UFOs, FLYING SAUCERS AND MKULTRA MIND CONTROL



FOREWORD

I remember Jim Keith writing this book. At the time, he was also working on an article for the coming issue of *Steamshovel Press*. Jim contributed regularly to the magazine and stayed in phone contact for research help and to chat conspiracy. He mentioned that he was trying to summarize all of his current thinking in a single themed manuscript.

The original *Saucers of the Illuminati*, in fact, may have been Jim Keith's last contribution to the zine world. The original book had an 8x10 format, spiral bound and resembled more a magazine than a book. Then, many people who knew Keith at all knew him primarily through his small-circulation "fan" magazines (although it is hard to conceive of a conspiracy/UFO cover up "fan"), *Dharma Combat* being the most well known but certainly not the only example. Zines were the happening means of the parapolitical underground in those pre-internet days and Keith served as the super-celebrity of that scene, broadcasting his charm and humor through self-published photocopied wonders, but also writing letters and doing commentary for similar zines produced by others.

Going through my stack of Keith masterworks recently, I discovered *Notes From The Hangar #1* from the early 1990s. In it, Keith published the rant of one Jason Bishop III, making declarations about humans working side-side with aliens in Dulce, New Mexico. Today it has become quite a familiar story, but at the time it was lore that had yet to reach the pinnacle of its currency in UFO circles. In fact, it was still part of what I see as a "barium meal" of UFO disinformation perpetrated by Air Force intelligence agents partly to drive a man named Paul Bennewitz insane.¡ In *Notes In The Hangar*, Jim presented the rant without edit and included several pages of critical response, declaring that he didn't necessarily believe any of it, but he believed in the importance of having it all discussed.

In *Saucers of the Illuminati*, Keith summarized his understanding of that history in a chapter entitled "MJ-12". That chapter remains one of the most concise and complete reviews of that important episode in the history of the ufological subculture,™ but at the same time comprises only a portion of what this book has to say. From there *Saucers* expands upon Keith's notions about the arcane and occult forces behind human history.

It was a point of view that developed over time, actually re-doing *Saucers* in 1998 in actual book form and now which resonates as a defining echo of the weirdness of the post-9/11 world, years after Keith has gone on to his reward.£ As the book cover attests, "as the 21st century approaches, many people suspect that something earth shattering is about to happen..."

On the phone back then with Keith explaining the over-arching view he felt he had captured in this new manuscript, I asked him if he thought he could really find a wider audience for the perspective. Wasn't it a bit obscure for the average reader?

We both had televisions on in the back ground as we spoke, both watching *CBS News*. As Dan Rather segued to the commercial, the newly redesigned CBS logo graphic appeared in the upper left corner of the screen. It was the CBS eye neatly pressed within a pyramid. As I looked in surprise at how much it looked like the backside of a dollar bill, Keith asked, "What was that you were saying about obscure?"

¡. Thanks to Peter Dale Scott for this concept. It refers to planted disinformation used by intelligence agents in order to track the blow-back. In the Bennewitz case, this meant various Area 51 stories that emerged as part of the UFO circuit presentations of people like John Lear and Bill Cooper, and had peripheral players such as super-spook Gorden Novel and JFK researcher Lars Hansson.

™. The first book-length treatment of the topic, *The Bennewitz Papers*, written by one of Keith's compadres, Greg Bishop, author of the *Wake Up Down There* anthology, is now pending publication.

£. Keith and I wrote *The Octopus: Secret Government and the Death of Danny Casolaro*, which became a hard-to-find cult classic. It currently enjoys a new edition, with one of three new chapters dealing with Jim Keith's unusual death. Among the many strange dimensions of Keith's passing discussed therein was the appearance of *clostridium* bacteria in the kind of knee surgery that led to his early death. Keith had noted years ago the presence of *clostridium* bacteria in the late 1970s cattle mutilations of New Mexico. *Clostridium* also killed our mutual good friend Ron Bonds, who published the first book edition of *Saucers*.

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The Great Seal of the United States of America featuring what some believe to be the symbol of the Illuminati.



Adam Weishaupt, founder of the Bavarian Illuminati.

Introduction

In 1993 a miniscule two hundred copy photocopied "researcher's edition" of my book *Saucers of the Illuminati* was rushed into print, upon my urging, by IllumiNet Press. My purpose for authorizing this informal edition was to get into print certain interesting connections that I had made between occult philosophy, the lore of UFOs, and the totalitarian New World Order - ideas that I had discussed at length with other researchers and that were already twinkling into being in a firmament of articles by some of those worthies. I was a little... paranoid is not the word I seek... concerned that by the time a proper paperback edition of *Saucers* was ushered into being, that I might be accused of plagiarizing myself.

As it turned out, my worry was largely unfounded, and little of what I wrote about in '93 has been grappled with, understood, or even mentioned in the conspiracy or UFO press, much less by the *New York Times*. I take this to be positive proof that I was on the right track.

Actually, my sense is that the ideas in *Saucers* tend to jump disciplines from political conspiracy, to UFOs, to the occult, in an attempt to synthesize the information in each. The researchers in those varied disciplines almost never have any truck with and so are confounded by their adjoining truckstops in arcane research. The Left Hand Path doesn't know what the Vast Right Wing Conspiracy is doing, you might say. But these topics are, at the deepest levels, intertwined and clarify the notions of the others.

Another matter: the ideas in *Saucers of the Illuminati* are dangerous, not to mention extremely weird, and stray very close to Things You Are Not Supposed to Think. In fact, in current polite--read mind controlled--society you are not even supposed to think

that there are things that you are not supposed to think... Do you follow?

Since the lightning appearance and disappearance of the researcher's edition of *Saucers* in 1993 copies have been completely unavailable, aside from a pirate edition that was rumored to have been put into print. That unavailability created a few misunderstandings about the book. Some speculated in print and on the Internet that the book was too incendiary, too Politically Incorrect, and that it went so quickly out of print because it was suppressed by the CIA or the Men in Black or somesuch. Those things have been known to happen in the annals of conspiracy research, of course, but not in this case. Simply, when I might have been expanding the text of *Saucers* to a length more appropriate for a paperback, I was doing lots of other things: writing nine other books, chasing the wolf of velvet fortune, things like that.

But I finally got around to the revision in 1998. Now here is the bells and whistles version of *Saucers*, with a lot of material not included in the book's original incarnation. Since the first appearance of the book, a great deal in the text has been clarified, and the revised work reflects new theories, new understandings obtained, and an arsenal of new smoking guns. Also included in this edition is the text of "UFOs at the Edge of Reality," a lecture delivered in Atlanta, Georgia in 1995.

I admit it. *Saucers of the Illuminati* is my strangest and most controversial work. That fact has been underlined by the largely uncomprehending and sometimes hostile reviews given to the first edition. The book may also be the most true that I have written.

Hold on to your brains. Maybe the world is ready for this stuff now.

1

A Process of Decoding

Regardless of our experience or research, we seem no closer to finding an answer to the puzzle of the UFOs. These strange craft and their equally strange occupants behave in a manner that seems to contradict physics and logic, appearing and disappearing seemingly at will, dropping curious objects and artifacts (including potatoes and pancakes), mutilating cattle, abducting people and leaving cryptic messages embedded in the brains of their awe-stricken contactees. These activities, these odd messages seem only to compound our confusion as to whom these interlopers on "our" cosmic turf are and what their motives might be.

While many saucer contactees or the variegated cults that have risen around them characterize the visitors they have confronted as angelic "Space Brothers" or advanced elder beings intent on warning humanity away from nuclear proliferation or other humanly-fostered evils, other indications as to the motives of these strangelings in silver ski suits are not so positive. Many individuals claim to have been abducted against their will by aliens in UFOs, and they have reported every kind of bizarre and grisly experience, ranging from mystical enlightenment, to the transmission of apocalyptic messages that they must deliver to mankind, even the implantation of tiny electronic brain devices apparently used for mind control or monitoring, perhaps in the same fashion that earthly ranchers now monitor cattle with under-the-skin electronic implants. Something very strange indeed is going on.

Analyzing the conflicting signals that we have received about the nature of these visitors, it is almost as if we are purposely being misled and befuddled by these mysterious agents, purposely being deceived about the motives behind these visitations, and perhaps even directed in some mysterious transformative operation of which we are not aware.

My own interest in the matter of UFOs is rather personal. Although I have been intensely interested in UFOs and the paranormal since my childhood in the early 1950s, it was not until 1972, in the Los Angeles, California suburb of Upland, that I experienced my own first contact--maybe. I came gradually awake in the middle of the night to find an archetypal grey alien staring in my face from a distance of about one foot. I leaped out of bed and raced into the living room. When I returned to my bedroom, the visitor was nowhere to be found.

I really didn't know what to think about what had happened. Was the experience an hallucination at the edge between dreaming and wakefulness? Was it an actual encounter with an alien presence? Was it a cross-dimensional experience that defied the boundaries of dream and reality? I have never been prone to this sort of nightmare, and have not experienced anything comparable in the intervening twenty-five years.

But there was nothing solid to grasp onto about the event, and so I shunted it into the category of maybe. I more or less forgot about the incident until I read Whitley Streiber's bestselling book *Communion* many years later, and one of the accounts in that book tipped the scale toward categorizing the event as being reality, rather than as a nightmare. In Streiber's book it was noted--coinciding with unnerving accuracy with my own apparent encounter--that the color and skin texture of the alien skin was not grey, but rather a deep blue grey, and that it had the shiny almost wet-seeming texture of

plasticine. Here was a coherence with another's alien experience that challenged--fractured--coincidence.

So, while I am perfectly aware of the fact that the U.S. military and others have experimented since at least the early 1950s with aerial craft that fit the description of UFOs, while I also know that the UFO experience has been hoaxed, including by American intelligence agencies and by UFO buffs, and that UFOs and abduction experiences may sometimes be a ruse to conceal mind control operations as described in a number of my books, I also leave the latch string out for other more "alien" interpretations of at least a percentage of UFO events.

One intriguing possibility is that the incident in Upland was one of beamed electronic mind control of the sort I have described in a number of my books. The house where the incident took place was a large hippie/radical commune where any number of anti-Establishment pipedreams were hatched. The strange motley of activists in Technicolor dream coats that came and went from the place at all hours no doubt drew the attention of those who monitor such things.

And so it occurred to me: Was I zapped electronically with the image of an alien? Was it just a byproduct of the chromatic chromosomes so prevalent at the time? I will probably never know. What I do know is that there are depths to the UFO enigma that are not plumbed by most researchers in the field, Horatio.

John Keel, for one, is a pioneering researcher who has been able to peer beyond the simplistic "space beings from another galaxy" device that is the primary stock-in-trade of UFO journalism. Of these strange visitors Keel has said:

> Many flying saucers seem to be nothing more than a disguise for some hidden phenomenon. They are like Trojan horses descending into our forests and farm fields, promising salvation and offering us the splendor of some great super civilization in the sky. While the

> statuesque long-haired "Venusians" have been chatting benignly with isolated traveling salesmen and farm wives, a multitude of shimmering lights and metallic disks have been silently busying themselves in the forests of Canada, the outback country of Australia, and the swamps of Michigan.

Other researchers have proclaimed that the motives of the visitors may not be altogether benign. It was the famous UFO researcher Jacques Vallee who coined the term "Messengers of Deception" and he has speculated of the UFOs:

> They are physical objects, the product of a technology, but they are also something else: the tools of a major cultural change. I think UFOs are perpetrating a deception by presenting their so-called occupants as being messengers from outer space, and I suspect there are groups of people on Earth exploiting this deception.

Speaking of the experiences of abductees in *Messengers of Deception*, Vallee surmises:

> It is more likely that they have taken a non-physical trip, controlled and guided by a system that acts on human consciousness (the Soviets use the term "psychotronic" to designate such devices), rather than one that is purely physical. The symbols it uses are engineered to have certain effects.

Vallee also reports, "I believe there is a very real UFO problem. I have also come to believe that it is being manipulated for political ends. And the data suggest that the manipulators may be human beings with a plan for social control."

I concur.

The evidence that I present in this book suggests that our vision has been purposely obscured by what we have been led to believe about the UFO experience, and it is probably not directly being done by insectoid extraterrestrials. Aside from the genuine

activity of hoaxers and disinformation agents, at least some of them factually connected to government, there seem to be certain elements of the UFO "message" that appear to be purposely designed to deceive. It appears that it was intended that we should be deluded from the very beginning, and it also appears that there is a definite method to the UFO madness.

To my mind the most sensible, yet least voiced explanation is that some UFO encounters are being staged for an ultimate--and ulterior--purpose. Is it within the realm of possibility that there is a group working behind the scenes to convince us that we are being invaded by space aliens?

In order to understand at least a portion of UFO sightings and their purpose, we need to work on decoding what amounts to their curious "language"--a language pieced together from the strange events and messages of hundreds and thousands of encounters, composed of word and symbol and deed apparently bearing meanings beyond the obvious. We must peer below the surface, the apparency, and furthermore, we must view these strange craft and their occupants in a different manner, in a manner that is perhaps not so different than the "open eyes" that secret societies attribute to their metaphysical initiates.

2

The Human Factor

If you were to assimilate the information contained in a large quantity of current books, motion pictures, and television presentations on the subject of UFOs and UFO abductions, I believe that you would be likely--by weight of the evidence presented--to come to one of three conclusions. That,

(A) we are being invaded by aliens from outer space, or

(B) that a high percentage of the human race is crazy and suffering from hallucinations of little green men or worse, or

(C) you would take an "agnostic" approach undecided on one of the first two possibilities.

I will not discount either of the first two possibilities as being the ultimate explanation of what is going on, however I consider it highly unlikely that you would even suspect, based upon information that is generally available, what I consider to be the most likely origin of this phenomenon. My investigations have shown me that UFO sightings (or at least a significant percentage of same) in all probability are the product of an entirely different *praxis* or control process than either alien invasion or hallucination, and that the parties responsible for the phenomenon have, so far as I can determine, never been named as such.

In preparation for the reality shift that I intend this book to entail, I would like to cite a few instances of UFO abductions that do not entirely fit into the media template as to what these encounters are like. In this fashion I hope to shatter the generalized

and predictable nature of what are usually put forth as "characteristic" UFO encounters. This will perhaps open the door for new interpretations.

Bruce Smith probably still regrets having chosen to attend a lecture by Budd Hopkins, reputed expert on alien abduction (who, oddly, never entertains the human quotient in his writings), in New Jersey in 1991. The lecture profoundly affected Mr. Smith (as abduction accounts have affected many others) to the point where he packed up his belongings into his trailer home and headed west. Perhaps Smith felt that New Jersey did not have the requisite privacy that encounters with ufonauts usually require.

Camping in Tesuque, New Mlexico, Smith woke up in the middle of the night, sensing that he was being visited by someone. Suddenly his ankles were grabbed by a pair of hands and, while woozily drifting in and out of consciousness, he saw a hazy creature looming in front of him... and, oddly enough, wearing glasses and a white, button-down shirt, the kind that his father had worn, according to Smith.

So far, so bad. Smith was dragged away from his tent and campsite but, still semi-conscious and able to partially grasp what was going on, he was able to see that it wasn't toward the expected glowing saucercraft that he was being carried.

Smith maintains that he was manhandled into a large, dark blue van, with markings identifying it as belonging to the U.S. Navy. After traveling for an hour in the back of the van over winding New Mexico roads, Smith maintains that the van stopped and he was levitated out the back door, and was then carried into a huge building that he believes was a portion of the Los Alamos nuclear laboratory.

Once inside the building, Smith was placed on an examination table while a big-headed "alien" examined him and "gouged" at his

eyes with a scalpel. Smith went unconscious again and woke up back at the campsite that he had been abducted from.

These terrifying experiences were uncovered several months later while Smith was under hypnotherapy. Smith concluded from the memories that welled forth under hypnotism that he had been abducted many times in the past, but this seems to have been the only time that it happened in collusion with the U.S. Navy.

One is tempted with this account to believe the stories that we hear of government/alien collaboration in abduction and hideous medical experiments--the sort of stories that John Lear and Bill Cooper used to make hay with on late night talk radio, and which still have some currency with the more excitable end of the UFO hobbyist community--but that is not the only possible explanation for the events that Smith says he endured.

The dark blue van is the obvious sticking point in this abductee's tale. Why, pray tell, would space aliens be driving around in vans in order to abduct people? Mysterious vans of this sort are also reported to have been prevalent during a UFO flap in Montana, with "Smithsonian Institute" emblazoned on the side. Researchers contacting the Institute found that they didn't know anything about the vehicles.

In John Keel's *The Mothman Prophecies*, he describes a similar modus operandi taking place in rural Virginia, at the height of the UFO flap of 1973:

> People up in the back hills had been seeing mysterious unmarked panel trucks which sometimes parked for hours in remote spots. There seemed to be several of these trucks in the area and the rumor was that they belonged to the air force. Men in neat coveralls were seen monkeying with telephone and power lines but no one questioned them...

It is perhaps a gauge of the quality of much UFO research that it is considered a serious possibility that these vans sometimes reported in conjunction with abductions and cattle mutilations (or alternately, the black helicopters that often show up around cattle mutilations) are disguised, shape-morphing extraterrestrial craft.

Strange, but if aliens are involved in all of this--and I have grave doubts that they are--instead of vans, wouldn't the more commonly described Star Trek-like "teleporter beams" as depicted in *Fire From the Sky* be more their speed, much more convenient, and less liable to be discovered? More to the point, when driving vans, would little grey aliens be able to see above the steering wheel?

Perhaps the answer is that the beings driving these vehicles aren't alien at all, or at least not quite so alien as we have been led to think. There is no shortage of available accounts of human beings being unaccountably connected to UFOs in the annals of this research, and "close encounters of the human kind" often take place without any accompanying extraterrestrial-appearing characters being involved in the incidents at all. Statistics compiled by James M. McCampbell in the book *Ufology* show, surprisingly, that over one third of "close encounters of the third kind" that are reported involve contact with UFO occupants who are apparently human.

John Keel is the source of another anecdote:

> One family of seven people swore they had seen a circular object land near a wooded area on Long Island. They stopped their car to watch and were astonished when they saw two figures, normal-human-sized beings, exit through a door in the object as a large black car crossed the field and stopped nearby. The two beings got into the car and it drove off. The object took off quickly and disappeared into the night sky.

Another UFO encounter involved two highly credible women, Betty Cash and Vickie Landrum, and Landrum's young grandson, Colby. The trio were motoring near Dayton, Texas in 1980 when they noticed an unusual moving light in the sky above them. They pulled the car over to the side of the road, and the light approached, hovering at approximately 135 feet in altitude and only a few hundred feet away, until it was so close that it was blinding in intensity. By that time the witnesses were able to perceive that they were viewing some kind of huge aerial craft.

Betty Cash, the driver, got out of the car in order to better view what they could now see was a huge, diamond-shaped craft. Flames shot out of the base of the UFO, and a roaring sound engulfed them. Betty Cash returned to the car, where she found the door handle hot to the touch. The strange aircraft slowly moved away. Then the observers saw the approach of twenty-three large, twin-rotor helicopters (apparently Army Chinooks), that looked as if they were escorting the UFO at a distance of about three-quarters of a mile.

After returning home all three of the witnesses of the strange craft had come down with what was apparently radiation poisoning. Betty Cash, the woman who had exited the car for a better look, suffered the worst case, with headache, loss of hair, eyes swollen shut, and sores on her skin, causing her to be hospitalized for six weeks. Since the incident Cash has also contracted cancer that she attributes to the incident. The other two witnesses suffered lesser degrees of eye inflammation and "radiation burns."

When contacted by Cash and Landrum, the Army responded in typical cover-up fashion. Despite the reports of other witnesses that Army helicopters had been in the area at the time of the UFO sighting, they issued a denial of having taken part in the maneuvers. An independent UFO investigator found a blackened area on the road in the vicinity where the witnesses had observed the UFO and

the choppers. Within a few days an unidentified road crew hurried to the location, dug up the portion of the road, and replaced it.

What these and similar accounts seem to say is that UFOs and encounters of the third kind are not always an entirely alien affair, that tabloid television may not have all the answers, and that humans may be involved to some unknown extent in many of these incidents--perhaps in some unknown plan of directed transformation that they are trying to implement. Few, very few, contemporary researchers have made this connection, most of them instead opting for the more-easily-graspable notion that the ufonauts are visitors from nearby star systems. There, leave it at that, they seem to say. What else could they be?

There are exceptions in the research community, however. Some prominent investigators such as Jacques Vallee, Martin Cannon, Alex Constantine, and John Judge seem to have entirely abandoned the idea that UFOs are extraterrestrial phenomena, although any alternate hypotheses are rarely hinted at in the mass media. Bogeymen "Greys" from outer space make better press it seems, and there are other reasons.

For the general public, I suspect the possibility that UFOs are controlled in some fashion by humans, for some conspiratorial purpose, is unthinkable. Why? The answer is simple. The public is the victim of a massive propaganda assault where you would be least likely to expect one. There is an almost total media blackout about the possibility that UFOs are anything other than extraterrestrial phenomena.

When humans are mentioned in relation to UFOs it is always in the context of some eldritch and vast science fictional conspiracy that includes government/alien collaboration and secret treaties, underground bases, and macabre scenarios of human-alien vat clonings. The monolith of this unlikely scenario is sustained upon a foundation of no hard evidence whatsoever; odd, since it apparently

involves hundreds of thousands of human participants scuttling in the dark underbelly of terrestrial politics and selling out the human race for a place in the sun after the coming alien takeover of Earth.

An additional filter on the truth is that the whole subject of the existence of secret, conspiratorial groups manipulating politics from behind the scenes is treated as a big joke by the media, and as the province of crackpots, as can be readily deduced from the treatment accorded to Oliver Stone's motion picture *JFK*. Six months prior to the release of the film, there was a huge media campaign to discredit the production, along with the whole notion of a conspiracy being involved in the John F. Kennedy assassination. Certainly there is abundant evidence showing that it is almost impossible that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole individual responsible for the murder of Kennedy, and that the large number of inconsistencies in the government story suggest that a conspiracy is at least possible. But that evidence, so it seems, is irrelevant. There are no political conspiracies, and that's that, chump.

Likewise, against the preponderance of evidence, almost the entirety of UFO literature (including motion pictures and television) assumes that the solution to the enigma of the saucers is, in a sense, already known to us. It is taken for granted that we already know that extraterrestrials from other planets pilot these super-science craft. Perhaps, after all, it serves someone's purpose for the public to believe this way. Perhaps it assists the transformation I have spoken of, a transformation that is taking place all around us.

3

The Mind Manipulators

To understand the motives that might prompt humans to organize such a massive deception, a mass mind-twisting of this scope, I believe that we should look outside the literature of UFOs, consulting the history of other recent and verifiable mass manipulations and deceptions. If we are attempting to unravel the secret of the most perplexing mystery of this century, we should acknowledge that certain segments of mankind, in order to accomplish their power-hungry plans, have often been happy to pull a veil over the eyes of (if not put out the eyes of) their fellows who inhabit this earth.

Since the middle of this century (and very probably before that) the intelligence agencies of the United States, as well as other countries, have been involved in covert programs intended to modify beliefs and behavior--to control the minds of the population of the world. The rubric "National Security" is employed by these manipulators as a catch-all shield to veil the illegal (and definitely immoral) activities of intelligence agencies involved in a welter of Orwellian mindbending programs such as ARTICHOKE, MKULTRA, and MKDELTA.

Although intelligence agency brainwashing is only very rarely spoken of in the mass media, this does not reflect on its prevalence or on the magnitude of its ambitions, which have involved thousands of programs and billions of dollars of funding into research on mind alteration and the control of often unwitting victims. Many volumes (although few published by major

publishing houses) have been filled with horrendous accounts of brainwashing, electroshock, psychosurgery, drug experimentation, and the experimental injection of hostile bacteria and viruses, all performed by "our" employees, the U.S. military and intelligence agencies.

Walter Bowart in the classic expose *Operation Mind Control* characterizes the purpose of intelligence agencies as being

> ...to take human beings, both citizens of the United States and citizens of friendly and unfriendly nations, and transform them into unthinking, subconsciously programmed "zombies," motivated without their knowledge and against their wills to perform in a variety of ways in which they would not otherwise willingly perform. This is accomplished through the use of various techniques called by various names, including brainwashing, thought reform, behavior modification, hypnosis, and conditioned reflex therapy.

A survey of some of the gothic monuments in the landscape of mind control research include:

The advent of television in the late 1940s has provided a potent mind drug administered to the vast majority of the population. Providing a substitution for actual human life in the modulating and hypnotic electronic flicker of the television tube, studies have been conducted showing that television actually induces a trance state that, with years of watching, becomes permanent. Television is, without a doubt, the most potent societal soporific in the mind control arsenal.

Susan Bryce, writing in *Nexus*, aptly describes what takes place during television watching:

> There is so much information coming at viewers over a short time, that they sit lethargically staring blankly at the screen. This is precisely what you are supposed to do. In this lethargic mode, when people are almost snoozing, more is taken in subconsciously by the

> mind. Have you ever wondered why people fall asleep in front of the TV? Viewers become passive recipients, on the treadmill of mindless consumerism, routed endlessly from one shopping center to another, buying, buying, buying. Mass programmed shoppers. Becoming absorbed in the pursuit of media popularized roles or fashions, in the vain hope of becoming loved, respected, rich, socially popular or sexually desirable. Sheep who venerate compulsive neurotic behavior as normal, desirable human contact.

Madness Network News chronicles that:

> Between 1953-1967, the CIA paid Ewen Cameron over $18,000 to test LSD, Thorazine, and sensory deprivation on mental patients. Dr. Carl Pfeiffer was paid $25,000 a year by the CIA to drug prisoners with LSD. Dr. Harris Isbell drugged prisoners with LSD for 11 years under CIA auspices. Dr. Louis Jolyon West of UCLA, Dr. Sidney Malitz, Dr. James B. Cattell, Dr. Amadeo Marrazzi, Dr. Paul Hoch, and many other psychiatrists were also on the CIA payroll.

Robert Heath at Tulane University in 1955 was employed by the U.S. Army to combine the administering of LSD with implanted brain electrodes on psychiatric victims.

Between 1952-57 Dr. Paul Hoch at the New York Psychiatric Institute was funded to the tune of $200,000 by the Army, to research mind control by drugging on humans.

Nineteen fifty-six saw the CIA authorizing the use of Bulbocapnine and other drugs on state penitentiary inmates. Bulbocapnine was deemed to be especially useful in inducing catatonic states in which brainwashing and implanting of information or commands could be performed.

In 1961 Dr. W. Fry and Dr. R. Meyers conducted experimentation involving the use of focused ultrasonics to create brain lesions, while in 1963, Dr. Peter Lindstrom at the University of Pittsburgh used sonic beams in the focused destruction of brain

tissue--a technique said to have been evolved to replace pre-frontal lobotomies.

One prime notable in mind control is Dr. Jose Delgado who, beginning in the 1950s and funded by Naval Intelligence and the Air Force, among others, crafted the first radio controlled brain implants, what he termed "stimoceivers."

Delgado described the capability of these early, crude stimoceivers in the following terms:

> It is already possible to induce a large variety of responses, from motor effects to emotional reactions and intellectual manifestations, by direct electrical stimulation of the brain. Also, several investigators have learned to identify patterns of electrical activity (which a computer could also recognize) localized in specific areas of the brain and related to determined phenomena such as perception of smells or visual perception of edges and movements. We are advancing rapidly in the pattern recognition of electrical correlates of behavior and in the methodology for two-way radio communication between brains and computers...
>
> The individual is defenseless against direct manipulation of the brain because he is deprived of his most intimate mechanisms of biological reactivity. In experiments, electrical stimulation of appropriate intensity always prevailed over free will; and, for example, flexion of the hand evoked by stimulation of the motor cortex cannot be voluntarily avoided. Destruction of the frontal lobes produced changes in effectiveness which are beyond any personal control.

Delgado's stated purpose in the invention of the stimoceiver was the "master control of human behavior," although after a popular treatment of the subject in his book *Physical Control of the Mind* was released, research into the area of direct electrical stimulation of the brain was rarely referred to again.

In the mid-70s, Dr. Louis Jolyon West, director of the Neuropsychiatric Institute at UCLA, suggested a centralized "violence reduction center" to be created at an abandoned missile

base in California, a concept that was greeted with approval by then-Governor Ronald Reagan. West reported in a secret memo that one purpose of the center would be the implementation of brain surgery techniques: "...now by implanting tiny electrodes deep within the brain... [it] is even possible to record bioelectrical changes in the brain of freely moving subjects, through the use of remote monitoring techniques."

At the same time that the military and intelligence agencies were drugging, implanting, and sawing up the brains of their experimental subjects, the nation at large was being stupefied by massive drugging promoted by the so-called medical profession and the media as the answer to their cares.

Peter Schrag in *Mind Control* records that, "by 1975 American physicians were writing 240 million pharmacy prescriptions annually for psychotropic medication for people who were not hospitalized--roughly one for every man, woman and child in the country--enough pills all told to sustain a $1.5 billion industry and to keep every American fully medicated for a month." Since that time the prevalence of pharmaceutical drugging in this country has only increased.

During the 1960s a shift seems to have taken place in emphasis in mind control projects. The U.S. military commissioned a number of experimental projects delving into the use of electromagnetic frequencies for controlling and altering the behavior of subjects. Between 1965 and 1970, Project Pandora researched the effects of low intensity microwaves on the health and psychology of humans. This was at the same time that the American embassy in Moscow was being irradiated by microwaves by the Russians, causing numerous harmful physiological effects in the employees there.

Studying Soviet literature on microwaves for the CIA, Milton Zarat determined, "they believe that the electromagnetic field induced by the microwave environment affects the cell membrane,

and this results in an increase of excitability or an increase in the level of excitation of nerve cells. With repeated or continued exposure, the increased excitability leads to a state of exhaustion of the cells of the cerebral cortex."

Eldon Byrd of the Naval Surface Weapons, Office of Non-Lethal Weapons, engaged in research into anti-personnel electronics, described the effects of electromagnetic radiation on the offspring of animals. He spoke of "a drastic degradation of intelligence later in life... couldn't learn easy tasks... indicating a very definite and irreversible damage to the central nervous system of the fetus." Byrd also described experiments in which, "At a certain frequency and power intensity, they could make the animal purr, lay down and roll over."

Even more startling brain control possibilities were researched. A 1976 DIA report suggests that "Sounds and possibly even words which appear to be originating intercranially can be induced by signal modulations at very low power densities."

Anna Keel, in *Full Disclosure* magazine, discusses one such experiment:

> Dr. Sharp, a Pandora [Project] researcher at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, some of whose work was so secret that the couldn't tell his boss, conducted an experiment in which the human brain has received a message carried to it by microwave transmission. Sharp was able to record spoken words that were modulated on a microwave carrier frequency by an "audiogram," an analog of the words' sound vibrations, and carried into his head in a chamber where he sat.

Dr. James Lin of Wayne State University in his book *Microwave Auditory Effects and Applications* discussed the Sharp experiment and remarked that, "The capability of communicating directly with humans by pulsed microwaves is obviously not limited to the field of therapeutic medicine."

Anna Keel writes:

> What is frightening is that words, transmitted via low density microwaves or radio frequencies, or by other covert methods, might be used to create influenoe. For instance, according to a 1984 U.S. House of Representatives report, a large number of stores throughout the country use high frequency transmitted words (above the range of human hearing) to discourage shoplifting. Stealing is reported to be reduced by as much as 80% in some cases. Surely, the CIA and military haven't overlooked such useful technology.

Keel also remarks:

> Another indication that the government entertained notions of behavior control through use of fields and sound, is a 1974 research proposal by J.F. Schapitz. To test his theory, his plan was to record EEG correlates induced by various drugs, and then to modulate these biological frequencies on a microwave carrier. Could the same behavioral states be produced by imposing these brain wave frequencies on human subjects? His plan went further and included inducing hypnotic states and using words modulated on a microwave carrier frequency to attempt to covertly condition subjects to perform various acts. The plan as released (through the Freedom of Information Act) seems less part of a careful recipe for influence than Adey's and other DOD scientists' work, and may have been released to mislead by lending an "information beam" science fiction like quality to the work.

In an upcoming chapter we will examine the possible use of an "information beam" employed in a highly science fictional manner.

A 1993 issue of the *Tactical Technology* newsletter reported on the then-current state of Soviet mind control technology:

> While visiting Russia in November 1991, Morris [Janet Morris, research director of the U.S. Global Strategy Council, a think tank located in Washington D.C., founded by Ray Cline, previously a deputy director of the CIA] and other members of a team sent to investigate

Russian technologies for commercial development were invited to a demonstration of mind control technology. A volunteer from the U.S. team sat down in front of a computer screen as innocuous words flashed across the screen. The volunteer was only required to tell which words he liked and which words he disliked. At the end of the demonstration the Russian staff started revealing the sensitive, innermost thoughts of the volunteer - none of which had been previously discussed.

The recorded message was mixed with what appeared to be white noise or static, so when played back it became indecipherable. Since there were no more volunteers in the U.S. group, the Russians volunteered to go upstairs and let the Americans choose a mental patient for demonstration. The Americans declined the offer.

The Russians told Morris of a demonstration in which a group of workers were outside the hospital working on the grounds. The staff sent an acoustic psycho-correction message via their machine to the workers telling them to put down their tools, knock on the door of the hospital and ask if there was anything else they could do. The workers did exactly that, the Russians said.

The Russians admitted to using this technology for special operations team selection and performance enhancement and to aid their Olympic athletes and an Antarctic exploration team. Unlike lie detectors, this machine can determine when the truth is spoken, according to Morris.

Being an infrasound, very low frequency-type transmission, the acoustic psycho-correction message is transmitted via bone conduction. This means that earplugs will not restrict the message. An entire body protection system would be required to stop reception. The message, according to the Russians, bypasses the conscious level and is acted upon almost immediately. They also say that the messages are acted upon with exposure times of under one minute.

Morris envisions this technology will be miniaturized into a handheld device. Presently the International Healthline Corp. of Richmond, Va., is planning to bring a Russian team of specialists to the U.S. in the near future to further demonstrate the capability...

Trilateral Commission kingpin Zbigniew Brzezinski has nicely summed up the mindset of the brain tinkers in these government-sponsored programs, in between gloating over the wonders of the coming New World Order in his book *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technotronic Era*:

> In the technocratic society [that Brzezinski sees as the New Order of society coming into ascendance after Marxism] the trend would seem to be towards the aggregation of the individual support of millions of uncoordinated citizens, easily within the reach of magnetic and attractive personalities effectively exploiting the latest communication techniques to manipulate emotions and control reason.

Could Zbig have been any more straightforward in talking about mind control?

We do know that authoritarian (and often covert) control of society continues unabated, the techniques becoming more finely honed as experimental subjects are utilized by the thousands and then discarded. The populace has been drugged, shocked, irradiated, made ill, manipulated, and even killed in the efforts of the military and intelligence agencies and their psychiatric dupes to devise the most effective and invisible manacles for the containment of members of our "democracy."

Is there any suggestion that this sort of mind programming might have been expanded to incorporate UFO incidents and the public's belief in UFOs to assist in their bamboozling? Whatever the answer, I believe that there is little doubt that such UFO incidents could be simulated in this fashion.

What additional capabilities than those described above, and the perhaps added usage of hallucinogens and hypnosis, along with various "extraterrestrial" stage props, would be required in order to convince an abductee that he had been waylaid by a flying saucer, rather than a dark blue van? I am not suggesting that this is the

entirety of the answer to the UFO riddle--but might not mind control experimentation of this sort, conducted with UFO space trappings, comprise a statistically significant part, and might not hoaxing, unusual natural phenomena, and the tendency for many UFO buffs to be extremely gullible account for most of the rest?

Ufologist Otto Binder has said, "At any rate, it would seem that the expanding series of saucer sightings in waves, from 1964 to date, is all building up to a crescendo, as if the saucer men are conditioning earth people in seeing saucers, and gradually forcing even the most recalcitrant scientists and government authorities to realize the sightings are not figments of imagination, but real."

The recent huge, triangular UFO seen by thousands of residents over Arizona is exactly the sort of sighting that cannot be ignored. But why would extraterrestrials have to be, or be interested in, conditioning humans to believe in their existence?

4

Infiltration

Although the forces that appear to dominate UFO research seem to prefer that everyone maintain a "Goshwow! Aliens are among us!" approach that beyond disinformational purposes also serves in marketing to the slack-jawed yokels with underbites, there seem to be certain forces afoot today other than just grey aliens. Although thus far we are only able to evaluate circumstantial evidence of UFOs being connected to human occupants (rather than aliens) and the military, there are a number of accounts of the military attempting to infiltrate public UFO research organizations, apparently in an attempt to monitor and disinform the field, and to delude the public at large on the subject of UFOs. On a number of occasions the UFO field has been infiltrated by military intelligence personnel, and well-known UFO "researchers," possibly even the majority of the prominent ones, have loyalties that seem not to reside with the UFO research community or with the truth.

In the early 1950s H. Marshall Caldwell, then acting as Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence for the CIA, penned the following memo to CIA Director Walter Smith. Caldwell wrote:

> With world-wide sightings reported, it was found that, up to the time of the investigation, there had been in the Soviet press no report or comment, even satirical, on flying saucers, though Gromyko had made one humorous mention of the subject. With a State-controlled press, this could result only from an official policy decision. The question, therefore, arises as to whether or not these sightings:
>
> (1) could be controlled

(2) could be predicted, and

(3) could be used from a psychological warfare point of view either offensively or defensively.

The public concerns with the phenomena, which is reflected both in the United States press and in the pressure of inquiry upon the Air Force, indicates that a fair proportion of our population is mentally conditioned to the acceptance of the incredible. In this fact lies the potential for the touching-off of mass hysteria and panic... A study should be instituted to determine what, if any utilization could be made of these phenomena by United States psychological warfare planners...

In the book *Clear Intent*, authors Fawcett and Greenwood detail the destruction of the early civilian UFO investigative group, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), by government intelligence agents. They cite the involvement in the group of Nicholas de Rochefort, member of the Psychological Warfare Staff of the CIA, Vice Admiral Roscoe Hillenkoetter, a director of the CIA, and Bernard J.0. Carvalho, another apparent CIA asset.

They describe the removal of Donald Keyhoe as NICAP's director in 1969, and point to the actions of chairman of the board Col. Joseph Bryan, former chief of the CIA's Psychological Warfare Staff as being instrumental in Keyhoe's ouster. They also note that John Acuff, the head of the Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers--connected to Defense Department intelligence units and the CIA--was the man who replaced Keyhoe. Acuff seems to have defanged NICAP, as far as the government was concerned, turning it into a sightings collection group without a trace of its earlier governmentally-critical policy, an approach that eventually drove the organization out of business. Acuff was replaced by Alan Hall, retired from the CIA, with the group eventually being dissolved.

Further investigation of government manipulation of UFO researchers must include a mention of William Moore, the co-author of *The Philadelphia Experiment* and *The Roswell Incident*, as well

as editor, until recently, of *Far Out* magazine, published by Larry Flynt of *Hustler* fame. Moore, who continues to be a medium weight popstar of the UFO research field, for reasons which remain unclear to me admitted at the 1989 MUFON Symposium that he had functioned as an agent for members of the U.S. military, reporting on at least one UFO group and involved individuals in exchange for "leaked," allegedly secret government documents about UFOs. To me this is astounding. The only reason I can imagine that Moore might betray his own activities in this way is that he feared that someone else was going to "out" him as working with the government, and he was attempting damage control by his "voluntary" admission.

Other information on Moore involves the matter of UFO researcher Paul Bennewitz. Bennewitz, a self-employed electronics expert, believed that he had discovered alien technology in action at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico, and contacted the military in an attempt to alert them. Bennewitz was apparently fed a series of documents outlining military collaboration with the aliens and other matters that are currently the stock-in-trade of the "Aliens are among us and polluting our vital bodily fluids!" end of the UFO research spectrum.

According to Moore, "[Bennewitz] was the subject of considerable interest on the part of not one, but several government agencies, and [I discovered] they were actively trying to defuse him by pumping as much disinformation through him as he could possibly absorb..."

Moore admits that he knew that Bennewitz was being disinformed by the government--with evidence suggesting that Special Agent Richard Doty was at least partially responsible--but according to his own admission he took no action to disabuse Bennewitz of the lies that, Moore says, were gradually driving him crazy. Bennewitz got to the point where he believed that aliens were

invading his house and poisoning him. He gradually broke down from the disinformational (and perhaps other) attacks, until he was put into a psychiatric hospital.

Sergeant Richard Doty, one of Moore's contacts who was involved in the Bennewitz matter, was a special agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. During the course of his employment with AFOSI he invited Linda Moulton Howe--a well-known investigator of cattle mutilations who oddly never seems to bring up the government connection--to visit him at Kirtland. Once Howe had arrived at the Air Force base, Doty showed her alleged secret documents that seemed to reveal information on crashed alien vehicles and their occupants.

According to Howe:

> These pages... contained a summary of this government's retrieval of crashed disks and alien bodies, including a live alien from a crash near Roswell in 1949. The paper said that this extraterrestrial had been taken to Los Alamos National Laboratory, where it had been kept until it died of unknown causes on June 18, 1952. Then the paper summarized some of the information that had been learned from this distinctly alien life form about our planet and its civilization's involvement with this planet. One of the paragraphs said, "All questions and mysteries about the evolution of Homo Sapiens on this planet have been answered, and this project is closed," ...Further, it stated in the paper that these gray extraterrestrials had been personally involved in the genetic manipulation of already evolving primates on this planet, suggesting that Cro-Magnon was the result of genetic manipulation by the gray extraterrestrials.

Another meeting was arranged between Captain Robert Collins, Howe, and John Lear, the UFO "expert" and former employee of the CIA. Lear is the man who has done more than anyone including Bill Cooper to convince the public that aliens are

among us, living in huge underground bases, and collaborating with the government to put us all in the vat-prepared soup. Collins furnished Lear and Howe with more alleged secret documents on the aliens, and mentioned to her that he had worked with William Moore for years.

It also is within the sphere of William Moore's influence that the bogus MJ-12 paper, a faked 1947 presidential "briefing document" on crashed saucers, surfaced.

5

MJ-12

In mid-1987, when UFO buffs first got the MJ-12 document in their hands, many of them thought that they were fondling the Holy Grail of UFO research. This photo reproduction of an eight-page alleged government document is purported to be a preliminary briefing on UFOs for President-elect Eisenhower, released on November 18, 1952 (also officially the first day of the formation of the CIA).

The MJ-12 document was allegedly used to brief Eisenhower by Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, said to be a member of Majestic-12, a top secret research team composed of scientists and military men empowered to investigate UFOs. The MJ-12 document claims that in July, 1947, an alien disk craft crashed in Roswell, New Mexico, and that a second craft crashed on the Texas-Mexico border in 1950.

From where did this historic and apparently earth-shaking MJ-12 document originate? In December, 1984, a roll of undeveloped 35mm black and white film was received in the mail in Burbank, California, by Jaime Shandera, a television producer. Shandera has said that the package was postmarked at Albuquerque, New Mexico. The roll of film was developed by Shandera and William Moore, who found photo images of the pages of the MJ-12 document.

The first publication of a portion of the MJ-12 document appeared in the *London Observer* newspaper, on May 31, 1987. A small portion of the document was printed in an article by Martin

Bailey, titled "Close Encounters of an Alien Kind--And Now if You've Read Enough About the Election, Here's News from Another World." The article was reprinted in many American newspapers in the weeks that followed.

According to British UFO researcher Timothy Good, he was the first to publish the complete MJ-12 document, in his book *Above Top Secret*, in May, 1987. Where did Good get his copy? He stated, "I received the document from a CIA source in March of 1987." When queried as to whether the CIA source had anything to do with William Moore, Good responded, "I am sure. Oh, absolutely."

The document was published and re-published in magazines, analyzed, touted as extraterrestrial gospel, decried as a hoax. But it captivated the imaginations of many UFO researchers, and injected life into an ailing UFO research field to a degree that had not been seen since the halcyon days of the 1960s.

For those UFO buffs who are interested in objective evaluation the fact that no original copy of the MJ-12 document is available is only one of the difficulties in proving or disproving its validity. Because of this fact, no evaluation of the authenticity of signatures, paper, or ink can be made.

The document also is suspiciously similar to a description of the one that was shown to Linda Moulton Howe at Kirtland Air Force Base, if a more refined version.

Other details suggest that the document is a hoax. The dating format is a mixed civilian and military style, as for instance in the date, "18, November, 1952." The military format would be 18 November, 1952," lacking the added comma. Single digit dates also have an added zero inserted before them in the MJ-12 document, a practice that did not come into use in the military until the 1970s. As pointed out by debunker Philip J. Klass, in available examples of Hillenkoetter letters and memoranda, the conventional military date format is used.

Also, according to Klass, a Los Angeles document examiner has determined that the typewriter used to type the MJ-12 document was not available before 1963.

Researcher Kevin Randle points out another significant discrepancy in the MJ-12 document: "The document is constructed as a briefing paper for President-elect Eisenhower, suggesting that Eisenhower had no knowledge of the Roswell crash. The problem is that Eisenhower, as the Army Chief of Staff in July 1947, would have been completely aware of the Roswell crash."

The MJ-12 report does not resemble in style or substance anything else that I have seen originating from the government, and I have examined hundreds of government documents originating from the same period, many of them dealing with UFOs. The document is also not written in typical "bureaucratese," that elusive jargon so valued in government circles.

The main problem with the MJ-12 document for me, however, is that it solves too much, wrapping up too many of the loose ends of the contemporary UFO controversy, and "proving" exactly what most UFO buffs "already know." Little new information is offered on the alleged saucer crashes themselves, which is rather odd given the fact that this constitutes our first clear look inside the "Cosmic Watergate" so toured by Moore, Stanton Friedman, and others. If this in fact is a briefing provided to Eisenhower, then it is a comic book briefing that would have raised far more questions in the President-elect's mind than it answered. The loose ends that are wrapped up in the document also neatly intersect with the specific stated beliefs and investigative involvement of the men most closely associated with the report: Shandera, Moore, Friedman.

After the publication of the MJ-12 briefing documents, another unsigned document was allegedly discovered in the National Archives, dated July 14, 1954. This is a purported memo to General Nathan Twining, Air Force Chief of Staff, from Robert Cutler,

Eisenhower's Special Assistant for National Security. This document states, "The President has decided that the MJ-12 SSP briefing should take place during the already scheduled White House meeting of July 16, rather than following it as previously intended." The alleged memo was unsigned, with Cutler's name and title typed at the page bottom. Advocates of the authenticity of the original MJ-12 pages claim that the Cutler memo provides proof positive that the document--and the alleged secret MJ-12 consulting group--was real, while detractors suggest that the memo is just another fake.

The authenticity of the Cutler memo, this supposed confirmation, is doubtful. Advocate Stanton Friedman insists that the memo is real because "it was in a classified box in a classified vault," but this only points up Friedman's willingness to overlook the obvious in his anxiety to verify the MJ-12 document. What would have stopped someone from carrying the Cutler memo in with them when examining the supposedly secure box?

Jo Ann Williamson, Chief of the Military Reference Branch, has indicated that "this particular document poses problems" in a number of ways. Williamson points out that it is not typed on government letterhead and does not have a watermark; it does not have a top secret registration number; it is the single document with a notation about MJ-12 in the folder in which it was found; the marking TOP SECRET RESTRICTED INFORMATION attached to it was not used until many years after the Eisenhower administration; and Robert Cutler was traveling in Europe and North Africa on the day the memo was supposedly issued.

Other significant factors, possibly the most significant in the evaluation of the authenticity of the MJ-12 documents and the Cutler memo are the associations of their recipient and primary disseminators. Jaime Shandera, who reportedly received the film containing images of the MJ-12 document, had in 1980 been involved in pre-production for a fictional movie about UFOs with

Stanton Friedman and William Moore. Some rash souls have suggested that the production of the MJ-12 document may have been their next fictional foray. Shandera had also "been working closely with Bill Moore and myself on the Roswell crash," according to Friedman.

Shandera and Moore had both been in contact with Richard Doty, who was at the time of the MJ-12 document's release working for the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. Doty was trained in disinformation and psychological warfare, and allegedly a self-admitted member of a disinformation group. According to published reports, Moore has stated that Doty reported to a Pentagon official named Hennessey, reportedly chief of security for the Stealth project. It is impossible to gauge Doty's actual connections, since portions of his service records are censored, although while stationed at Linsay Air Force Base in West Germany, according to Klass:

> Doty was charged with falsifying official documents and telling falsehoods to his commanding officer. A formal investigation confirmed these charges and Doty was "decertified" as a special agent [with the] Air Force Office of Special Investigations and returned to Kirtland AFB in late 1986. Doty spent his last two years before retirement in food services management.

Doty was allegedly involved in an earlier UFO hoax regarding a sighting near Kirtland Air Force Base in 1980. An anonymous letter, purporting to be from an airman and indicating that the same information had been submitted to the Office of Special Investigations, was sent to a UFO organization. According to researcher Robert Hastings, "careful analysis of the anonymous letter reveals that it was almost certainly typed on the same typewriter used by Doty..."

According to Dr. Bruce Maccabee of the Fund for UFO Research, Doty also confessed to William Moore that he been involved in another hoaxed UFO incident, called the Ellsworth case, and that he had forged documents and submitted them to researchers as authentic.

Was Doty or the OSI the source of the MJ-12 documents? Did he forge them? No conclusive proof exists.

But the plot continues to thicken. Researcher Lee Graham has reportedly said that William Moore had contacted him "in an intelligence capacity" and that he worked for the government in releasing sensitive UFO information. According to Graham, Moore had flashed a Defense Investigation Service badge, although Stanton Friedman in his 1996 MJ-12 apologia titled Top *Secret/Majic* puts a different spin on the event. Friedman says, "As a joke, Bill once pulled out a MUFON identification card, flashed it at Lee, and indicated that he was working for the government. Lee bought it." This sidesteps the issue of this alleged impersonation of a government official, as well as Graham's memory of a government badge, not a MUFON card. Friedman carefully sidesteps these matters in his defense of a person who has otherwise admitted to collaborating with agents of the government!

Another issue that Friedman does not approach in *Top Secret/ Majic* is Moore's association with men claiming to be Air Force intelligence. Although I was not present at the 1989 MUFON Conference at which William Moore spoke, Jacques Vallee was, and offered the following description:

> In a confused and embarrassing presentation before the MUFON Conference, Bill Moore indeed confessed that he had willingly allowed himself to be used by various people claiming to act on behalf of Air Force Intelligence and that he had knowingly disseminated disinformation, although he has never been "on the payroll." This is a

> mere play on words, of course. Not being on the payroll does not mean that he was not paid in cash or through other means...
>
> Moore gave a weak excuse for his actions, claiming that he had acted in a heroic private effort to infiltrate and ultimately expose the operation.

Does Friedman avoid bringing up these matters because they provide additional evidence that the MJ-12 document is a hoax, or simply because he is Moore's friend? It is impossible to know, although Friedman's recent career as a "UFO expert" has been largely based on protesting too much about the discrepancies in MJ-12.

Although the MJ-12 document has not been conclusively proven to be a fake, the weight of evidence suggests that this is the case. More significantly, to be given serious consideration, in order to be factored in as valid data into any real evaluation of the nature of UFOs, it must be proven to be real, and this certainly has not taken place.

In a sense, it doesn't matter if the MJ-12 document or the Cutler memo are proven to be counterfeit, since the majority of UFO true believers will continue to believe what they want, despite any facts to the contrary. My experience is that a significant portion of the UFO hobbyist community use their obsession as a form of excitement, for the feeling of being "in the know," and as a substitute for a life. Deep down, they hope that we are being invaded by evil aliens!

That aside, it is obvious that the government is attempting to defuse UFO investigations by overwhelming them with incendiary disinformation and by having informants report on the activities of groups and individuals. This is no longer the matter of conjecture that has buzzed among UFO researchers since the earliest days of these investigations. Now there is more than enough proof to show that this is the case.

Providing more support for the idea that UFO abductions may have more to do with humans than aliens, we do know that the American government, at least, is in possession of top secret aircraft of a radically different type than orthodox aircraft, and that these may include saucer craft. Certainly there is much evidence to show that advanced disk craft designs confiscated from the Germans after World War II may have been put into production.

It is only in recent years that the existence of this kind of aircraft has been able to be fairly easily verified by observation outside the military installation known as Area 51 in Nevada. Before this sort of testing moved on to other regions, large crowds would gather outside this military preserve for UFO watching parties. There, on many nights (Wednesday was said to be the most active night for the flights), one was able to observe strange aircraft doing aerial maneuvers that would have been impossible for the unclassified aircraft of which we are aware. But that does not make these craft extraterrestrial, nor does it make them extraterrestrial/human technological hybrids. It does make it obvious, however, that the people who maintain that this is the case, without a shred of hard evidence, are blithering idiots.

The relatively common occurrence of garden variety humans being seen in the vicinity of, entering and leaving, and sometimes piloting UFOs may be another significant clue as to the meaning and origin of these craft. Many operations which are said to take place inside the saucers and performed by "alien" beings are in fact carbon copies of the kind of operations performed on the restraining tables of psychiatrists in the employ of the CIA and other military and intelligence agencies--right down to the reports of tiny electronic brain implants inserted through the nose, the standard insertion technique for both brain control shrinks (as exemplified by Dr. Jose Delgado, the originator of the technique) and, so we are told, the grey aliens.

6

A Symbolic Odyssey

It has been established, I think, that there are aspects of the UFO mystery that owe more to the activities of humans than extraterrestrials. But my purpose is not simply to show that humans forces of some sort--perhaps the CIA--are hoaxing the populace into believing that the aliens are here and pose a threat to the well-being of mankind. I am hoping to provide a look into the purpose behind the hoaxing.

There are strange clues that need to be examined in detail; these involve a tangled web of symbolism in the UFO mythos that, fortunately, resolves into a single meaning: Trust me on this. As I cite each reference in this symbolic odyssey, I will try to distill the relevant images that will assist in forming a conclusion.

In the incredible account "My Life Depends On You!", which has circulated widely in the underground press, Martti Koski describes the experience of literally going mad. In 1975 he began to be plagued by unwanted voices that he believed were being broadcast from the hotel room above him. Assuming that he was experiencing a neurotic bout he put up with the voices until, in the late summer of 1979, his mental torture escalated. Now Koski found that he was losing control of his bodily functions, and that his senses were being scrambled. His heartbeat became erratic to the point that he entered the University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton, Canada.

Once checked into the hospital, the voice in his head identified itself, claiming to be a spokesman for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and telling Koski that he had been chosen to be a spy. The

voice dubbed Koski the "Microwave Man." Koski claims that while in the hospital bizarre experiments were performed on him by the doctors while, in the meantime, interior voices were telling him to perform acts like stealing shirts and engaging in covert sales of cigarettes to other patients.

After leaving the hospital, Koski attempted to escape the barrage of voices by traveling to his native Finland, but to no avail. The voices did not let up.

After eighteen years of psychic attack, Koski has, to a degree, learned to live with it. In Finland he works with other individuals who claim that they have been victims of government mind control experimentation, some of them being able to back up their claims with x-rays that seem to show tiny mushroom-shaped brain implants.

Koski's plight may be interpreted in at least two ways. He may be simply crazy, and the voices may be entirely the product of his own mind. The lucidness of his written account of his ordeal, however, argues against this possibility. He may also be correct in his conclusions. He may be mind controlled by, as he suspects, the RCMP. Certainly there is a huge body of literature detailing the activities of government intelligence operations on civilians, and there is proof that brain implants in fact actually are performed, including numerous x-ray photos of tiny, otherwise unexplainable brain implants. It is also interesting that the most infamous of doctors working in the CIA MKULTRA mind control experiments of the 1950s was Dr. Ewen Cameron, his horrendous experimentation performed at his gothic Ravenscrag facility in Montreal, Canada.

But there is an additional strange element to the Koski story that may provide a piece to the puzzle that we are researching. After Koski returned to Finland, the voices he was hearing began to tell him a different story. Now they told him that they weren't RCMP, at

all. They were beings from the "Dog Star," Sirius. So Koski is being mind-manipulated by extraterrestrials?

There are further symbolic linkages on this speculative trail that may or may not lead to the stars. At the beginning of this century, contact with the Sirius star system was claimed by the occultist Lucien-Francois Jean-Maine who, through the famous occultist Papus, learned the rituals of the Ordo Templi Orientis lodge, founded by Aleister Crowley, and formed his own group in his native Haiti. Jean-Maine is said to have in 1922 combined the OTO rituals with voodoo practices to form the Cult of the Black Snake in Haiti. He also claimed to be in contact with a disembodied being or voodoo loa named Lam, an entity who OTO Grand Master Kenneth Grant said was one of the Great Old Ones, an elder as well as eldritch god nigh-identical with those portrayed by the American horror writer H.P. Lovecraft in the 1920s and 30s.

Lam, according to Grant, has the task of uniting the current that emanates from the Andromeda galaxy with the current that flows from Sirius. Grant believed that a dimensional portal exists in the Andromeda galaxy, and through this portal will enter the Old Ones, demonic entities intent on returning Earth to their dominion and having humanity for breakfast.

Prior to Jean-Maine's contact with Lam, the famous occultist and founder of the OTO Aleister Crowley reported that he had summoned the same entity through one of his own "magickal" workings. Crowley also penned a drawing of Lam, reprinted in Kenneth Grant's *The Magical Revival*, adding another strange dimension to the now inter-dimensional puzzle.

Crowley portrays the entity Lam as a prototypical big-headed "Gray," i.e. as the picture of modern popular conceptions about what a UFO alien is supposed to look like. Crowley, relates Grant, also "unequivocally identifies his Holy Guardian Angel with Sothis

(Sirius), or Set-Isis." The obvious connection here is the significance of Sirius, although the Ordo Templi Orientis lodge, Crowley, and Lam also have their own special relevance.

Evaluating this mish-mash of occultism, who would imagine that the telepathic transmissions from Sirius might have something to do with military intelligence? Occult investigator James Shelby Downard, in his wonderful "Sorcery, Sex, Assassination, and the Science of Symbolism" (published in my *Secret and Suppressed* anthology) researches the existence of a Sirius-worship cult that he believes exists at the highest levels of the CIA! He cites as one of their ritual locations the telescope viewing room of the Palomar Observatory in California. There, he says, the adepts of the Sirius-military intelligence cult enact rituals in the telescopically-focused light of the Dog Star, in imitation of the Egyptian priesthood, astral rays bathing the viewing chamber and the participants when the telescope is aimed Sirius-ward.

Utter madness? Tell that to Colonel Michael Aquino of U.S. military intelligence, the admitted head of the satanic Temple of Set, a deity identified in occultism with Sirius. Aquino makes no bones about the fact that he is the head of his offshoot of Anton LaVey's Church of Satan, known to draw many of its leaders from military circles. Again, we see the strange conjunction of Sirius, occultism, and military intelligence.

Another occultist and "spirit channeler," championing the cause of Sirius, the Dog Star, in the 1950s and 60s, was well-known ufologist George Hunt Williamson (the penname for Michel d'Obrenovic). Williamson authored the classic UFO book *Other Tongues--Other Flesh*, an extended treatise on the beneficence of the ufonauts from Sirius, who supposedly provided mankind with civilization in the far distant past.

Williamson treats this theme at length again in his book *Secret Places of the Lion*, extolling the "Goodly Company," the "Star

People," the "Children of Light," who "migrated to earth"--the "dark star"--"planet of sorrows"--about eighteen million years ago and have worked ceaselessly and tirelessly in their gigantic task of acting as the Creator's mentors to a backward, fallen race.

Williamson claimed that he had met these benevolent "space friends," and was in fact a member of the group of witnesses who claimed to have seen George Adamski contact a saucer craft and an alien being in the California desert. The alien warned him about the evil influence of the beings from Orion.

Williamson also rhapsodizes at length, but in a somewhat circumspect fashion, on the seemingly-unrelated theme of Solomon's Temple and the reappearance of the Messiah, hinting at certain "secrets" relating to same. Although it may seem quite a digression, Williamson's treatment of the Messiah theme provides the solution as to his own and to others' "secret" orientation in ufology.

Drawing upon a selection of quotes from his book, Williamson maintains that:

> Throughout the entire history of the earth, the "Goodly Company" or the multitude of "Christ Souls" have incarnated in a group...
>
> Pharoah was addressed as "The King, the Ra, the Sun." This signified his position as leader of the "Goodly Company" of star born beings dedicated to the salvation of a planet!...
>
> A special hereditary order of men was now created to keep a semblance of Aton (One God) worship amongst the Israelites; although the Greater Light could not be theirs because they were not yet ready for it, a less spiritual worship was set up, based on pagan ritualism, that nevertheless was symbolic in its sacrifices, ceremonies, vestments, etc...
>
> The promise of an Eternal King, to arise out of David's Family, was repeated over and over again: to David, to Solomon, and again and again...

> There are references to the breaking of the bread and drinking of the wine as a symbol of "the sacred repast." The wine represents the "Holy Vine of David" and the bread "the life and knowledge of God." Those "Children of the Greater Light" who are descendants of the "Holy Vine of David" serve, through the "sacred repast," "the life and knowledge of God!! God made a covenant with David of an eternal dynasty."...
>
> David and Bathsheba prepared the way for the coming of the Master or the Fulfillment in Israel...
>
> When Solomon ascended the throne of his father, he consecrated his life to the erection of a temple to God and a palace for the kings of Israel. David's faithful friend, Hiram, King of Tyre, hearing that a son of David sat upon the throne of Israel, sent messages of congratulation and offers of assistance to the new ruler...
>
> Now we are entering the "twilight of the gods," when the final destruction of the Old Age will take place and man and the gods will be regenerated and reunited! Man will have revealed unto him a true vision of his eternal heritage--that earthly things may show him the nature of his spirit!

So sayeth George Hunt Williamson. But what do the Temple of Solomon, Hiram, King of Tyre, the "Holy Vine of David," the ancient manipulation of Earthlings by space aliens, and the coming "Fulfillment in Israel" have to do with Sirius, the Dog Star? A surprisingly large amount, it turns out.

A more recent version of essentially the same Sirius scenario is provided by the UFO contactee Oscar Magocsi.

After contact with the extraterrestrials, Magocsi believes that he has a mission to impart the wisdom of the "Psycheans," members of the "Interdimensional Federation of Free Worlds," whose base of operations is located near Arcturus. Magocsi reports that humanity migrated from the Pleiades thousands of years ago, and that we (and the Interdimensional Federation) are at war against evil forces from Draconis. These Dark Forces, Magocsi maintains, rely on human allies--the Illuminati secret society--whose mission is to assist in

enslaving mankind through a long term disinformation operation intended to portray them as forces of good hailing from the Orion nebula. There are, Magocsi claims, actual good guys from Orion--he dubs this faction the Lords of Light--but the Illuminati are a different bunch altogether. Magocsi also maintains that a particular area of positive influence is Sirius, the intelligences there supposedly beaming telepathic transmissions intended to counteract the bad vibes of the Dark Forces.

7

Increase of Resolution

A few additional notes need to be added to this mystic cacophony before a conclusion can be drawn about Sirius, the Temple of Solomon, and the nature of UFOs.

A remarkable UFO group was contacted by Jacques Vallee in Paris, France. The group is called the Order of Melchizadek, and it uses the Star of David for its emblem, and for its program espouses a one world government and the doing away with money and religion--except for the UFO-oriented sort of religion, I would imagine. The Order is cabalistic in its mystical practices, the Qabalah being an ancient form of Jewish mystical cosmology, a philosophy also employed by other occult groups such as the OTO and the Freemasons. Vallee notes the curious number of organizations that the head of the French Order of Melchizadek fronts, including the Front for Christian Liberation, Jesus People Europe, Jesus Revolution, the Charismatic Christian, the Christian Socialist Party, and Jew and Arab movements. Here relevant cross-currents include cabalism, the Order of Melchizadek, and the Star of David. Throw in one world government and the abolition of money and religion for good measure.

Another French UFO group that Vallee investigated should be stirred into the melange. The Frenchman Claude Vorilhon was taking a pleasant hike in the mountains one day--so he relates--when he saw a UFO hovering nearby, the craft bearing a Star of David with a swastika inside the emblem. A glowing childlike figure stepped forth from the craft. The child conversed with Vorilhon,

bestowing a new name on him, "Rael," and informing the man that the reason he had been chosen to be contacted was because France was the birthplace of earthly democracy during the French Revolution. The being entrusted Vorilhon with the mission of building an embassy in which the aliens, which Vorilhon calls the Elohim, from the biblical reference, could meet with dignitaries of Earth, with the stated task of spreading "Peace, Love and Fraternity."

Vorilhon was informed that humans had been created by the Elohim, godlike space travelers who were also skilled in the arts of DNA alteration and cloning. Vorilhon was now to assist the Elohim in preparing mankind for the final age of Revelation. Vorilhon, now going by the name Rael, insists to his numerous followers that "A world government and a new monetary system must be created. A single language will serve to unify the planet."

He and his followers now sport the Star of David/swastika that he observed on the side of the UFO, and practice a form of "sensual meditation" that may be similar to kundalini yoga as practiced by the OTO and other groups.

Of the Rael cult, Jacques Vallee observes:

> The most remarkable facts about Rael-Vorhilon are that he has acquired a large number of disciples--including thousands of followers in French Canada--and that the cult seems to have sources of income beyond the donations from his flock, leading some to speculate that the Raelian movement... like Jim Jones' People's Temple, may have attracted the attention of social engineers motivated by the observation and management of such belief systems.

An additional case, that of Betty Andreasson, should serve to link this twisted chain of incidents.

Andreasson's abduction was the subject of a book by Raymond Fowler, titled *The Andreasson Affair*. Although her case has been

discussed at great length in the UFO-related press, and has been the subject of a number of television segments, no one has satisfactorily explained the extremely strange nature of the events she experienced, ones that are quite different from typical UFO abduction events, as least as they are usually presented.

Taking place in 1967, the events of Betty Andreasson's abduction were later brought out through the use of hypnosis. Andreasson recalled being kidnapped from her home and spirited away into what appeared to be a spacecraft. She was transported to an unknown location and then taken through a series of underground passageways that she believed were part of a city. Arriving at an underground chamber, Andreasson experienced, in a manner that she describes as highly painful as well as emotional, a kind of mythic psychodrama enacted before her which may not have been different from the kind of mystical dramatizations enacted in ancient Mystery Religions and other mystic cults.

She saw a huge bird, that she estimated to be fifteen feet in height, resembling an eagle but with a more elongated neck. The creature was apparently alive, but as Andreasson watched it, it began to transform. It began to glow with a light and heat that was so intense as to cause her pain. When the heat and light had diminished the bird was gone and she was gazing on a pile of flickering embers.

As Andreasson stared at the embers she saw a worm wriggling in the ash. "Now, looks like a worm," she described it during her hypnosis, "a big fat worm. It just looks like a big fat worm--a big gray worm just lying there."

Also during the experience, Andreasson was told by her abductors, "We are going to measure you for light... You have not completely understood the word that you have. You are not completely filled with light."

She said, "I believe I am filled with the light! I believe--I believe that I'm filled with the light!"

Andreasson also recalled that, "They called my name, and repeated it again in a louder voice. I said, 'No, I don't understand what this is all about, why I'm even here.'

"And they--whatever it was--said 'I have chosen you.'

"'For what have you chosen me?'

"'I have chosen you to show the world.'

"'Are you God?' Andreasson asked, 'Are you the Lord God?'

"'I shall show you as your time goes by.'"

The following text is part of an interview with Betty Andreasson, conducted by Raymond Fowler:

> FOWLER: Have they [the UFOs] anything to do with what we call the second coming of Christ?
> ANDREASSON: They definitely do.
> FOWLER: When is this going to occur?
> ANDREASSON: It is not for them to tell you.
> FOWLER: Do they know?
> ANDREASSON: They know the Master is getting ready, and very close.

Since we are ranging cosmically far afield in our search for connections, it should be noted that Eye in the Triangle emblems have been seen on some UFOs and the uniforms of their occupants, that Men in Black sometimes wear the same emblem and speak of themselves as being members of the "Nation of the Third Eye," and that in recent years a significant percentage among 2,000 UFO sighting reports in Belgium describe triangular craft with lights at each point of the triangle, and another light in the center of the triangle. This may be the same gigantic aircraft seen over Phoenix, Arizona in 1997--again, the Phoenix!--a craft identified as being a

UFO in the news media, but conforming to descriptions of top secret aircraft currently being produced by the military.

To reiterate the elements I have been stirring together in this and the preceding chapter: the "Dog Star," Sirius--the "Lords of Light" and various other references relating to light--the Eye in the Triangle--the Illuminati--Set--Isis--the Temple of Solomon, the Star of David, and God's reported covenant with Israel--the Qabalah--and the Phoenix. All of these symbols convey a single Earthly origin.

Is it surprising to note that these are the symbols and catchphrases of a secret society that has existed since--conservatively--at least the 1700s, and which draws upon mythology that began with the Egyptians, if not earlier. That society is the Illuminati, whose most visible proponents currently are the Freemasons, a secretive fraternal order with many members among the ranks of prominent world leaders, politicians, intelligence and military, and with conclaves located in virtually all towns of any size in America. Although the vast majority of Freemasons know very little of such arcane imagery and purposes, the information is there to be perused in their books and in the performance of their mystical initiatory rites.

Albert Pike, the head of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in the 1800s, announced that, "Sirius still glitters in our Lodges as the Blazing Star *(l'Etoile Flamboyante)*." He also spilled the symbolic beans when he said that Sirius was interchangeable with the Eye in the Triangle, the Mother Goddess Isis, and the pentagram beloved of many a mystical sect.

One of the secrets, perhaps the core secret of the Illuminati and of their related societies (including the Freemasons and the Priory of Sion secret society as revealed and simultaneously concealed in Baigent, Lincoln, and Leigh's seminal *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*) is

that the overall goal of this secret society is the rebuilding of the destroyed Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.

The secret within the secret is that this is the purpose of the New World Order (another Illuminati conception), namely the enthronement of a new Messiah from the genetic line purported to descend from King David (and Jesus, thus fulfilling the ambitions of both Jews and Christians) who will rule over the world in feudal fashion and supposedly usher in a new era of transcendent wonderfulness.

Gibberish? The Freemason Pike said in the 1800s: "Behold our object, the end, the result, of the great speculations--of antiquity; the ultimate annihilation of evil, and restoration of Man to his first estate, by a Redeemer, a Masayah, a Christos, the incarnate Word, Reason, or Power of Deity." When Freemasons tell you that the group is all about performing good works and driving around in funny little cars on the fourth of July, don't believe them. They have a metaphysical agenda, although only those initiated at the highest levels are aware of it.

This agenda is exactly what George Hunt Willamson is getting at when he talks about the "Holy Vine of [King] David": a physical bloodline of individuals descended from the alleged marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene, and from King David. This scenario is also a key to the battle plan of the New World Order (whose agenda seems to go back, in this instance, to at least the time of the Knights Templar).

So UFO celebrity George Hunt Williamson had it, and so the varied branches of the Illuminati have it, although in highly cryptic fashion. If it is thought that Williamson is merely echoing biblical themes and in fact had no secret Masonic orientation woven into his writings on UFO contact, we should listen further to his words:

"Solomon," Williamson says, "was a great artist; he designed most of the burnishings for his Temple of God. He was an alchemist,

and manufactured by alchemical means the gold used in his Temple. The transmutation of base metals into gold was accomplished by 'vibrations.' Alchemy was more than a speculative art--it was also an operative art!" Similar, perhaps, to the speculative and operative lodges of Freemasonry?

The Andreasson encounter reiterates a number of secret society symbols, including its familiar 'light' motif, but centers around the explicitly Masonic symbolism of the death and rebirth of the phoenix. In the informative book *The New World Order*, Ralph Epperson asserts, "The phoenix bird symbolizes a rebirth, not only of an individual inside the Masonic religion but also of a new civilization arising out of the ashes of the ruined one."

And this appears to be the plan of the Illuminati.

In recent years the highest levels of political manipulation have been directed toward fulfilling the biblical prophecy and Freemasonic philosophic cornerstone of rebuilding the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem on the site of the Dome of the Rock, a Muslim holy place, and placing a World King of Davidic bloodline on its throne. There have been several attempts by terrorists linked to high level Israeli intelligence to blow up the Dome of the Rock, the reported site of Solomon's Temple, an event which is rightly seen as a certain motive for the launching of a holy war between the Jews and Arabs.

Making it even more likely that the Dome of the Rock will be destroyed, and the Temple of Solomon rebuilt is that a red heifer has been born in Israel--supposedly the first red heifer since the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. The ashes of a red heifer were traditionally used for purification before approaching the Holy Temple. Some Muslims are concerned that the birth of the red heifer will be seen as the signal for the destruction of the Dome of the Rock.

"The potential harm from this heifer is far greater than the destructive properties of a regular terrorist bomb," David Landau wrote in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*.

As far as the possibility that the recapturing of the reported site of Solomon's Temple will set off war, and possibly nuclear war in the Middle East, not many Jewish or fundamentalist Christian sects--or even Freemasons--are likely to be much worried about this possibility. Millions of dollars have in fact been channeled into the terrorist organizations from Christians in the United States in their fanaticism and belief that the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple will set off the advent of the Messiah, which conveniently also carries all the earmarks needed for it to parallel the second coming of Christ.

And the manipulation continues...

8

Philip K. Dick and the Illuminati

The most revelatory account I have I come across of a possible contact with an alien intelligence is the book *VALIS* by Philip K. Dick. Aspects of the book that seem to be little understood are symbols that point to an encounter of some sort with what we can accurately term the Illuminati. Again, the messages in *VALIS* are coded, and the meanings encoded are Freemasonic, comprising in fact a relatively exhaustive recapitulation of Freemasonic lore and agenda.

VALIS is a semi-fictionalized account of "Horselover Fat," Dick's alter ego (the name formulated from a word derivation of his name), and Dick's meeting with what he takes to be God, or at least a God, via the medium of a pink beam of light. Dick dubs this god VALIS (a Vast Active Living Intelligence System).

Dick's vision came about when, in March of 1974, and suffering from two impacted wisdom teeth, he waited in his apartment in Anaheim, California for a prescribed plain killed from a local pharmacy. When the delivery person from the pharmacy arrived at the door it was a young woman wearing a golden fish-emblem necklace. Dick reflects that:

> For some reason I was hypnotized by the gleaming golden fish; I forgot my pain, forgot the medication, forgot why the girl was there. I Just kept staring at the fish sign.
>
> "What does that mean?" I asked her.

> The girl touched the glimmering golden fish with her hand and said, "This is a sign worn by the early Christians." She then gave me the package of medication.
>
> In that instant, as I stared at the gleaming fish sign and heard her words, I suddenly experienced what I later learned is called anamnesis--a Greek word meaning, literally, "loss of forgetfulness." I remembered who I was and where I was. In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, it all came back to me. And not only could I remember it but I could see it. The girl was a secret Christian and so was I. We lived in fear of detection by the Romans. We had to communicate in cryptic signs. She had just told me all this, and it was true.

This sudden influx of knowledge had been caused by a pink beam of light that had shot out of the necklace the girl was wearing, the beam apparently penetrating directly into Dick's head and imparting a vast array of information, including the knowledge of several languages that he had not previously understood. Aside from feeling a sort of hyper-rationality, Dick sensed that he had been taken over by a superior mind that had memories dating back in excess of two thousand years.

Later Dick was to hear troubling, grotesque messages coming out of his radio telling him to die, and would have an all-night display of graphic inner vision similar to thousands of abstract paintings seen in rapid succession projected upon the mind's eye. He also experienced a superimposition of the features of ancient Rome onto those of the California landscape in the 1970s, and formed the conviction that the present world was locked in what he termed a "Black Iron Prison," a state of spiritual (and probably physical) entrapment.

From these experiences and others Dick evolved a complex body of speculation, from which he drew a trio of books that included *VALIS* and a lengthy *Exegesis* consisting of several thousand pages of handwritten notes speculating on the nature of his contact with what he determined to be God.

The outcome of Dick's experiences with VALIS was not altogether benign. After the encounter (and a breakup with his wife) Dick attempted to kill himself, ending up in a mental ward instead.

What Dick believed to be the source of his contact is particularly interesting:

> "Where did the plasmate [VALIS] originally come from?"
> After a pause Fat said, "From another star system."
> "You wish to identify that star system?"
> "Sirius," Fat said.

In *VALIS* Dick relates the fairly widely-known information on the African Dogon tribe and their startling and unexplainable exact astronomical knowledge about the Sirius star system (as described in *The Sirius Mystery* by Robert G.K. Temple--possibly a pseudonym?). The Dogon, Dick says, "got their cosmogony and cosmology directly from the three-eyed invaders who visited long ago. The three-eyed invaders are mute and deaf and telepathic, could not breathe our atmosphere, had the elongated misshapen skull of Ikhnaton and emanated from a planet in the star-system Sirius. Although they had no hands, but had instead, pincer claws such as a crab has, they were great builders."

Dick has Horselover Fat dreaming of these three-eyed creatures: "They manifested themselves as cyborg entities: wrapped up in glass bubbles staggering under masses of technological gear... Soviet technicians could be seen, hurrying to repair malfunctions of the sophisticated technological communications apparatus enclosing the three-eyed people." I will have more to say about the Dogon later in this text.

Dick also believed that, "Our world is still secretly ruled by the hidden race descended from Ikhnaton, and his knowledge is the information of the Macro-Mind itself... From Ikhnaton this knowledge passed to Moses, and from Moses to Elijah, the

Immortal Man, who became Christ. But underneath all the names there is only one Immortal Man, and we are that man."

"Real Time ceased in 70 C.E.," Dick asserted, "with the fall of the Temple at Jerusalem [i.e. the Temple of Solomon]. It began again in 1974. The intervening period was a perfect spurious interpolation aping the creation of the Mind. 'The Empire never ended,' but In 1974 a cypher was sent out as a signal that the Age of Iron was over; the cypher consisted of two words: KING FELIX, which refers to the Happy (or Rightful) King.

"The two-word cypher signal KING FELIX was not intended for human beings but for the descendants of Ikhnaton, the three-eyed race which, in secret, exists with us."

Dick believed that, "The person referred to by the two-word cypher KING FELIX is the fifth Savior who... VALIS had said, was either already born or would soon be."

Out of the VALIS communications, "Fat deduced that he had a mission, that the plasmate's invasion of him represented its intention to employ him for its benign purposes."

Of Ikhnaton's three-eyed kin, Dick alter-ego Fat observes, "My God... These are the original builders...," to which another character replies, "We have never stopped... We still build. We built this world, this space-time matrix." This is reminiscent of the terms with which the Freemasons refer to themselves in such tomes as Pike's *Morals and Dogma*. There is no mistaking the connection for anyone with the slightest familiarity with Masonic lore.

And VALIS, we learn, employs the same mystical communication system as the Masons: "All its verbal information is stored as Cabala." The Qabalah (alternative spelling, Cabala) is an ancient form of mysticism that pervades Freemasonry, top of pyramid to base.

Dick describes the method by which VALIS initiates secretly communicate with each other: "During a handshake, a motion with

one finger of two intersecting arcs: swift expression of the fish symbol, which no one beyond the two persons involved could discern." The connection with the secret handshake of the Freemasons is obvious.

In *Exegesis,* Dick amplified on his beliefs:

> For the first time I have inferential evidence that a genuine secret fraternity of authentic Xtians exists, & has affected history... & possess supernatural powers & Immortality, due to direct links back to Christ--so they are the true hidden church. The two historic interventions which I am sure of collate: the secret fraternity fights the Empire (Rome in all its manifestations) & promotes the evolution of man to higher levels by inner & outer regeneration. The 16th, 17th century Illuminati are connected with this secret brotherhood...

Whether the godlike VALIS was involved at all, what was communicated to Dick seems to be approximately what the Freemasons and their brethren want us to believe about their mission: that theirs is an ancient tradition resting on an immortal bloodline that comes from the star system of Sirius, and that fulfillment of their plans (including the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon, and the enthronement of a World King (their secret agenda hidden in their convoluted inner circle cant) is the only salvation for this soon-to-be One World.

Dick seems to believe that VALIS took the form of a satellite, firing electronic beams of information down upon the Earth. Or perhaps crop circles? He has one of his characters say, "The satellite had control of them from the get-go. It could make them see what it wanted them to see... The satellite has occluded them, all of them. The whole fucking United States."

There are other indications that the actual VALIS that Dick contacted may have come from another source than Sirius. "In Fat's

[i.e. Dick's] opinion, his apartment had been saturated with high levels of radiation of some kind."

He theorized that, "the Rosicrucians [the philosophic precursors to the Masons] were telepathically beaming pictures at him, probably boosted by micro-relay systems of an advanced order; but then, when Kandinsky paintings began to harass him, he recalled that the main art museum at Leningrad specialized in just such nonobjective moderns, an he decided that the Soviets were attempting telepathically to contact him."

Later Dick theoretically pinpointed the transmissions as originating from the schemes of a crippled rock musician named Mini: "He visited the Soviet Union one time; he said he wanted to see certain experiments they were conducting with microwave information transfer over long distances."

Fat himself comes to believe within the pages of *VALIS* that, "All that was involved from the start... was advanced laser technology. Mini found a way to transmit information by laser beam, using human brains as transducers without the need for an electronic interface. The Russians can do the same thing. Microwaves can be used as well. In March 1974 I must have intercepted one of Mini's transmissions by accident; it irradiated me."

Actually, I doubt that Dick felt the source of his infernal "enlightenment"--that happened to him in real life, in much the same fashion as it was depicted in the partially fiction *VALIS*, as shown by his statements in his Exegesis--was a rock musician. It happens that information beam experiments of exactly the type that Dick speculated on were at about that time being conducted by both the CIA and the KGB.

CIA Director Richard Helms described research taking place in the 1960s into "sophisticated approaches to the 'coding' of information for transmittal to population targets in the 'battle for the

minds of men'" as well as "an approach integrating biological, social and physical-mathematical research in attempts... to control behavior." He described "use of modern information theory, automata theory, and feedback concepts... for a technology for controlling behavior... using information inputs as causative agents."

Anna Keel, in *Full Disclosure* magazine, writes:

> Due to [the CIA's] Project Pandora, it is now known that applied biological (and other) frequencies can also be used as direct "information inputs" (e.g. of feeling or emotion) and to reinforce brain rhythms associated with conditioning and information processing. One way to get such a signal into a human may be through use of a high frequency carrier frequency. Results of research into information processing, unconscious processes, decision making, memory processes and evoked brain potentials would likely be exploited or integrated in an interdisciplinary system.
>
> For difficult subscribers... there are substances that have psychological or psychobiological effects ranging from subtle through devastating, and that cause increased susceptibility to conditioning. Some of these substances are similar to ones which are recognized by neurotoxicologists or behavioral toxicologists as occupational hazards; some are variations of substances used experimentally in laboratories to produce selective damage in certain neuronal tracts. Many substances needn't be injected or orally ingested, as they may be inhaled or applied with "skin transferal agents," i.e. chemicals like the popular industrial solvent dimethylsulphoxide (DMSO), which can, in fact, enhance the applied substance's effect. For instance, some compounds cause damage that produces increased sensitivity to stimulus, distraction (or flooding of thought associations), and enhance susceptibility to influence i.e., a state where automatic parallel information processing, which usually takes place outside of awareness, and interferes with conscious or more intentional limited channel processing. While causing acute mental symptoms wouldn't be the goal in groups, producing mild distraction, an ego weakened blurring between the sense of "I" and "you," would enhance some kinds of conditioning and promote suggestibility; then, perhaps transmitted "thought

> associations," "the voice of God," "lucky advice" or whatever, can more easily get through and have an effect... Convenient to the agencies involved in covert influence, is that among primary symptoms of schizophrenia or mental illness are ideas that one is being influenced by "transmissions" (e.g. radio frequencies), "voices" or even telepathy; unless complaints about covert psychological weapons are well organized, they would tend to be discounted as indicative of mental imbalance.

Another approach that may have been used is the transmission of "key concepts" to matters that the subject is already conversant in, creating a realignment of the subject's sense of reality by the injection of just a few bits of information, images, or sentences. In Dick's case this might have involved accessing his study of religious symbolism and history. A fast acting hallucinogen and a beamed transmission of religious concepts might have made him very susceptible to the idea that, due to an unexplainable event of "gnosis" he had tapped into the secrets of reality.

Dick describes a message broadcast "Out over the airwaves by one of the largest TV stations in the world, NBC's Los Angeles outlet, reaching many thousands of children with this split-second information which would be processed by the right hemispheres of their brains; received and storied and perhaps decoded, below the threshold of consciousness where many things lay slumbering and stored." He terms the message the KING FELIX cypher, and reports that, "The United States Army cryptographers studied it but couldn't discern who it was intended for or what it meant."

Dick describes the way in which the message was broadcast:

> On the screen the words FOOD KING appeared--and then they cut instantly, rushing their film along as fast as possible so as to squeeze in as many commercial messages as possible; what came next was a Felix the Cat cartoon... One moment FOOD KING appeared on the screen and then almost instantly the words--also in huge letters--

> FELIX THE CAT. There it had been, the juxtaposed cypher, and in the proper order: KING FELIX.

I don't know whether the KING FELIX cypher or the Food King/Felix the Cat messages were actually broadcast (other than in *VALIS*, that is), but discounting the possibility out-of-hand would be unwise. Certainly similar messages have been sent over the airwaves, such as the Eye in the Triangle station break presented by CBS during 1992. A perfectly clear representation of the Eye in the Triangle was shown, quickly metamorphosizing into abstract patterns. Curious as to whether I was projecting my own fixations, I polled an audience of about a hundred people from the podium at a UFO convention; the majority of them had also noticed the depiction.

Another television subliminal was the image of the Statue of Liberty projected between the film frames of an ALF cartoon, as reported in *TV Guide*. Surely that image must have been slipped into the programming by some overzealous right wing patriot skulking in the CBS editing room. So one would tend to believe, but check out what conspiracy theorist and Freemasonic expert Norma Cox has to say in her *Secrets* newsletter on the subject of Lady Liberty:

> [This] is the statue of the Moon Goddess, Diana... This Queen of Heaven is also the Queen of Democracy... Diana's right arm holds a great torch (symbolizing the sun) high in the air. The left arm (right and left symbolic of male and female), grasps a tablet which bears the date of the Declaration of Independence. A crown with huge spikes, like sun rays, rests on her head (the crown covertly represents our satellite, the Moon)... Note the similarity between Juno, holding aloft a sword and Diana, whose statue, symbolizing Freedom, Equality and Worldwide Brotherhood, stands in New York harbor. Worshipped as Juno Lucina, the Bringer of Light, Illuminism's adoration of this Moon goddess ranks only slightly below that of the god of the Sun who, in the case of Juno, is Jupiter (Zeus), her husband.

I have been following examples of the injection of occult symbolism via other conduits; one of these, amazingly, impossibly, is Camel cigarette advertising. Although the media has been hip to the idea that the cigarette company is specifically targeting young people with their cartoon "Joe the Camel" cigarette campaign, no one that I know of has spotted the fact that the Camel ads are riddled with subliminal imagery, including occultist subliminal content. It begins with the Camel image itself, the camel being a symbol of Isis according to Aleister Crowley. Other images I have noted in these ads are the obviously phallic snout of Joe the Camel (this representation has been noted by other, including mainstream writers), the phallus being a seminal occultist obsession; a tiny representation of a man with erect phallus on the cigarette package's front; and a sprinkling of other important occult symbols such as the rose, the moon, the ocean, the eye in the triangle, and the pyramid, all Isis or Illuminati symbols, prominently featured for no apparent reason in Camel advertising. There is even a depiction in one ad of Joe the Camel as George Washington; is it possible that Robert Anton Wilson and Robert Shea were on to something in their *Illuminatus!* trilogy, when they suggested that George Washington was impersonated by Adam Weishaupt, after the suppression of the Bavarian Illuminati, and that this is the significance of this ad? Nah.

But to return to Philip K. Dick... Ultimately the VALIS enigma is difficult to interpret with any absolute sense of certainty about what took place that day in March of 1974. It shines with points of illumination whose meaning remains elusive against the explanations of prosaic reality. What we do know is that, for whatever reason, in whatever fashion, Philip Dick had almost the entire Illuminist/Freemasonic mythos fired into his forebrain, and that he struggled with those images, trying to make sense of their symbolism, for the short period of time that remained in his life. Either he was force-fed a massive injection of Freemasonic

mythology via electronic beam (as he believed), or in a moment of dreadful illumination--or perhaps hallucinogenic receptivity--Philip K. Dick saw the truth of the world.

9

The Sirius Connection

The Freemasons tell a very curious story about the origin of their order and of civilization. They believe, in a mythology with roots dating back to the time of the Sumerians, that civilization on Earth (not to mention the secret occult doctrine) was established by divine visitors from the star system Sirius, which they symbolically equate with the Egyptian god triunity of Isis, Osiris, and Horus. In the Sumerian mythology they are explicit in stating that these extraterrestrial visitors, who they term Oannes, were fish-like in form. Isis, it may be observed in Egyptian representations, wears a fish headdress. The home system of these alien visitors, the star Sirius, was of such significance to the Egyptians that they based their calendar and the alignment of their temples on the star's rising times.

Harry Lebelson in an essay titled "The Search for Ancient Astronauts" reports the following of the fish-like extraterrestrials:

> The Oannes were described as teachers who gave the people insight into letters, the sciences and art. Referring to cuneiform and pictographic records compiled several thousand years before his time, [the scholar] Berossus describes how the Oannes taught the people to found temples and codify laws; they taught the principles of geometrical knowledge and 'everything to humanize mankindt,' as Berossus put it.

Here is the theme of extraterrestrials visiting Earth thousands of years ago and civilizing it, along with the information that these

visitors specifically imparted information on building ("The Builders") and geometrics, orientations central to Freemasonic lore and symbolism.

We do know that, for whatever reason, there was a sudden quantum leap in civilization that took place virtually simultaneously in Sumeria and Egypt. According to Professor W.B. Emery in Archaic Egypt:

> At a period approximately 3400 years before Christ, a great change took place in Egypt, and the country passed rapidly from a state of advanced Neolithic culture with a complex tribal character to two well-organized monarchies, one comprising the Delta area and the other the Nile valley proper. At the same time the art of writing appears, monumental architecture and the arts and crafts developed to an astonishing degree, and all the evidence points to the existence of a well-organized and even luxurious civilization. All this was achieved within a comparatively short period of time, for there appears to be little or no background to these fundamental developments in writing and architecture.

And the reason for this remarkable increase in human knowledge is known to us, although not admitted. Although the truth has not filtered into the hallowed studios of the 6:00 News, it is not in question as to whether mankind has come into contact with an extraterrestrial culture. We have. There is complete confirmation of the legend of the Oannes, which has been obtained in the 20th century. Proof of that contact resides in the secret cosmological traditions of the Dogon tribe of Africa.

The traditions of the Dogon have been transmitted in oral fashion for centuries, and may comprise the most pure offshoot of the secret tradition that underpins the religious beliefs of diverse religions and secret societies - including the Illuminati. Their tradition clarifies the secret agenda of the major occult and religious

traditions of this planet. And that pure transmission from the Dogon speaks of, verifies and conclusively proves extraterrestrial contact.

The secret tradition of the Dogon is centered upon the star Sirius, but more significantly, upon its smaller companion Sirius B. The problem is that Sirius B is totally invisible to the naked eye, and was only discovered through the use of a powerful telescope in the 20th century. It might have only been a lucky guess that the Dogon attributed an orbiting companion to Sirius, if only they hadn't made so many more "lucky guesses" that prove their scientific knowledge of the star system:

--They know that Saturn has a ring around it, although it is impossible to determine this fact without the aid of a telescope.

--They are aware that the planets in this solar system orbit around the sun, and that the solar system is contained in the Milky Way.

--The Dogon say that Earth's moon "is dry and dead like dry dead blood."

--They are aware of four moons of Jupiter.

--They know that the Earth turns on its axis.

--They also know, most significantly, that the orbital period of Sirius B around Sirius A is fifty years; again, a fact impossible to determine without a modern telescope.

Where did they obtain this information? They say that they were taught it by intelligent amphibious beings called the Nommo--the term used in both a singular and plural form--who came from Sirius thousands of years ago in a circular, spinning ark. Their tradition is a precise correlation with the Sumerian tradition of the Oannes. The Dogon call the Nommo "the Shaper of the world"--note the similarity to Phil Dick's concept of "the Builders."

The Dogon have a number of interesting things to say about Sirius and the Nommo. During Dogon ceremonies the Sirius system is portrayed on a checkered blanket, recalling the tessellated or

checkerboard pattern that the Freemasons favor for their floors: is this a reference to Sirius?

The Bozo tribe, cousins to the Dogon, call Sirius the "Eye Star," a concept hearkening to the Eye in the Triangle and to the Egyptian glyph for Isis' consort Osiris. It is noteworthy that the Bozo say that Sirius A is "seated." Isis is depicted in Egyptian hieroglyphics with a symbol of a seat or throne.

Remarkably, there is another religious tradition on which the lore of the Dogon may cast a penetrating light. The Dogon refer to mankind as Ogo, the imperfect, the outcast. They say that the Ogo were rebellious and were unfinished as a creation. In order to make up for the rebellious--sinful--nature of the Ogo, one of the Nommo, named O Nommo, "Nommo of the Pond," was sacrificially crucified on a tree to atone for our imperfect nature, died, and will return in an ark with the ancestors of men.

According to Robert K.G. Temple in *The Sirius Mystery*:

> The name Nommo comes from a Dogon word linked to the root nomo, "to make one drink." It is said: "The Nommo divided his body among men to feed them; that is why it is also said that as the universe 'had drunk of his body' the Nommo also made men drink. He also gave all his life principles to human beings." He was crucified on a kilena tree which also died and was resurrected.

The helical rising of Sirius was key in Egyptian--as well as Dogon--religious ceremonies. The Dogon also portray the helical rising of Sirius as a cross with a flower-like sun in its center, an image very reminiscent of the flowering cross of the Rosicrucians and their successor groups like the Freemasons and the Ordo Templi Orientis.

It may be speculated that the fish symbol of the secret soiety that Philip K. Dick felt had contacted him may have derived from the Oannes/Nommo connection. The fish symbol, stood on its head,

also portrays a representation of the fertility cult of Isis, and it is even possible that the Christian fish symbol is similarly derived, since it may be argued that Christianity is at core a Mystery Religion of Osiris-Sun God worship, transmogrified by claims of an historical uniqueness that it specifically does not possess.

As Aleister Crowley wrote in *The Book of Thoth*:

> In this card [Death, a Tarot card] the symbol of the fish is paramount; the fish (il pesce, as they call him in Naples and many other places) and the serpent [symbolizing the Messiah] are the two principal objects of worship in cults which taught the doctrines of resurrection or re-incarnation. Thus we have Oannes and Dagon, fish gods, in western Asia; in many other parts of the world are similar cults. Even in Christianity, Christ was represented as a fish. The Greek word IXThUS, "which means fish, and very aptly symbolizes Christ," as Browing reminds one, was supposed to be a notariqon, the initials of a sentence meaning "Jesus Christ Son of God, Saviour." Nor is it an accident that St. Peter was a fisherman. The Gospels, too, are full of miracles involving fish, and the fish is sacred to Mercury, because of its cold-bloodedness, its swiftness and its brilliance. There is moreover the sexual symbolism.

Michael A. Hoffman II in *Secret Societies and Psychological Warfare* observes the following of the star Sirius, that it is, "regarded in the highest occult circles as analogous to the 'hidden god of the cosmos'... The emblem of the All-Seeing Eye above the unfinished pyramid is the representation of the eye of Sirius, of its omniscient surveillance."

An investigation of the beliefs of Freemasonry (and, incidentally, of the other major religions both exo- and esoteric on this planet) shows that this "charitable fraternity" is merely an updated version of ages-old and archetypal Osiris/Isis Sun God/ Mother Goddess programming. This form of worship can be traced back to the literal beginning of recorded history, its mythology

anciently crystallizing into the Isis/Osiris Sun/Moon cultus of the Egyptian priesthood.

Osiris, it so happens, was one more divine visitor who is claimed to have civilized the backward and mud-rutting people of Earth with his teachings. From Egypt the deities of the Sun pantheon may have taken on different names (including Ra, Odin, Jehovah, and Jesus, with feminine counterparts including Diana, Mary, Ishtar, Rhea, Astarte, Cybele, and Ma), but the mode of worship and populace control was essentially the same.

The adepts of the Sun/Moon programming (of which Freemasonry is a major surviving branch) have always called themselves variations on the term "the Illuminati," the origin of the phrase betraying its source. Illuminati--Illumination--the adepts of the Sungod and his consort. When I state this derivation of the term there are no doubt many who will think I am distorting and oversimplifying this religio-occult progression--but I am not.

A quick and cursory sketch of the main branches of the Illuminati might go something like this, although I admit that others might offer a family tree somewhat different in its branchings. This is a secret society, remember, and what we know of the Illuminati has been obtained by accident (as when lightning struck down a member of the Bavarian Illuminati in the late 1700s, providing us with a cache of inner circle documents), or has been eked out through conjecture, inference, and interpretation of their double-talk code language.

In Isis/Osiris veneration, we can see the beginnings of the ritual trappings of the Mystery Religions that were to follow. One reason that the Greek and Roman Mystery Religions are mysterious is that little is known of what actually took place in their rites, celebrated primarily at night and in caves. We do know that Mystery Religions were the source of many of the practices that were taken up by later secret societies including the Freemasons, and that they

partook--practices varying somewhat from one Mystery group to the next--of secret ritual initiation involving dramatizations of the lives of the gods, the imbibing of psychedelic drugs such as magic mushrooms, sex orgies (with an emphasis on homosexuality), and at least in some instances, human sacrifice. The symbology of "light" pervades the Mystery Religions, adepts having been said to "have seen the light," "had their eyes opened," and so forth, all very appropriate to celebrants who enacted their rites in the dead of night in caves. Light = Illumination = Illuminati.

From the Mystery Religions, which were extremely influential upon the tenets of Christianity, came the philosophies of the Gnostics, composed of a number of secretive European sects, the most prominent perhaps being the highly secretive, perhaps even fictional, Priory of Sion.

Again, we know very little of what the actual practices of the early Gnostics were, but we do know that the Sun God/Mother Goddess orientation had in certain cases taken on a more philosophical bent, dealing with the eternal cosmic war between darkness and light. Again, the motif of "illumination" is represented. A recent translation of a document of the Cathars, perhaps the most prominent of the Gnostic groups, suggests that one of their secrets was that they were a straightforward Isis cult.

The Jewish/Gnostic mystical practice of the Qabalah, whose origin may have been about the time of Jesus or shortly after, was a primary influence on a number of secret society tributaries, including the Rosicrucians and the Knights Templar. Qabalism was also the singular greatest philosophical influence on the Freemasons, which in the mid-1700s evolved a return to an overt Sun God/ Mother Goddess mythology, along with an emphasis in their practices on the importance of the star Sirius. Freemasonry, aside from being an essentially Gnostic religion, has comprised since its inception a vastly important influence in world politics and in world

intelligence agencies, and may be the most active and far-reaching of the Illuminati fronts at the present time.

Freemasonry and the Rothschilds international banking group (the Rothschilds being from the beginning of their dynasty Freemasons) were the main influence on diamond magnate and Freemason Cecil Rhodes' Round Table secret society, formed around the turn of this century. Rhodes was the single most important Freemasonic spearhead into world political control. Currently we may note the Trilateral Commission (with their symbolic "666" triangular emblem and orientation), the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Bilderberger Society as being among the most influential organization on this planet; these sprung from the Round Table group.

While I am limited in space in this thumbnail sketch, it is very possible to trace the twistings and turnings of the Illuminist philosophy until we encounter the secret Freemasonic rituals of the elitist leaders of today, men like George Bush of the Skull and Bones German Illuminati offshoot, Henry Kissinger and Alexander Haig, alleged to be members of the Freemasonic P-2 group, and in all probability the (Cecil) Rhodes scholar, Trilateralist, and saxophone player from Little Rock, Arkansas, the highly symbolic Masonic location where the arch-Mason Albert Pike formulated his schemes.

Why were the Sun and Moon chosen by the Illuminati of ancient history as deities for the worship of their slaves and underlings? My guess is that it is a relatively arbitrary choice that reflects solar-lunar influence in a simple, understandable fashion, particularly as it might be understood in an agrarian society where these astral bodies are the obvious and all important influences in a people's day-to-day life. If the sun doesn't shed its beneficent rays on the Earth, then the crops don't grow.

There is an additional associative quality of the Sun God/ Mother Goddess programming that pertains to the human mother and father and accesses our unexamined and authoritarian-inlaid childhood programming, digging into deeply ingrained programming much in the same way that beer commercials on television access a different level of instinctuality, by being larded with sexual imagery.

As the cult of the Sun God and his consort first evolved, the Illuminati made it well known that they were the chosen representatives of these immortal deities--and did the people REALLY want to take a chance on not believing what they told them? The masses had better treat the Illuminati real nice, or they might have a word with the Sun God and his consort and have them bring a punishing plague of frogs.

"In the beginning," the Sun God and Moon Goddess were in absolute control, working in mysterious and usually sadistic ways that were only fully decipherable to their Illuminated envoys. A lot of people fell for this stuff, and they were probably given little tin badges that clearly identified them to the hold-out heretics whom they in turn tortured and murdered in order to assist them to "see the light."

In time (say about the time of the Chaldeans) the Illuminati started to believe some of their own programming and began to study the movement of the Sun and moon and their brother and sister stars and planets. This gave the Illuminati another leg up, via astronomy, in being able to predict coming occurrences like eclipses and comets. By the time astrology was formulated, the Illuminati had it all pretty well sewn up, with franchises in operation all over the planet.

Science began in a similar fashion as astrology--gasp! But the dominant belief modes of humanity have always been given names like "Science," which simply means "knowing." During the

sixteenth century when the noble Illuminati popularized this latest version of "knowing," they had lots of free time to dabble in astrology and alchemy (the forerunner of modern chemistry) and, for a change of pace, to participate in sex orgies in groups with names like the Hell Fire Club.

Since the Sun God (and his various relations, including sons and wives) were, after several thousands years of worship, beginning to fray around the edges in terms of believability, and a lot of commoners were beginning to grumble that this stuff was all made up, the Illuminati came up with a new and improved version of their mind control software that didn't depend upon the Sun God or Moon Goddess for ultimate authority. As the Sun/Moon cult lost some of its popularity, "Scientists" were quick to take up the slack. According to their propaganda, the physical laws of the universe were the ultimate causative factors, and naturally, those physical laws were only fathomable by the scientific (i.e. Illuminati) elite.

Now the Illuminati restored their waning dominance with their promotion of the arcane wisdom of bunsen burners, stupefying Mesmerism and electricity, and they no longer--at least at the present time--needed to draw their powers from mystical associations of the stars and planets. Their vision of the universe and society, as fostered by members of the British Royal Society and other Illuminati-conceived groupings, became the predominant worldview. The main tenet of their new religion, Science, was that whether you understood it or not, it was always Right. Not so different a creed than the programs that preceded it.

The British Royal Society of the late seventeenth century was the forerunner of much of the media manipulation that was to follow. After the re-tooling into "scientific" values was accomplished by the Illuminist masters, society (in the view of the Illuminati) needed to be conditioned for stability in a capitalist and non-religious format. The cogwheels had to be greased. This was

accomplished by the launching of non-religious, pro-scientific attitudes through the same media vehicles that influence us today: newspapers and books, with radio, motion pictures and television soon to follow.

And heretics against either Science or Religion have always been dealt with in summary fashion--sometimes possibly in dark blue vans by CIA technicians dressed to look like space aliens.

Now we are in an era--which we arbitrarily term "modern," but which seems to have no claim to that appellation--whose religion is a hybrid of both science and mysticism: this is the religion of the UFO and the New Age. It is a religion that performs the functions of all religion: it induces awe and susceptibility and confusion and guilt and restimulation of infantilism, and opens up the believer to intervention by the priesthood.

Attempting to crack the secret of the nature of this elusive beast, the UFO:

-- Isn't it odd that the U.S. military just happened to be working on disk craft back in the 1950s when the whole UFO flap started?

-- Isn't it odd that the mind control implants that are supposed to be inserted through the nostrils of UFO abductees just happen to conform exactly to the implants designed by Dr. Jose Delgado, the CIA mind control researcher?

-- Isn't it odd that several of the most prominent among "UFO researchers" have been members of military intelligence, men such as John Lear, "formerly" of the CIA?

-- And isn't it the oddest thing of all that the intelligence agencies of all countries crawl with Freemasons, and that the CIA just happens to have a reported faction of Mother Goddess cultism within its ranks?

Attempting to get a grip on this topic, why would "UFO" testing be done relatively "out in the open," on military reservations that can be fairly easily observed by a public notified of UFO flights

by "former" CIA men eager to spread the truth about the little grey men? Are the military authorities teasing us, as it were, with this open testing, along with all the other revelations of the secret order that underlies the normalized facade of our society and media?

When George Bush spoke repeatedly of the New World Order, is it likely that he would have simply forgotten the thousands of right wingers and conspiracy buffs who for years have used that phrase as the personification of world fascism, evil, and mind control? Or was something else going on, some other process or directed transformation?

When CBS broadcast an Eye in a Triangle in their station identification, could it possibly have been done by accident? Does this not hearken to the "cant" language, the mystical double-talk employed by Freemasons and other secret societies?

Michael Hoffman II has spoken about similar processes involving "revelation of method" or the purposeful giving away of arcane secrets of Freemasonry, which he dubs "the cryptocracy." He likens this to the activities of the alchemists:

> This is what simplistic researchers miss: the function of macabre arrogance thumbing its nose at us while we do nothing except spread the tale of their immunity and invincibility further. That is the game plan operant here.
>
> To the belief system of the modern man it sounds too crazy. Why would the perpetrators want their secrets revealed after the fact?... This question can only be definitively answered if one has an understanding of the zeitgeist which overseers in the cryptocracy have partly manufactured and partly tailored their own operations to coincide with. As I've pointed out, secrets like this were rarely revealed in the past because traditional people had not yet completed the alchemical processing (of mind control). To make such perverse, modern revelations to an unprocessed, healthy and vigorous population possessed of will, memory, adherence to their deepest inner intuition

> and intense interest in their own salvation, would not have been a good thing for the cryptocracy. It would have proven fatal to them.
>
> But to reveal these after-the-act secrets in our modern time, to a people who have no memory, no willpower and no interest in their own fate except in so far as it may serve as momentary titillation and entertainment actually strengthens the enslavement of such a people.

There is an occult/Freemasonic stratum in the command structure of media and world control. There is a long-term occult agenda in geopolitics that is just now coming to poisonous fruition.

10

Demons and Adepts

Secret societies such as the Freemasons have been linked throughout their history with the kind of otherworldly visitations that we associate with UFOs, having now conveniently pigeonholed the phenomenon into a "scientific" categorization that removes them from the relatively discredited earlier pigeonhole of being demonic. "These are highly evolved beings from the planet Xenon," we might be saying, "flying in craft that are thousands of years in advance of our own. You can't use a crucifix to scare these babies off."

Historically many occultists have claimed to channel alien beings that conform exactly to allegedly extraterrestrial visitors that are described today, although in the past this phenomenon was considered to be related to religion. Jacques Bergier, in *Extraterrestrial Visitations from Prehistoric Times to the Present* even credits the possibility that these entities actually exist, suggesting that the proliferation of alchemical, occult, and scientific knowledge that took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth century may have been due to contact with otherworldly beings by Illuminati such as Roger Bacon, Jerome Cardan, and Leonardo da Vinci. Is it possible that during the Middle Ages the Nommos made a return visit?

Bergier attributes the alien influx of knowledge to "Information Source X" and believes that:

> This knowledge was connected with alchemy but went beyond it... A knowledge that came from where? More or less directly from

> those Intelligences who are able to light and extinguish stars at will--an essentially rational knowledge, offered without request for payment and not requiring adherence to any religion--a knowledge that must have filtered over to [Jonathan] Swift, enabling him to predict the Martian moons.

Certainly, during the Middle Ages contact with angels and Men in Black and sundry demons (often dressed in "shining armor") was almost taken for granted by the populace, although I have the suspicion that it was probably in the interests of the clergy and secret mystical societies to play this material up and to weave legends around it. At that time the term "demon" did not always carry the satanic overtones that it does in this era, and the descriptions we have of the otherworldly beings from that time suggest that they were of two general descriptions.

There were the monstrous succubi and tormentors of humans that the clergy--including Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish--got a kick out of spooking their aptly-termed flocks with. There was also the category of entity said to have been in contact with the Illuminati of the day, and that group seems to have been more interested in imparting the advanced and arcane knowledge of alchemy and astrology and science than in forging diabolic pacts and wagering souls.

Note the difference: the clergy would be well-served by the imps of hellfire, while the Illuminati, affirming their possession of transcendent knowledge, would be served by contact with wise, unearthly spirits who didn't have anything to do with the bugaboos of mainstream religion. Not that I am absolutely positive that some of these "demons" may not have been real, but this dual orientation suggests that at least some of them were invented, just as some UFOs are invented.

Bergier quotes Jerome Cardan, who claimed to be in contact with demons: "Just as the intelligence of a man is greater than a dog's, in the same way that of a demon is greater than a man's."

Bergier also reports:

> During the Middle Ages, appearances of creatures with garments of light were most common. These messengers went to meet rabbis, with whom they held lengthy discussions on the cabala, the powers of gold, the knowledge and exploration of time, etc. They stated that they knew the guardians of the sky, but were not guardians themselves...
>
> There is no law against interpreting this radiance and the demons' shining garments in terms of our twentieth-century mythology, against imagining that the "double face" [displayed by many of the demons] is a space helmet, that the "luminous garment" is a force barrier producing luminous radiation through fluorescence or excitation...

While I don't know whether the Freemasons and their cohorts ever really contacted the sort of beings who we would now term "extraterrestrials," it may be that they did. Or it may only be that they only thought they did. Certain areas of human history--and the history of disinformation--elude easy answers. Yet I can't help reflecting on the fact that contact with extraterrestrial aliens might have been just as profitable a pursuit then for the occult adept--and the rank charlatan--as it is today.

11

Occult Espionage

Elizabethan scholar Francis Yates places John Dee, Illuminatus Extraordinaire, at the center of the formation of the Rosicrucian secret fraternity, this because of the references to *Ros Crus*, or the "Dew of Light" in his work. The Dew of Light is also a cabalistic image. Today we primarily know Dee as cabalist, alchemist, court astrologer to Queen Elizabeth, and ET channeler--at least one of whom who bore a close resemblance to a grey alien.

But Dee had another interesting side to his character that falls into the grey area between scholarly disciplines that few are willing to talk about. John Dee was one of the founders of what has come to be known as British Intelligence, which in its early days used alchemical ciphers of Dee's invention for passing secret messages. For what it is worth, Dee's code name was 007. As late as World War II, Himmler claimed that the Rosicrucians were a branch of British Intelligence, although my sense is that he may have gotten it backwards.

To this day, British Intelligence remains heavily Freemasonic in its membership. Peter Wright, the former assistant director of British M15, describes in his book *Spy Catcher* his initial vetting for a high-level position in the organization:

> "Just wanted to have a chat--a few personal details, that sort of thing," he [John Marriott, M15's personnel director at the time] said, giving me a distinctive Masonic handshake. I realized then why my father, who was also a Mason, had obliquely raised joining the brotherhood when I first discussed with him working for M15 fulltime.

I'm reminded of an odd instance when a journalist friend of mine was covering a survivalist/patriot convention for an American magazine. During the course of the convention, he met Bo Gritz, the right wing Liberty Lobby's Populist Party candidate for president of the U.S. in 1992, Vietnam war hero, and a prominent personality in the patriot movement. Shaking Gritz's hand, he says that he was rather surprised that he was given what he took to be a secret Masonic grip, and that Gritz looked at him in a somewhat sheepish fashion when he didn't return the grip. An interesting confluence of forces in play in the world these days...

Linking the Mother Goddess cult (of which Freemasonry is the most prevalent example that we know of) to intelligence agencies, the authors of *Dope, Inc.* give a highly interesting interpretation:

> The Cult of Isis was developed in ancient Egypt no later than the Third Dynasty of the Old Kingdom, approximately 2780 B.C. and represents one of the earliest formal articulations of the entropic and backward ideology of mother-worship. As known to the priesthood of the Temple of Isis--true believers themselves--the Isis cult formalizes the elements of a capability for social control, exploitation, and destruction of creative free will in subject populations. The elements include:
>
> Use of various schizophrenia-inducing drugs;
>
> Use of repetitive, heteronomic sounds in "music" to supplement the effect of psychotropic drugs, and to create a societal aesthetic that endorses and encourages the use of the drugs;
>
> Creation of synthetic cults based on the original reactionary Isis myth but specific to the psychological profile of the population which the priesthood has targeted for subversion;
>
> Enforcement of a political-economic model antagonistic to general human progress, and containing targeted populations within noncreative, manual slave-labor projects such as pyramid building.
>
> This combination of Pharaonic cult capabilities was taken as a model for further refinement in this century by the British Secret Intelligence Service's Tavistock Institute in London--an institution which launched

the "counterculture" in the United States and Europe, based on the very drugs, mescaline and hashish, the ancient priesthood had employed.

The occult underpinnings of the spy business should not be glossed over if we are attempting to understand historical world manipulation by secret societies, much less the real nature of UFO abductions. It may be interesting to note that many occultists channeling "alien" entities have had one foot in the occult camp, the other foot among spy agency contacts.

Aleister Crowley was a "magickal" adept who functioned as a spy for the British, and--opinions differ--perhaps simultaneously for the Germans. During his career as the world's foremost occultist of the time, Crowley claimed to be in contact with any number of alien beings, including gods of ancient Egypt, and to channel written material such as *The Book of the Law*, which he attributed to an extraterrestrial entity named Aiwass. As noted earlier in this text, he also claimed he had contacted an alien named Lam, which, from the drawing that Crowley made of the entity, looks almost exactly like the big-headed aliens so often involved in UFO abductions.

A 1923 U.S. military intelligence report reveals that Aleister Crowley, as well as another famous occultist, Rudolph Steiner, the founder of the Blavatsky-esque Anthroposophy, were being investigated as the leaders of a New York occult group allegedly involved in "subversive Bolshevik activities." The report, written by a Norman Armond, goes so far as to suggest that the Russian Revolution may have been controlled by occult networks. Armond states that Steiner and Crowley, through a holding company Steiner controlled, had been involved in an alliance with Lenin that had begun in 1909.

Aleister Crowley is reported--whether reliably or not, I do not know--to have initiated "psychedelic guru" Aldous Huxley into drugs. While this connection may lie somewhat afield of what we

are discussing, Huxley was the grandson of Thomas Huxley, a founder of the Rhodes Round Table, which was the base from which later well-known elitist control mechanisms such as the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Bilderbergers were launched.

Aldous Huxley was raised in the "Children of the Sun" (note the Sun orientation), a school for children of Round Tablers, and was tutored at Oxford by H.G. Wells who, during World War I, was the director of British foreign intelligence, and as the author of books like *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution*, the most influential mouthpiece of the Rhodes/Illuminist New World Order.

During 1952 and 1953 secret meetings are reported to have taken place between CIA Director Allen Dulles, Ford Foundation Director Robert Hutchins, and Dr. Humphrey Osmond, Huxley's friend and personal physician. These meetings involved the funding by the Ford Foundation for a number of experimental research projects using LSD and mescaline. Also of interest is the statement of Captain Al Hubbard that LSD had been discovered, years prior to the date of its reported discovery, by a group led by the aforementioned Rudolph Steiner, seeking to discover a metaphysical "Peace Pill."

Huxley started a number of groups that, by furnishing LSD, mescaline, and settings for controlled trips, launched virtually all of the acid-occult missionaries of the 1960s, including Tim Leary, Ken Kesey, Richard Alpert (Baba Ram Dass), Gregory Bateson, and Alan Watts.

As poisonous as it may seem to a mostly-liberal audience, the LSD invasion of the world may have been a form of chemical warfare launched by British Intelligence (and their apparent masters), much in reflection of the kind of drug warfare that England had waged in the previous century during the Chinese

Opium War. Certainly LSD and a connected doctrine of occultism as furnished by men like Crowley and Huxley has paved the way for future interventions of the occult (and possibly ufological) kind, and for a possible alchemical transformation of which we are only beginning to be aware.

The espionage strategy of drug and occult philosophy-induced destruction of a culture is reminiscent of the process that Carl Raschke attributes to UFOs in "Ultraterrestrial Agents of Cultural Deconstruction" in *Cyber-biological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience*. Raschke believes:

> UFOs serve as facilitators of what I label "cultural deconstruction,"... "Deconstruction" is contrasted with "destruction" inasmuch as the latter connotes a random and unconstrained act of demolition, whereas the former suggests an aim-governed and formative sequence of changes... The work of deconstruction is not sudden, but slow and inexorable. It is more akin to a sculptor chipping away at stone so that he can craft a figure than to an iconoclast who seeks by some *coup de main* to obliterate outworn impressions. So far as UFOs are concerned, the deconstructive movement works upon human culture as a whole, although it may also have devastating effects at times on individual lives.

Another "child of Crowley" was rocket scientist, Caltech founder, and California OTO head Jack Parsons. In Pasadena, California in January of 1946, Parsons, assisted by Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard (who later claimed he was working in Naval Intelligence at the time) participated in a "magickal" working intended to incarnate the demonic Whore of Babylon via Crowleyan sex rites. At about the same time that Parsons was trying to incarnate an extraterrestrial entity, he also claimed that he had met a Venusian in the desert of New Mexico--an interesting foreshadowing of the claims of later "contactees" such as George Adamski in the early 1950s.

Hubbard was later to abscond with Parson's girlfriend and his money, going on to form the Church of Scientology with its Freemasonry-like "grade chart" of spiritual processing and its cross emblem that is almost a duplicate of Crowley's *Book of Thoth* cross. Hubbard's son, Ron DeWolfe, says that Hubbard was something of an acolyte of Crowley, and after the death of the Beast 666, determined to take on his mantle.

Parsons was to die in June, 1952, in a chemical explosion that has often been suggested to have been a by-product of his cosmic tampering. That may or may not have been so. Before his death Parsons was interviewed by FBI agents and admitted that he had been illegally in possession of a number of classified documents relating to explosives taken from Hughes Aircraft Corporation, and that he had furnished them to the Israeli government. The question remains open as to who was responsible for Parson's death - infernal forces or Howard Hughes playing turnabout?

James Shelby Downard, in "The Call to Chaos" in *Apocalypse Culture* provides additional deep background on the intelligence agency-occult connection:

> Consider that the secret society which became the nucleus of the Office of Strategic Services - Central Intelligence Agency octopus was making biotelemetry implants in unsuspecting people as early as 1933. After the operations, the victims were kept drugged for a time and then were brainwashed (OSS-CIA is written that way because when the former became the latter, they changed the name but not the facts). I believe the implants were at first activated by touching the skin with a device similar to an electronic prod, but which actually was a symbolical phallus.
>
> The early implants were made to stimulate the pudenda nerve, when triggered, so that the sexually excited and amnesiac-drugged victims could be used in the sex circuses of the OSS-CIA secret order. Those victims were not infrequently operated on while anesthetized by morphine and scopolomine, which produce analgesia and amnesia

> (twilight sleep, to esotericists). They too were brainwashed after healing. This evil program, supposedly for the sake of national security, was oriented to the Cult of GAOTU [The Freemasonic god, the Great Architect of the Universe].

Downard also reports:

> Saturnalian orgies were and are performed with some representation of a deity... A woman I call the Great Whore performed in those rites some years ago, representing such deities as Artemis (Diana or Hecate), Aphrodite Porne (Dirty Venus), Bastet, Selket and the White Goddess described by Robert Graves in his famous book. I do believe that these sex circuses were part of a greater Call to Chaos working...

Is Mr. Downard projecting all of this? I am not entirely certain, but I do know that there are strong verifiable linkages between occultism, politics, and spycraft. One of the less-spoken-of aspects is their connection to homosexual and bisexual practices, long a mainstay of certain forms of ritual magick. With the risk of straying into Political Incorrectness (truth, as always, being a secondary concern of the arbiters of our national mindset), I will speak of such matters.

Jim Brandon in his excellent *The Rebirth of Pan* has commented on the attraction of UFOs, inexplicable Fortean events, and alien entities to sex activities of various sorts. It should be noted that homosexual orgies seem to have been an integral part of many Mystery Religion rituals, the precursor of many current secret societal practices, and that in primitive tribes homosexuals were often looked upon as partaking of divinity, and took on the role of shamans (read "channelers" in latter-day parlance). The Mystery Religions in addition utilized hallucinogenic drugs, Sun and Mother Goddess worship and human sacrifice--at least on occasion.

Aleister Crowley engaged in bisexual practices for some of his magickal workings, as did the cabal of "Apostles," a Cambridge University student group that was thoroughly infiltrated by the KGB and took over British intelligence in the 1930s, their influence said to have continued until the present day. One of the founders of the Apostles, which was termed by members as "the Higher Sodomy" and "a sort of gay Freemasonry," was Sidney Reilly, "Ace of Spies" as the media has it. Reilly was also part of the Rhodes Round Table group at 120 Broadway in New York that provided funding for the Bolshevik revolution. An index to Reilly's viewpoint is provided in a letter on bolshevism that he penned in 1925:

> I believe that... it [bolshevism] is bound by a process of evolution to conquer the world, as Christianity and the ideas of the French Revolution have done before it... and that nothing--least of all violent reactionary forces--can stem its ever-rising tide... the much decried and so little understood "Soviets" which are the outward expression of bolshevism as applied to practical government, are the nearest approach I know of, to a real democracy based upon true social justice and that they may be destined to lead the world to the highest ideal of statesmanship--Internationalism.

Pretty straight Round Table-One Worldism in Bolshevik guise.

From the ranks of the Apostles came such highly-placed British intelligence turncoats as Anthony Blunt, Donald Maclean, Kim Philby, and Guy Burgess. These men were KGB agents who infiltrated and controlled the highest levels of British--and in certain instances--American spycraft. In recent years Victor (Lord) Rothschild of the Rothschild banking family (which bankrolled Cecil Rhodes), a member of British intelligence during World War II, was fingered in the British Parliament as the most likely candidate for the highly-placed "Fifth Man" Soviet spy among his Apostle friends Blunt, Burgess, Philby, and Maclean. Although there

were calls for prosecution, Margaret Thatcher defended Rothschild and within months the case was closed.

The behind-the-scenes manipulation continues. Another homosexual cabal that allegedly included Knight of Malta, British intelligence agent, and Rhodes Round Table lawyer Louis Bloomfield, along with homosexuals Clay Shaw and David Ferrie, as described by "Torbitt" in his pivotal investigative document *Nomenclature of an Assassination Cabal*, is said to have been responsible--in an organizational sense--for the John F. Kennedy assassination.

There is a tangled web of Masonic symbolism that can be discerned in the events of the JFK assassination, beginning with the fact that the killing took place in the "Lone Star" (i.e. pentagram, Sirius) state. Remarkable research in this regard has been done by James Shelby Downard, demonstrating that the Kennedy assassination was manipulated for ritual purposes in an enactment of the ages-old "Killing of the King" fertility ritual, admittedly a radical theory but one backed up by a good deal of evidence.

As John Michell has said in *The Flying Saucer Vision*, "what we now suspect was in the past openly known. The 'gods' demand sacrifices, perfect specimens for their own scientific purposes. In the days when the nature of the gods was known, their desires studied, and the benefits they could bring enjoyed, sacrifices were left for them on the high places which they frequented. The relationship between the gods of mythology and the superior race from the sky, to whom the first sacrifices were made is a large subject which must soon be studied in detail."

In "The Call to Chaos" in *Apocalypse Culture*, Downard explains, "The third degree of 'Blue' (basic) Freemasonry, and more particularly the ninth degree of Scottish Rite work, embody symbolical assassination and death ritual; but in GAOTU [the Great

Architect of the Universe] operations they go in for the real McCoy: heavy snuff stuff."

The Kennedy assassination was performed at Dealey Plaza, the location of the first Masonic temple in Dallas. "Security" for the Kennedy motorcade was supplied by the New Orleans CIA office, with headquarters in a Masonic temple building. Dealey Plaza is located near the Trinity River, and Kennedy's motorcade headed for the Triple Underpass, both references symbolic of the Masonic triangle and number three fixation. In what may have been a symbolic dramatization of the Masonic Hiram Abif legend of assassination by three "unworthy craftsmen," after the Kennedy murder three "hoboes" were paraded in front of cameras by the Dallas police (one of the "hoboes" alleged to be E. Howard Hunt of the CIA), then the three were quickly released without record of their identity. In Masonic lore assassins travel in threes.

"Torbitt's" investigations persuasively show that the conspiracy to murder JFK was run from the top by Masonic Vice President Lyndon Johnson and 33rd degree Mason and homosexual J. Edgar Hoover, at the time playing dual roles in Washington as Director of the FBI and epically repulsive party girl, with Bloomfield (also very likely a Mason because of his affiliation with British intelligence) running a large network of conspirators and underlings in the killing of Kennedy. Mason Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Mason Earl Warren to head the Warren Commission for investigation of the assassination. Information was doled out to the commission by Mason Hoover and Mason and ex-CIA director Allen Dulles, while 33rd degree Mason Gerald Ford seems to have done everything he could to discount the possibility that the murder had been perpetrated by anyone but a "lone nut assassin."

One macabre possibility is that Lee Harvey Oswald may have received the same sort of brain implant as the alleged saucer abductees mentioned earlier. As detailed in *The Man Who Knew Too*

Much by Dick Russell, the Mexico City CIA station was, immediately prior to the Kennedy assassination, the location of certain mind control experiments intended to create a "sleeper killer," that is, an hypnotically-controlled assassin. Russell also repeats a "deadly rumor" that was published in the little-known *Were We Controlled?* by the pseudonymous "Lincoln Lawrence." Russell reports:

> Lawrence began his chronicle on March 30, 1961, when Oswald was admitted to the Third Clinical Hospital's Ear, Nose, and Throat division in Minsk [Russia]. He had been suffering "complaints about suppuration from the right ear and weakened in hearing," and the diagnosis called for an adenoid operation. Marina, whom he had recently met, came regularly to his bedside during his eleven-day stay in the hospital.
>
> "After he was placed under anesthesia," Lawrence wrote, "advanced technique was employed to implant a miniaturized radio receiver which would produce muscular reaction in his cerebral region." Thus, upon leaving the hospital, Oswald would "remain for the rest of his life--without his knowledge--a completely efficient human tool... subject to control!"
>
> The author went on to describe two devices implanted in Oswald's brain. One was R.H.I.C. (Radio-Hypnotic Intracerebral Control), "the ultra-sophisticated application of post-hypnotic suggestion triggered at will by radio transmission. It is a recurring hypnotic state, re-induced automatically at intervals by the same radio control"... On record in the National Archives is a government memo dated March 3, 1964, from CIA director McCone to Secret Service chief James Rowley, which makes a remarkably similar speculation. Following his surgery at the Minsk hospital, McCone wrote, Oswald might have been "chemically or electronically 'controlled'... a sleeper agent. Subject spent 11 days hospitalized for a 'minor ailment' which should have required no more than three days hospitalization at best"... But "Lincoln Lawrence" did not see Oswald ultimately as a pawn of the Soviets. Rather, he wrote that Oswald was later "high-jacked," or "maneuvered into the orbit of another group which trained and prepared

> him for work in the future when they (the second group) might have need for his 'special qualifications.' The second group then asserted control of Oswald upon his return to the United States in the summer of 1962..."

According to Lincoln Lawrence, Oswald was not the only manipulated cog in the wheel. Another was Jack Ruby, "placed under hypnosis... perhaps at a party or perhaps by some 'performer' who was pretending to offer a casual audition for the Carousel Club." The entertainer at Ruby's club the week of the assassination was, in fact, a hypnotist, William Crowe, whose stage name was Bill DeMar.

It is verifiable that Masons and their allied secret societies are hardwired into the control systems of government and intelligence agencies, comprising a level of unseen motive and hidden intention in agencies that have the power of life and death over the citizens of the United States and the world. They control the controllers, so to speak, and if there was a conspiracy and a cover-up in the John F. Kennedy assassination, then they were certainly in a position to accomplish them.

James Shelby Downard, again, has stated:

> But the ultimate purpose of that assassination was not political or economic but sorcerous; for the control of the dreaming mind and the marshaling of its forces is the omnipotent force in this entire scenario of lies, cruelty and degradation. Something died in the American people on November 22, 1963--call it idealism, innocence or the quest for moral excellence--it is this transformation of human beings which is the authentic reason and motive for the Kennedy murder.

And the transformation continues...

12

The Year of Light

The calendar of the Freemasons begins four thousand years prior to the Gregorian, at the time of a reported supernova that they commemorate as *Anno Lucis,* the Year of Light, and about the same time that a fantastic leap in civilization was accomplished in Sumeria and Egypt. Look at the cornerstone of any government building in your town and you will see that the Masonic date is included in the inscription, obvious proof that this dating is highly important to the Masons. But there were other, earlier commemorations to the supernova. Richard W. Noone, the author of a book titled *5/5/2000*, believes that the Great Pyramid at Giza was probably built as a monument to this striking astronomical event. He states:

> The Grand Gallery [of the pyramid], aimed like a giant telescope at a particular celestial body in the earth's southern sky--before its view of the heavens was blocked by the completion of the building--points to where radio astronomy bas just pinpointed the supernova (or giant stellar explosion) nearest to our solar system... The Great Pyramid's Grand Gallery is focused at this particular spot in the earth's southern sky.

Noone recalls that Dr. Anthony Hewish, 1974 Nobel Prize winner, while tracking astronomical anomalies in the heavens, "demonstrated that... strange rhythmic pulses were radio emissions from a star that had collapsed or blown itself up in the earth's southern sky some time around 4000 B.C."

At about the same time that Hewish's research was taking place, George Michanowsky, author of *The Once and Future Star*, was deciphering Sumerian tablets that caused him to come to the same conclusion. According to Noone's review of the events:

> The ancient Sumerian cuneiform table Michanowsky was deciphering described a giant star exploding within a triangle formed by the three stars Zeta Puppis, Gamma Velorum, and Lambda Velorum...
>
> Michanowsky continued deciphering the Sumerian star catalogue, containing observations going back for thousands of years. The remarkably accurate star catalogue now stated that the blazing star that had exploded within the triangle would again be seen by man in 6,000 years.

This means, interestingly enough, that the Sumerians set the date for the reappearance of the supernova in about the year 2000 A.D. Strong evidence, it seems to me, that the Freemasons probably see the turn of the next century as having a pivotal significance in their mythic history of the world. Taking into account what seem to be the secret purposes of the Freemasons and other allied secret societies, there are certainly many speculations that could be made about what the nature of that significance might entail.

If you are still in doubt that behind the whitebread facade of world politics there is an occult agenda, read the following quotes published in the *Rosicrucian Digest* in 1948, and drawn my attention in *The Patriot Report* of February 1998. According to an article titled "Requisites of Peace":

> --Nationalism is destined to become extinct.
> --The dissolution of nationalism does not mean advocating an equal distribution of the world's goods among all peoples. It does mean a pooling of resources and their common control by all the peoples for the whole of humanity.

--A one world is inevitable.
--If it does not come through an intelligent admission of the obsolescence of nationalism, then it will come through the most terrible war conceivable.
--Does all this seem to strike at the love of country? It will mean only the replacement of a limited love for a more expansive and expedient one - the love of the world.
--A unity of people, not of states, is required; if there is a merging of interests then there also must be a merging of political control - a central government.

The following quotes are from another article from the *Rosicrucian Digest* published in 1948, "War or Peace," penned by Gisbert Bossard:

--The eventual solution lies in a world federation... the world has progressed to the point of a United Nations.
--Unless certain deficiencies in the U.N. charter are eliminated, the United Nations organization cannot exercise effective world authority.
--Your help is needed in the final push for victory.
--The first Reform: Abolish the veto in matters of aggression.
--The second Reform: Control atomic energy and limit all other important weapons.
--The third Reform: Establish an effective but tyranny-proof world police force.
--Russia will achieve military equality with the U.S. through quota disarmament.
--The cooperation of Russia for the "One World" and a new and wonderful era for mankind is essential.

Aside from the dark catalog of covert manipulation that I have compiled in these pages, I will not delude you into thinking that I am certain that the Freemasons are planning on overthrowing the world system on or about the year 2000 A.D. I do not even know for certain whether this is the date planned for the final consolidation of governmental systems into the New World Order. All I know is that

the twists and turns of history are covered with the bloody fingerprints of Freemasons and members of allied secret societies who have intervened at key moments to turn the flow of history in hitherto unanticipated directions, and that everything points to the year 2000 as being an epic culmination in the mythology of these secret groups.

The Masonic architects of the French and Russian revolutions; the Masonic assassins of Archduke Ferdinand who touched off the bloody conflagration of World War I; the Masons who seem to have been responsible for the Jack the Ripper murders performed to stave off a deadly crisis in the Masonically-controlled British government; the Masons who controlled the investigation of and may have been responsible for the murder of John F. Kennedy; the host of Masonic controllers who lurked behind the gothic machinations of the CIA MKULTRA mind control programs; and the continued direction of international politics by Masons and their occultist brethren like P-2--all this makes it seem that the occult portents can now be seen as forecasting another intervention by the cabal.

Key to the creation of the New World Order is the economic and political unification of Europe. According to Cornelia R. Ferreira, writing in a monograph titled "The New Age Movement":

> The formula of the "United States of Europe" and of the "Universal Republic" (to be formed by Europe's merger with other world blocs) was first proclaimed by the Illuminati in 1793; has long been the slogan of the French lodges; was adopted in the 1920s by the Theosophists; and was discussed in American-German Masonic circles after World War II. Unelected European Commission president Jacques Delors, demonsrating the importance of European unity (and the totalitarian nature of the future world government), has threatened national leaders who do not unequivocally endorse it, hinting that Margaret Thatcher's opposition caused her downfall.

The attempted unification of Europe, directed (as revealed in *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, by Baigent, Leigh, and Lincoln) by the Priory of Sion, a secret order that may in fact underpin, be connected to, or even be the Masonic order under a different name, may be a stage setting for something even more earthshaking than a united European state. At the same time that the European Commonwealth is being put in place piece by puzzle piece, there are additional and highly strange prefigurements coming into view, one of the most odd being the multiple-thousand sightings of Eye in the Triangle-configured UFOs seen in Belgium, the headquarters of the European Commonwealth, and, more recently, in Arizona, USA.

If one understands the claims made in *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (and a study of Masonic texts such as Pike's *Morals and Dogma* or Hall's *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* will substantiate these claims), a person of the bloodline of King David, descended through Jesus and Mary Magdalene, is to be enthroned in a newly reconstructed Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, ushering in the messianic New Age. This reenthronement of the Davidic line was apparently also the hidden mission of the Knights Templar, who are said to have been the group from which the Freemasons sprang in Scotland after the suppression of the Knights.

The family line from which the "Lion King" of the New World Order will arise may be the European royal von Hapsburgs, currently led by Otto Von Hapsburg, the son of the last empress of Austria, and a prominent member of the Bilderberger Society. The family crest of the von Hapsburgs is the double-headed eagle seen on Masonic regalia, and the family has been historically connected to the Illuminati in a number of ways. Maynard Solomon in his book *Beethoven* states that the composer's "Emperor Joseph Cantata," which characterizes Emperor Joseph von Hapsburg as a lightbringer and a foe of darkness, was commissioned by the Illuminati. The

commemoration may have been based on the Emperor's legalization of Freemasonry in Austria.

Another scion of the family, Archduke Johann von Hapsburg, in the late 1800s provided a huge gift of cash to a parish priest named Father Sauniere, which sum he used to build a temple to Mary Magdalene in France's Renne-le-Chateau. Mary Magdalene, alleged to have borne a child by Jesus--remember? Sauniere was also connected to the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light and the Priory of Sion.

According to J.R. Church, the author of *Guardians of the Grail*, "The Hapsburg dynasty which ruled the Holy Roman Empire since the 19th century, is the direct lineage of the Merovingian bloodline. The Habsburgs are reputed to be the family of the Holy Grail offspring of Mary Magdalene."

At this time the most probable candidate for the position of World King is Hapsburg's son, Karl, who is now thirty-five years old. Karl Von Hapsburg was probably smirking when he said, "The time for the [Hapsburg] dynasty lies in some happier tomorrow when a new Europe... will undergo a time of resurrection."

The Freemasons have always seen themselves as "the manipulators," "the builders," hence the name. One of the secret meanings of the Eye and the Pyramid (which, check a U.S. dollar bill, lacks a capstone, or a culmination, suggesting that it is unfinished) is a portrayal of this intervention in history, the guiding of events in what is cabalistically termed *tikkun,* or the "perfecting" of the universe--through disinformation, murder, seemingly whatever it takes.

The Freemasons seem to take positive delight in the deception they employ. In *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*, which implicates the Freemasons in highly believable fashion for the Ripper murders, author Stephen Knight describes the mindset:

> Freemasons applaud violence, terror and crime providing it is carried out in a crafty manner. One section of the [Masonic] notes says humor is all important and the most appalling crimes may be committed under its cloak. The one Ripper letter likely to have been genuine suggests that Jack the Ripper was going about his crimes in just this way, committing ghoulish murders with a Puckish sense of fun. If Masonic supremacy appears in jeopardy, it is reestablished by a show of strength, by crimes of violence, perpetrated to demonstrate... the far reaching power of Freemasonry to initiates the world over...

This is akin to the manipulation we are witnessing. Both Christians and Jews will see the coming World King as the fulfillment of their religious prophecies. What they will not see is a cool precision of cogwheels in motion in the program that enthrones him.

The date the Sumerians and apparently the Masons set for the reappearance of the supernova within the triangle of Zeta Puppis, Gamma Velorum, and Lambda Velorum is around the year 6000 A.L. (*Anno Lucis*) or 2000 A.D.

Who knows? It may even be that the Masons believe their own legends about Sirius, and expect the year 2000 to see the return of the Oannes, the Nommo, the beings from Sirius, those beings no doubt having plans for setting into motion another stage in the civilizing of humanity.

A possible strategy to take advantage of this event is only too obvious. If the Masons really are planning on setting a World King on the throne--and they are--it would be to their advantage to take into consideration millennial beliefs widely held by Christians about a Second Coming around the year 2000, while at the same time taking advantage of Jewish expectations about the Messiah and the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon. They have even been subliminally introducing the youth of the world to the concept through the recent extremely popular animated feature produced by

Disney Studios: "The Lion King"--if you doubt the explicit rendering of the messianic legend into huggy and merchandisable animal format, then view this film another time.

At the same time that we see the building blocks being pressed into place for the coronation of a World King, we see other curious activities taking place. Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter Tim Weiner, in *Blank Check,* observe that the largest "black" or hidden budget expenditure by the U.S. military and FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) is in the creation of huge underground bases of the same sort that are mentioned in the wilder of the government-alien collaboration scenarios. Those scenarios of grey aliens ruling underground roosts and preparing for an invasion to be launched from underground, may in fact be disinformation masking what is really taking place: the elite in the government creating a safe underground haven for themselves when the Global 2000 plan goes into place.

The event which may prompt the placing of the key piece in the *Novus Ordo Seculorum* pyramid, the missing capstone, the culmination of the Fool's journey of the Tarot, may well be the catastrophic collapse of the U.S. economic system. The collapse of the U.S. currency and the stock market, as prefigured by the recent crises in the Orient, may well be the straws that will break the American Phoenix's back.

On the other hand, there are those who say that the widespread computer flaw termed the "Millenium Bug" or "Y2K" may perform the same function. The Congressional Research Service describes the problem this way:

> Most computer systems in use today record dates in a format using a two digit number for the year; for example, 96 represents the year 1996. The two digit year field is very common among older systems, designed when memory storage was more expensive, but is also used in many systems built today. With this format, however, the

year 2000 is indistinguishable from 1900. The year data filed in computer programs performs various functions, such as calculating age, sorting information by date, or comparing multiple dates. Thus, when years beyond 1999 are entered under this format, computer systems will fail to operate properly.

Here are some newspaper quotes about the possible effect of the Millenium Bug:

> For some institutions... it will be too late. We could end up with a real catastrophe that could affect many people's lives around the globe... One industry expert has called the defect "the most devastating Virus ever to infect the world's business and information technology systems."
>
> --*Washington Post,* September 15, 1996

> The [IRS] is launching a massive effort to forestall a breakdown of the income tax system when the year 2000 arrives... If the agency cannot quickly revise millions of lines of obscure software code... it will throw the government's financial operations into chaos. Computers throughout government and private industry face the same problem... Experts say the federal government has been dangerously late in recognizing the problem.
>
> --*Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1996

> The world of finance... is especially vulnerable... The absolute worst case is a global financial meltdown. Clearing and settlement of transactions could break down. Stocks held electronically could be wiped out. Interest might not be properly credited. Deposits or trades might not be credited to an account. The consequences may be catastrophic.
>
> --*Business Week,* August 12, 1996

This book, however, is not a treatise on the Millenium Bug, and so I will not go into all of the possible ramifications of a majority of the computers in the world suddenly being rendered

non-functional, but can you imagine the effects on this country--particularly in the inner city--if welfare and social security checks were not delivered for a few months?

Events of the sort mentioned above would leave the country, ripped apart by strife, ripe for elitist intervention. After push does come to shove, the small groups of survivalists and patriots hanging out in the woods of Oregon will provide little more than possibilities for further Establishment PR coups as these "murderous terrorists" are routed out.

There will be no resistance. Hungry, threatened people would be eager for any answer, especially if it was transmitted in "divine" fashion, and seemingly from the stars.

Regardless of whether there are any bigheaded grey aliens in the bleachers for the gala coronation, whether or not the occultists at the top are able to launch a fleet of UFO-style flying disks to perform synchronized aerobatics over the newly-rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem, wouldn't the appearance of a singularly impressive stellar display, a supernova flaring forth in the midst of a triangle composed of three stars, be a wonderfully impressive and awfully convenient harbinger of the Illuminati World King?

UFOs at the Edge of Reality

A lecture delivered in Atlanta, Georgia, November, 1995

What I intend to explore today are some of my thoughts and opinions about the nature of UFOs and aliens and reality, based upon an interest that goes back to about 1957. I'm going to focus on some material suggesting that UFOs and ETs walk a fine line between reality and thought (or awareness). This is not to suggest that this is an illusory experience, however. I don't believe that the UFO experience is illusory. I want to explore what you might call the edge of manifestation of this UFO phenomenon.

I'm not suggesting that UFOs and aliens are imaginary, nor will I pledge that they are always completely, materially, solidly "real." Actually, I think that their existence challenges the tightly-formulated definitions of reality and imagination, and points up the limitations of those definitions. It seems to me that UFOs sometimes happily cross these lines of demarcation, and defy the definitions. The way they do this gives us some clues to something else, to the nature of reality, what is really real and what is possible, in terms of the understanding and potential expansion of awareness.

Reality is an amorphous concept. My experience suggests that there is an in-between realm in this universe or omniverse where thought and matter meet, like one of those paradoxical graphics by the Dutch artist M.C. Escher, where thought and matter coalesce and partake of each other, where matter manifests from pure awareness, where reality takes form... and that the nurturing bed where matter, reality and, incidentally, where UFOs and ETs manifest, is what we might loosely call awareness, or the mind.

When I say "mind," I'm not limiting that to the purely physical conception, to the computer that resides behind your forehead, to the electrical activity sparking in your brain pan, or whatever, because

that is a rather limited and limiting conception. If we stick with that, we're not going to accomplish what I want, which is to provide a little more familiarity with this borderland reality, with the interface between thought and material solidity.

When I use the term "mind" I am talking about awareness in a generalized sense, in a theoretically absolute sense. My own belief is that awareness is not necessarily limited to an awareness resident in the body, in a meat body. You can believe anything you want, but anyone who has any experience with meditation, with hallucinogens, or with ritual magic is going to have a sense of what I'm suggesting.

Awareness, as far as I am concerned, and in my own experience, ultimately has no limitations whatsoever, beyond the limitations that it conceives for itself. Awareness is potentially a creator, and it can create freedoms and it can create limitations. Awareness, interestingly enough, creates its own conception of itself, which is what it then proceeds to be.

I just want you to try on the concept that awareness may not proceed from solid reality. In fact, I'm not certain that I could prove this to you unless you were willing to entertain this possibility and play around with it a little bit yourself. If you think that the possibilities that I have mentioned are absolutely impossible, then you are maintaining that the beliefs and knowledge of this insignificant tide pool of awareness, the planet Earth, determine the possibilities of the entire universe. This has a corollary that UFO aficionados are often vocally decrying; the absurdity of people who believe that life could only exist on one planet in this vast universe.

I'm also saying that awareness, very loosely defined, is senior to solid matter. It stands above solid matter. Awareness creates thought and belief and, ultimately I think is the creator of solid matter. Reality, I believe is defined and created from this immaterial plane of thought and mind. I think that you create the entirety of

your physical reference, and the only reason this isn't obvious to everyone is that one also creates the belief that one can't create or even influence physicality to the slightest degree with the mind.

I believe that you create your own reality entirely. In addition, you create yourself according to whatever template you choose, in whatever body you choose, on whatever planet you choose, based upon your belief structures.

It follows that if you create your own reality, if you change your beliefs about what you can and can't do, can and can't experience, can and can't see, then you can change your reality. You can restructure your own experience entirely, change your identity entirely, and experience anything whatsoever that you wish. This is perfectly true, at least in my own experience and belief structure.

Reality. The word is a semantic absurdity. Reality, according to my American Heritage dictionary, is "the quality or state of being actual or true." When you look up "actual" or "true" you find that defined as "Consistent with... reality." The definition goes in circles, and is never grounded in anything that is separate and verifiable.

The problem is that the concept of reality is indefinable, and the concept of something being "real" is dependent upon proving that something is "real," with a verifiable existence which is apart from some subjective belief or illusion. Something that can be nailed down using a disinterested measuring stick of comparison. Unfortunately or fortunately, so far as I know, it is impossible to do this with any aspect of reality or of thought. The reason for this can be exhibited by hauling forth the standard argument one encounters for the existence of something called "reality." I don't know how many times I've heard this one. You're talking to the guy at the party and presenting your crazy ideas about how reality isn't real, and the guy stands up and [bangs on the podium]. "See," he says, "This is real. This is solid. This is reality! Try and disprove that!"

The point is that knocking on something, feeling something, feeling the weight of something, does not prove its existence, because you are proving its existence with something that is essentially identical, that is, a solid hand is impacting with a solid podium. You have not removed yourself from the context of that existence and compared it with "reality."

It might as well be meaningless babble that takes place in a dream. You might as well be dreaming that you're banging your hand against a podium and hearing the rap in the dream. In fact, every time you do that, pound on the podium, you are dreaming in a sense, because solidity, solid reality, is not the basis of reality. You can dream that you're touching solidity, you can imagine it, and in fact, once you start working with this thing called imagination, once you regularly exercise your ability to dream up realities and all of the perceptions that are allied with them, you'll also be exercising your ability to mold and transform this one, that which you've considered to be your original reality. You'll theoretically be able to change your reality and everyone else's in any manner you wish. That might seem like a contradiction, but I don't think that it is: that you can change another person's reality. The reason it seems like a contradiction is that you are identifying your awareness with the limited definition of being fixated in a single physical body. You're really not stuck.

In my experience, there really is no "other" whose reality toes you're going to step on if you get a little too frisky with your awareness play, but it is one awareness inhabiting a multitude of bodies. At least until you change that conception, and that reality.

So the "truth" about "reality," bottom line, is that there ain't no such beast. Reality is only what we believe it to be. Reality is only a contingency of awareness. The fact that ten people or a thousand people believe the same thing, does not render the thing any more real in an absolute sense, but it does point out the structural

underpinning of the determinant of this shared illusion called reality, what causes it to manifest in the shapes and forms that it does; and that determinant, that reality-shaper is called "belief." What people believe down deep is what they consider to be reality, and also what they experience. Sometimes this can be different from what they say they believe.

The existence of UFOs can be voted down due to the relative rarity of the experience, and its sometimes insubstantial character. It's the same thing with people who study conspiracy politics. You look into this subject and it becomes quite apparent that the world is run on conspiratorial lines, Rockefeller, Rothschilds, regardless of what Rush says. But the conspiracy is outvoted by the pundits in the media who know better without actually having researched the subject, and so it's not true, it's not real.

What can be accomplished by playing around with belief systems? I think that potentially we can remove finally all barriers to perception, to creation, and theoretically come up with an unlimited awareness, capable of knowing anything, capable of doing anything, and one which is totally free of limiting definition. This naturally smacks of conceptions of godhood, but I'm not trying to get religious here. I'm saying that this is part of the spectrum of possibilities of awareness. Human beings are part of the spectrum of possible awareness manifestations; snails are another.

And in this latter portion of the 20th Century mankind has come up to having awareness characteristics, enough smarts where it is possible to attain states of awareness that were hitherto unimagined, at least by the majority of awareness points on the planet. Of course, this is a belief structure in itself that I am communicating; that we are on this planet, that we are human life forms, that we have certain awareness characteristics, that we inhabit bodies, that there is such a thing as time and human evolution.

Awareness is a fascinating thing and in my belief, if consciousness that has been localized on the planet Earth would finally begin to flow a little and be liberated from some of its former boundaries and self conceptions. Awareness just won't stay in a localized, fixated condition and position forever. That's its nature.

The human condition is an interesting thing. I thought about just what the human condition is, what a human body is, what this fleshly container for our awareness is, and I think I've had some insight on this. It occurred to me that a real reality, something that you know is true, is more satisfying to awareness than simply a dream or a work of art or a movie, let's say.

It's far more interesting to an awareness to be involved in something that is real, something unchangeable, something that cannot be denied, a true story, let's say. And that's what the human body is all about. It is the awareness creating itself solidly inside of the drama, the awareness play making itself a solid portion of the play so that the drama is real!

The awareness of death even creates itself within the illusion that when the reality creation ends, when the structuralization ends, the awareness ceases to exist. This doesn't actually seem to be the case. But the solid creation of the human body--pinch me so that I know I'm not dreaming--is based upon interest. So long as you are an omniscient awareness that exists outside of its creation, knowingly having created or creating that reality or game or whatever, it's not half as interesting. You know that your creation is an illusion, it's a game, a movie, it's pretend.

You, the awareness, know that it is a form of play that you're experiencing and that it really doesn't ultimately matter. But to pretend that it's real, true, that it's reality, to put yourself in the 3-D holographic picture and say that you had no hand in its creation and that the physical creation in fact was responsible for creating you, that you were born into it and had no hand in the creation of the

drama, now that makes for some real involvement, some real fun even if it's only of the tragicomic sort!

Ultimately, consciousness has to flow. It works like a rushing stream of events. No single, localized event ultimately has any meaning; only its localized meaning. It draws its meaning from the larger context. As we expand in terms of our own self conception, as we free ourselves from self-created barriers and limitations, you might say that we are refamiliarizing ourselves with the energy of the ocean of awareness, rather than fixating on the energy swirlings locked in the little tide pool, the tide pool of Homo Sapien's conception and delusion at the tail end of the 20th Century.

There seems to be a cover-up going on about the fact that awareness creates reality, is actually in charge of reality, and that awareness has the capability of creating a belief that something is solid and then perceiving it that way. Who's doing the cover-up? Well, scientists, I suppose, and the guys who don't believe in ESP and the paranormal, and of course if people believe this there wouldn't be any organized religion, so I guess the priests are covering this up, and maybe the societal structure, the elitists who don't want the commoners getting any delusions of grandeur that they can do anything they want and throw the bums out of the Federal Reserve or whatever...

There really is a reality monopolization going on and a continual indoctrination that is forever insisting on the limited nature of awareness. "I'm only human, it's human to err, you only go round once so grab all the gusto you can..." This is the tree of knowledge of good and evil that we're not supposed to pick from. Knowledge which, you might note, is proffered by the phallic serpent, Pandora's box (a cteic symbol), Tower of Babel (another phallic symbol), and the Frankenstein story where the moral is that you shouldn't muck about too much with reality because it's likely to bite you if you do.

The antidote to all this is the *Wizard of Oz,* written by the Freemason L. Frank Baum, where some upstart and her dog stop trembling for a moment and she gets up off her knees and sneaks away from the Scarecrow (Christianity, perhaps, with the crucified scarecrow?), the Tin Man (mechanistic science, perhaps?), and the Lion (animal impulses, perhaps), and Dorothy peers behind the emerald curtain (the green coloration perhaps signifying life, delving into the meaning behind this life). And then the deception becomes apparent.

Who, ultimately, is responsible for the cover-up of the centuries, the cover-up of the unlimited nature of consciousness? I would guess that it is awareness itself, the mass consciousness behind all of the mobile meat bodies, the mass consciousness itself which is covering up this possibility through its subservient minions like the priests and the scientists and the hack storytellers at NBC and so forth.

What would be the reason that mass consciousness, possibly the closest thing to God that we have pinpointed in this sector, has been covering up these cool abilities and transcendent possibilities? Possibly for fun. Possibly to create a game, because games have both freedoms and barriers resident in them, and this makes for interest because if you can do anything whatsoever then you create a completely non-challenging state. Superman, actually, would get pretty bored on Earth, because he wouldn't have any challenges. That's why the authors of the comic book had to invent Kryptonite, to give Superman a challenge with which to create a story.

Another reason for the enforcement of limited states and the cover-up of the real possibilities inherent in life is that there is a gradual unfoldment taking place in which this physical reality, bodies and so forth, is being evolved from non-existence or potential into a state of pure awareness. "God," let us say, taking part in a continual enlargement of its awareness and manifestation. Reality, I

am coming to believe, is based solely and entirely upon the belief structures that awareness holds. Change the underlying beliefs and you will change the perception of reality.

One of the time-honored methods of reality manipulation and creation is ritual magic. Ritual magic, at least according to the more intellectual magicians that I have come across, is simply the channeling of attention through ritual and symbology, concentrating attention in a certain direction so as to achieve a certain result. The channeling of thought so as to create a certain physical manifestation. Basically the imagining of something purely conceptual into reality. Ritual magic as reality creation.

I don't mean to defame any ritual magicians who are in the audience, but it's obvious that engaging in magic is giving some of your power away. It's based upon belief in the limitation of your own power, and that you have to access some higher conception or entity or universe energy channeling device like a symbol, or whatever. You have to go through certain incantations and steps and buff your body with lambs wool, or whatever. It's based upon the belief that you need a servo-mechanism to channel a higher power in order to manifest whatever you want in this world.

More to the point, I would think, would be to locate the limiting belief you have about your own power and ability, to deconstruct that belief by realizing that you created it in the first place, and then to manifest directly whatever it is you want without employing a go-between. Cut out the Baphometic middle man.

It's interesting to note the interplay of the psyche with the techniques of ritual magic and religion. Both religion and magic, these techniques of creating or influencing reality, can be seen to derive at least in part from a hierarchical vision of reality, to contain trappings in their rituals and literature if only subconsciously dramatizing a subjection to kingly and noble forces. A

totalitarianism of the spirit. In other words, I think that ritual magic and religion both have inherent in them the presumption of control by the nobility and a ministering court. If only in the hierarchies of angels. Or the *Wizard of Oz,* again. God as king, as above so below, regal robes, and the altar as the throne of the almighty. Jesus is coming - everybody look busy.

Actually, the study of reality creation and manipulation, in my opinion has been greatly furthered by the ritual magicians. In terms of the study of the creation and manipulation of realities, there is a succession of people who have contributed to this evolving field of study.

Certainly a lot of people contributed to this line of thought, but the most distilled transmission in this century, as far as I'm concerned, began this century with Aleister Crowley, who of course was also one of the first ET contactees with his channeling of the entity Lam. Several people have commented that Crowley's Lam bears a close resemblance to a grey alien.

Was Crowley a black magician? Did he engage in human sacrifice? I frankly don't know for certain, but with his synthesis of Eastern and Western magical and religious thinking, you can see that Crowley knew that these systems are basically symbolic interpretations overlaid on and hopefully accessing something more amorphous, and that this, not the symbolism itself, is where the power derives from.

I'll put it another way: I get the impression that Crowley knew that all of this stuff comes from unmanifest, non-symbolized awareness, and that there is a stepping down that takes place from pure awareness by which symbols and realities are created.

The next guy in line in this transmission might be Jack Parsons, head of the Pasadena, California chapter of the Ordo Templi Orientis in the 1940s, who I think if he didn't teach L. Ron Hubbard everything he knew, then he at least quickened Hubbard's

quest. Hubbard himself had lots of penetrating insights, although I would caution people about getting involved in his organization, which in my experience will siphon off all of your awareness and energy in the service of the Scientological cause. Hubbard also, although he came pretty close to copping to the fact that we create our own reality, also carefully hid that fact, because if you create your own reality you aren't quite so likely to subjugate yourself to "Source," which is what Hubbard termed himself.

Returning to the UFO/ET experience, from what I can tell, one of the things that makes it difficult to define and understand is that these are multifaceted phenomena, and there are a number of different origins for the experience. People assume that there is one explanation for UFOs/ETs, they latch on to the one they are most comfortable with, and they insist that one explanation explains all incidents and possibilities. I think that there are at least five different possible explanations for UFOs and ETs, in the following suggested categories:

(1) Encounters with aliens. People may have had encounters with extraterrestrial craft and their occupants, or with unexplained denizens of this world that seem to fit this definition; i.e. inner earth dwellers, or pixies or fairies, or whatever. Non-human encounters, let's say. This is an unproven possibility.

(2) Spiritual or non-material entities. This is the crossover dimension that I have been discussing, where reality slides in and out of thought and imagination and possibility and doesn't necessarily manifest as solidity or material reality.

(3) Government military operations involved with advanced craft and/or disinformation and/or psychological operations in which people are led to believe they have had encounters with aliens. I have the feeling that this is the source of some, although not all, of the more elaborate encounters over the last fifty years.

(4) The work of hoaxers.

(5) Misperception and delusion and fish stories.

So, depending on the incident, there are at least five possible evaluations and categories of experience. UFOs and ETs cannot be explained with only one explanation, and once you start compartmenting the experience this way, things become more understandable.

An example: As I recall, about two hundred years ago, the European scientific establishment declared that the panda bear was a myth. The rarity of encounters with panda bears made these men believe that the things didn't exist.

Now, can you imagine what the scene would have been like if the same forces had been at work on the "panda bear myth" as are at work in this century in relation to UFOs and ETs? Some guy in Leipzig would be running around in a fake panda suit, faking close encounters. The British military and the M15 intelligence agency would be doing advanced testing of fake, robotic pandas, and the CIA would be doing mind control experiments where guys were hypnotized and were convinced that they had a close encounter with a panda. The popular press would be full of this stuff. People would be dreaming of panda abductions. Disinformational panda manifestos and channelings from Panda Central at the center of the Earth or Saturn would be cranked out all over the place. We'd have faked panda autopsies. And the debunkers would be oh-so-seriously deriding the possibility that pandas could possibly exist. Like the UFO scene as it stands, things could get pretty confusing. Understanding the UFO experience has been confused by the propagation of hoax material, by the deluded and the true believers, and by the military trying to cover up its little schemes.

One proof of the unreality of reality is that so many totally unreal things that violate our conception of what is true continue to happen, regardless of how much government funding the materialists get. My own beliefs about UFOs and their inhabitants

are perhaps influenced by two close encounters that I have had this lifetime, which I'd like to describe to you.

I was talking about some LSD experiences to a friend back in the late 1960s, and I said something to the effect that the hallucinations I had were incredible while under the influence of the drug. My friend responded, "They're not hallucinations." That struck me as a profound insight at the time, and still does. LSD and other hallucinogenics do not so much cause hallucinations as they cause a relaxing of one's barriers to experience and then the whole strange world rushes in.

By the way, I'm not recommending LSD or other drugs, I personally stopped this line of inquiry before 1970. But... the time of this anecdote is 1968, and I was tripping on mescaline in the San Bernardino Mountains outside of Los Angeles. I wandered off from the group of people I was with and climbed to the bed of a pristine canyon, and perched on a boulder amidst a trickling creek. I relaxed in order to ponder the fate of the universe. And that was when I saw Her, or perhaps just felt Her with complete perceptual clarity. She didn't have a body, but my sense was that the stones, the water, the trees, the air... these things were Her flesh. It was, maybe, The Mother, the Mother Goddess who manifests this world... at least I thought so at the time.

This may have been the same entity who has been worshipped since ancient times via such vehicles as the Mystery Religions, perhaps the same being as seen in Virgin Mary manifestations, Isis, Astarte, the White Goddess... but I was awe-stricken with the sudden realization of what was what, and an amazement that I could have ever forgotten that the world was the flesh of the Mother, my Mother.

And that was when she noticed that I was sitting there, and I thought I perceived surprise. She vanished out of there at warp speed, and I was left assuming--what could I assume?--that I was

profane and undeserving of seeing Her and touching the hem of Her garment if she had been wearing one. Remember, she didn't have a body, but she was perfectly perceptible and understandable to me. So that was my first encounter with an uncommon being.

The second encounter was about four years later, in 1972. By this time I had knocked off the mescaline and LSD. Now, this was in the days before Whitley Streiber, and the media hadn't really latched on to grey aliens. But I woke up in the middle of the night in Los Angeles with one of these guys, the prototypical alien grey, staring me in the face, right up close. It terrified me, and I jumped out of bed and ran out of my bedroom into the living room. When I returned to the bedroom the visitor was gone.

I put this experience aside for twenty years, until I read the book *Communion,* which verified certain details of the experience, the primary one being the color and texture of the creature's skin... which was not grey, but blue grey, with the texture and reflective quality of clay... plasticine. That verification of detail was what made the needle swing over toward "close encounter" rather than "particularly vivid dream." I don't have those types of dreams. My nightmares don't feature aliens... and so now I am willing to accept that this might have been an actual encounter, one which may have taken place at the edge; at the edge of manifestation.

Regardless of the factuality or verifiability of these two encounters, I expect they did change my way of thinking about the UFO/alien phenomenon. These encounters violated all scientific laws and seemed instead to reside in something like a crossover state between fantasy and reality. Both of these entities simply vanished when confronted, and I began to feel that this might be the realm from which a good number of these encounters proceed.

A tangent that backs up this notion: it's interesting that a lot of ritual magicians have used sex as a tool for accessing different states of consciousness, for providing "oomph" to their workings.

Although I'm not a member of the Ordo Templi Orientis group, I have a copy of their Gnostic mass, and it's a straight sexual symbolization, dramatization. Crowley was very much into this, Kenneth Grant, Austin Osman Spare, the Templars, the Mystery Religions, tantric yoga, even some of the Christian adepts like Baron von Zinzendorf's Christian-Freemasonic group who got their kicks from rhapsodizing about the ecstasy of using Christ's side wound as an orifice for their penetration.

Sex can provide an access port into energies that are useful in manifesting other realities... This, as in the case with drugs, may have something to do with the relaxing of inhibitions to experience. Sometimes, though, things are manifested that are not desired. In the Hebrew Talmud masturbation is warned against because with each act are created incubi or succubi or disembodied entities which they refer to as Qlippoth. Certainly it's no secret that in a lot of UFO abduction cases the aliens make free with the abductees, even going so far as having sex with them.

I also want you to note that researchers have long connected poltergeist, "noisy ghost" phenomena with the presence of pubescent children, children phasing into sexual maturity. Certainly a lot of energies are aroused during this period, energies which apparently manifest Qlippoth-like entities and even impact with the physical environment and toss dishes around and so forth.

I wonder if there's a correlation between alien abduction and sexual frustration? I know a woman who had an alien encounter and impregnation, or thought that this had happened to her, and she dramatized all of the signs of pregnancy, including the enlargement of her stomach. She's a New Ager so she wouldn't have appreciated my down-to-earth suggestion that she get a sonogram and find out what's really going on. Anyway, the aliens apparently intervened at the last moment and spirited the alien half-breed away before birth. I

didn't question the woman closely enough to really have an informed opinion about what was going on--there are such things as what are termed hysterical pregnancies, and fathers sometimes dramatize the characteristics of pregnancy, you know--so I don't know the nature of what actually took place. But what I am pointing out is the sexual and birth connection to the UFO/ET experience.

Another matter of high curiosity is that ET abductions often contain elements which seem to be able to be traced to events which took place at the time of the abductee's birth. This was brought out by Alvin H. Lawson in a paper about what he calls the "Birth Memory Hypothesis." Lawson did a study of abductions in the 1970s and noted that in three hundred or so transcripts of persons who believed that they had been abducted by ufonauts, birth imagery was "abundant" in their descriptions of the events. These narratives linked "the fetus with the abductee, the placenta with the UFO, the cervical opening with UFO doorways and the umbilical cord with levitating light beams or pillars..."

Lawson commented that "most" abduction accounts are "dominated" by prenatal details. I know this sounds speculative and pretty wild, but Lawson did additional studies in which he compared abduction sequences with events which actually took place during the person' birth, and noted striking correlations. For instance, in the case of one woman who had a breech birth (rear end exiting first), she got aboard the UFO "by being vacuumed up a tunnel, through a small door, and into a tiny bubble-like room (like the amniotic sac), where she remained throughout her experience. She exited the UFO in a unique manner..."

Remember, this woman was a breech birth. "She 'sat down' over a trap door in the floor and sank to the ground. Another subject, a breech birth, who was born feet first, exited the UFO by walking backwards until she was outside. A forceps-aided... breech birth, she said that 'they' pushed on her head, slipping her outside; later she

said that during the examination 'they' moved her body to 'center' her."

Bud Hopkins says that he has regressed over 160 abductees whose narratives were loaded with reproductive imagery. Here the veil seems to have been pulled back a little, and we see the direct influence of the human psyche, at least in its sexual and birth aspects, directly influencing the UFO and ET experience, as if the psychic portion of the contactee is phasing into, shading into, shaping and influencing the reality of the contact, the actual circumstances. Might this be straight delusion? Sure, in many instances I'm certain that this is the case, but I don't think that we're talking delusion in all cases.

It's reminiscent of the anecdote where the shrink shows the woman a Rorschach test and she slaps him. I think it has more to do with the concept that Aldous Huxley talked about in *Doors of Perception,* that the mind functions, at least in part, as a reduction valve on experience, a tuner that limits the bandwidth of what is perceived, and puts perception into a manageable or understandable format, and perhaps even shapes the experience into what is dictated by the content of the awareness, particularly through its beliefs. I suggest that not only does awareness interpret what is perceived, UFOs and ETs and whatnot, but that it also creates these phenomena at both the mass consciousness and individual level.

Another suggestion that our experience of UFOs and ETs is influenced by our mindset is that a lot of these experiences portray far stranger motifs, ones which come from Freemasonry and the Mystery Religions and the New World Order.

The Frenchman Claude Vorilhon was taking a pleasant hike in the mountains one day, so he relates, when he saw a UFO hovering nearby, the craft bearing a Star of David with a swastika inside the emblem. A glowing childlike figure stepped forth from the craft. The child conversed with Vorhilon, bestowing a new name on him,

Rael, and informed the man that the reason he had been chosen to be contacted was because France was the birthplace of earthly democracy (i.e. during the French Revolution). The being entrusted Vorhilon with the mission of building an embassy in which the aliens, which Vorilhon calls the Elohim from the biblical reference, could meet with dignitaries of Earth, with the stated purpose of spreading "Peace, Love, Fraternity."

Vorilhon was informed that humans had been created by the Elohim, godlike space travelers who were also skilled in the arts of DNA alteration and cloning. Vorilhon was now to assist the Elohim in preparing mankind for the final age of Revelation. Vorilhon, having adopted the name "Rael," now insists to his numerous followers that "a world government and a new monetary system must be created. A single language will serve to unify the planet." He and his followers sport the Star of David/swastika emblem that he observed on the side of the UFO, and they practice a form of "sensual meditation" which may be similar to tantric yoga as practiced by the OTO and other ritual magicians.

Quite obvious to anyone with a conspiratorial bent who has studied the literature are the New World Order/Illuminati references within this UFO encounter and the mission that was imparted to Rael. The childlike alien might as well have been on a mission from George Bush.

Another case is that of Betty Andreasson. Taking place in 1967, the events of Adreasson's abduction were later brought out through the use of hypnosis. Andreasson recalled being kidnapped from her home and spirited into what appeared to be a spacecraft. She was transported to an unknown location and then taken through a series of underground passageways that she believed to be part of a city.

Arriving at an underground chamber, Andreasson experienced, in a manner which she describes as highly painful as well as emotional, a kind of mythic psychodrama enacted before her that

may or may not have been different from the kind of mystical dramatizations enacted in Mystery Religions and other mystic cults. She saw a huge bird, that she estimated be fifteen feet in height, which resembled an eagle but having a more elongated neck. The creature was apparently alive, but as Andreasson watched, it began to transform. It began to glow with a light and heat that was so intense it caused her pain.

When the heat and light vanished the bird was gone and she was gazing on flickering embers. As Andreasson stared at the embers she saw a worm wriggling in the ash.

"Now, looks like a worm," she described it in her hypnosis, "a big fat worm. It just looks like a big fat worm, a big grey worm just lying there."

Also during the experience, Andreasson was told by her abductors: "We are going to measure you for light... You have not completely understood the word that you have. You are not completely filled with light."

Andreasson said, "I believe that I'm filled with the light! I believe, I believe that I'm filled with the light!" Andreasson also recalled that, "They called my name, and repeated it again in a louder voice. I said, 'No, I don't understand what this is all about, why I'm even here.' And they, whatever it was, said that 'I have chosen you.'"

"'For what have you chosen me?'

"'I have chosen you to show the world.'

"Are you God?" Andreasson asked, "Are you the lord God?"

"I shall show you as your time goes by."

The following is part of an interview with Andreasson conducted by Raymond Fowler:

Fowler: Have they [the UFOs] anything to do with what we call the second coming of Christ?

Andreasson: They definitely do.

Fowler: When is this going to occur?

Andreasson: They know the Master is getting ready, and very close.

Since we are ranging cosmically far afield in our search for connections, it should be noted that Eye in the Triangle emblems have been seen on some UFO and the uniforms of their occupants, and that in recent years a significant percentage of two thousand UFO sighting reports in Belgium describe triangular craft with lights at each point of the triangle, and another light in the center of the triangle.

Anyway, the Lords of Light and various other references relating to light, the Star of David, the Phoenix, the Eye in the Triangle... All of these symbols convey a very earthly origin and are often seen in accounts of encounters and abductions. These are symbols from the mythology of the Freemasons and the Illuminati.

As I mentioned in my book *Saucers of the Illuminati,* incidents like these strongly suggest a Freemasonic/Mystery Religion/ Illuminati motivation and/or manipulation. Both American and British intelligence agencies are still much aligned to Freemasonic goals, and so this might point out an intelligence agency connection, say in terms of staged incidents, mind control, whatever. That's the argument that I make in *Saucers of the Illuminati,* but since then I've come to see that there are other possible explanations.

There is the possibility that, since Freemasons and their ilk are quite involved in ritualism and magic, that this might be a straight magical transmission evoking these UFO events and even influencing them from a non-physical standpoint. These events may be summoned by Illuminati ritual.

At the very least I would suggest that these symbols might have crept into the common subconscious coin, from which position

they are dramatized in reality. Again, I am not suggesting that incidents like these are examples of delusion, but that we may be looking at something quite different: that the content of the mind can influence and shape the manifestation of real events.

Another clue suggesting the UFO experience draws part of its meaning from the human experience or the subconscious or mass consciousness experience is that one can see that one of the major concerns of this era is, and should be, the interface of human consciousness with outer space. We have finally evolved tools, that is rockets and other modes of propulsion, for travel among the planets, and are getting to the point where the creation of a faster than light drive is possible. We can see this as conceivable, and something that mankind may accomplish in the near future.

We might conceive that humans or mass consciousness may be pondering upon these things, upon this position in time and the possibilities inherent in it. And these experiences with spacelings may in part depend upon and be flavored by this focus of attention, but also possibly because we have not objectified our experience of outer space yet, we have not solidified our beliefs and views, standardized our interpretation of the possibilities of this experience.

UFOs may wholly or partly constitute an "imagining into" future possibilities. Perhaps a testing out of realities that we are going to put on or manifest in the future. A trial run in a new pair of shoes. Maybe like the Rorschach test, space is relatively amorphous to us at this moment, in our present perception, a somewhat neutral oracle that we are reading meanings into, that we are beginning to play with.

I suspect, although since I have not conducted the experiment I cannot prove, that there are major correlations between the type of UFO/ET encounters one has and one's chronic emotional tone... i.e. anger, apathy, grief, whatever; one's obsessions, philosophy, and material circumstances, roughly gauged.

I have the feeling that a statistical analysis would show significant correlations between people who feel that they are victimized and abused by life and those who feel that they are victimized and abused by ETs. I have the feeling that people who have a generally airy-fairy New Agey view of life might tend to encounter benevolent space brothers who impart homilies about transcendence and golden eternity. Naturally, this would not correlate on a one-to-one basis, it wouldn't always be true, but I think that a decent statistical sampling would show that I am on to something here.

Again, I am not saying that these non-human contacts with humans are not sometimes real. I am saying that we tend to attract experiences that correlate with our mind and emotional sets, and that we ultimately create our own reality, including traffic jams, bad television shows, toothaches, trips to the corner grocery, being a human on the planet Earth, and having our mind blown by an ET encounter. I think that we are God playing at being human, until we realize the fact and decide to consciously play at something different.

Another clue to the UFO/ET experience is the alien face. It seems to be an interpretation and distillation of information that is too overwhelming to comprehend, and so the perception is simplified into a context that can be understood.

I have the suspicion that at least in some instances the ET experience is so big, so amorphous, so alien, that it is simplified in its comprehension, into the grey alien face. And why might I think that? Because the prototypical grey alien face is based upon the least information units that you can interpret and still come up with a face. It can be reduced to three dots in an inverted triangular shape, and given that as the basis of a face, the details can logically be filled in to form a tiny chin and a big head. It works aesthetically, in

the logic of the mind's eye. The triangular shape, the three dots in an inverted triangle, dictate the bulbous head as visual balance.

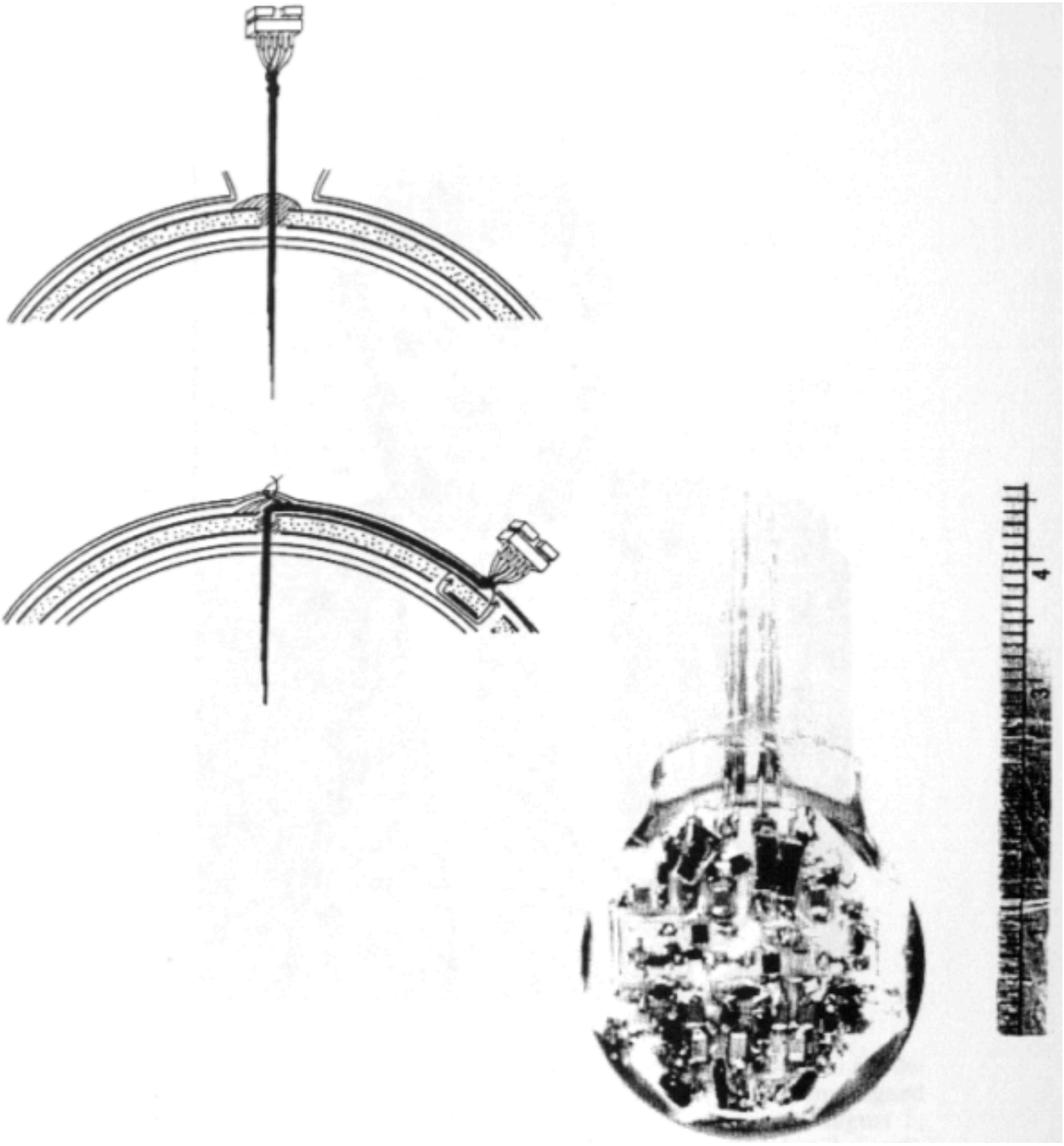
I am led to believe that perhaps the image is a distillation of an experience that is very amorphous but real, which offers a dearth of information--or perhaps too much information--to the contactee, and then the details are filled in by the mind. This is one function of the mind, to fill in the details. As a face, the grey alien is the ultimate in simplicity.

This is just conjecture, but is it possible that contactees and abductees in certain instances are confronted by something far more energy than entity, and that this energy field or nexus is channeled through the mind and interpreted based upon the least possible information units into the simplistic alien grey face?

You can see this in various oracular systems like the I Ching and the Tarot and runes and tea leaves and reading animal entrails and the Magic 8-Ball. These are purposeful destructurings of the field of information into random images, rendering the field itself amorphous and virtually meaningless, so that meaning can manifest, ready to deliver messages that are not otherwise available to the conscious mind. Like the William Burroughs Brion Gyson cut-up technique of literature. James Joyce must have seen this when he wrote his randomized *Finnegans Wake*...

John Lennon was pointing this out with his "I Am the Walrus" which is a randomized song text with recurring imagery of oneness and omniscient control by the Walrus, perhaps a bow to Lewis Carroll. This random fracturing of message is certainly the world of the abstract painter, like Jackson Pollock, and his swirling splatter canvases, which I find irresistible.

Ultimately I believe that there really is no universe, no "field" as it were, and no past and future. No time. I believe that we create the past to justify the present, and that we can create the past in any form we want. You create your own reality.



Implant technology pioneered by Dr. Jose Delgado.



Dr. Jolly West.

TOP SECRET
EYES ONLY

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 24, 1947.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Dear Secretary Forrestal:

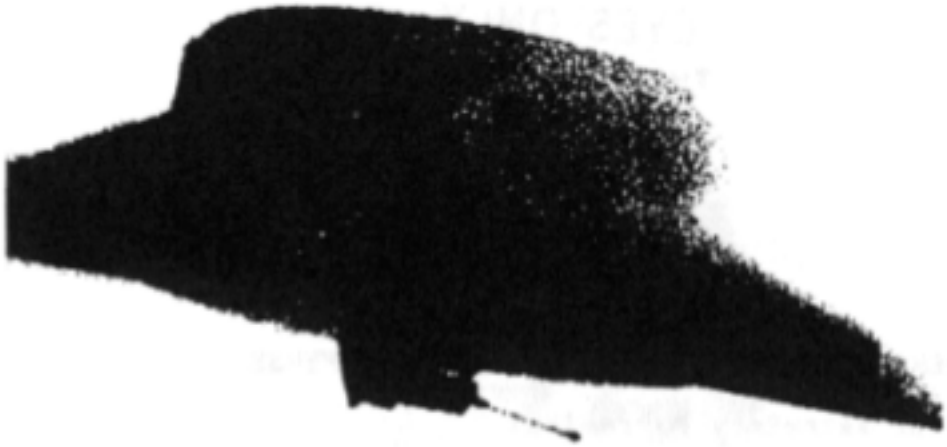
As per our recent conversation on this matter, you are hereby authorized to proceed with all due speed and caution upon your undertaking. Hereafter this matter shall be referred to only as Operation Majestic Twelve.

It continues to be my feeling that any future considerations relative to the ultimate disposition of this matter should rest solely with the Office of the President following appropriate discussions with yourself, Dr. Bush and the Director of Central Intelligence.

Harry Truman

TOP SECRET
EYES ONLY

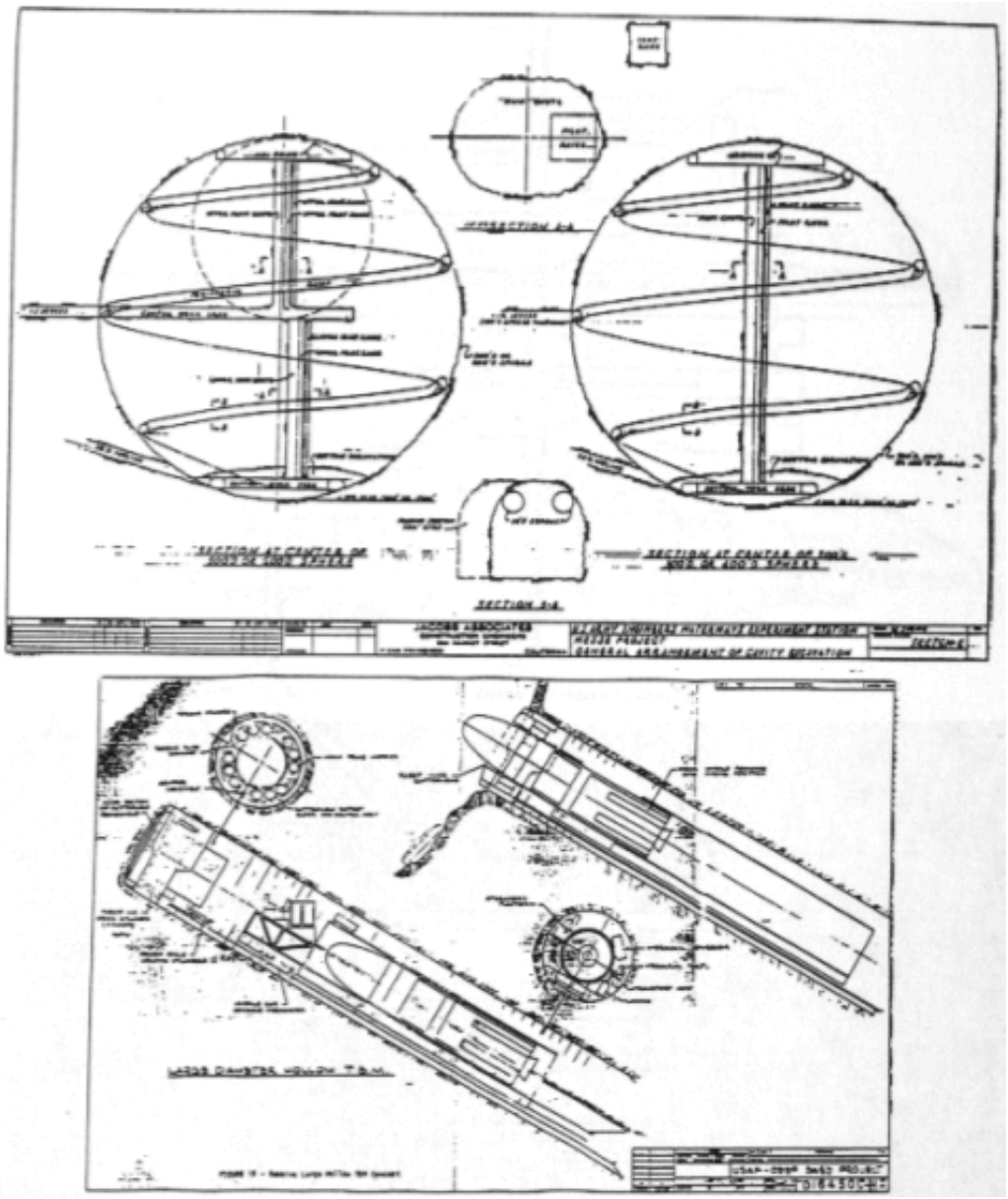
A White House document to Secretary of State James Forrestal on the creation of Majestic Twelve or MJ-12 dated September 24, 1947 and signed by President Harry Truman. Forrestal died mysteriously on August 1, 1950 and was replaced on the Mj-12 commitee by General Walter B. Smith. From the German book *Die Dunkle Seite Des Mondes (The Dark Side of the Moon)* by Brad Harris (1996, Pandora Books, Germany).



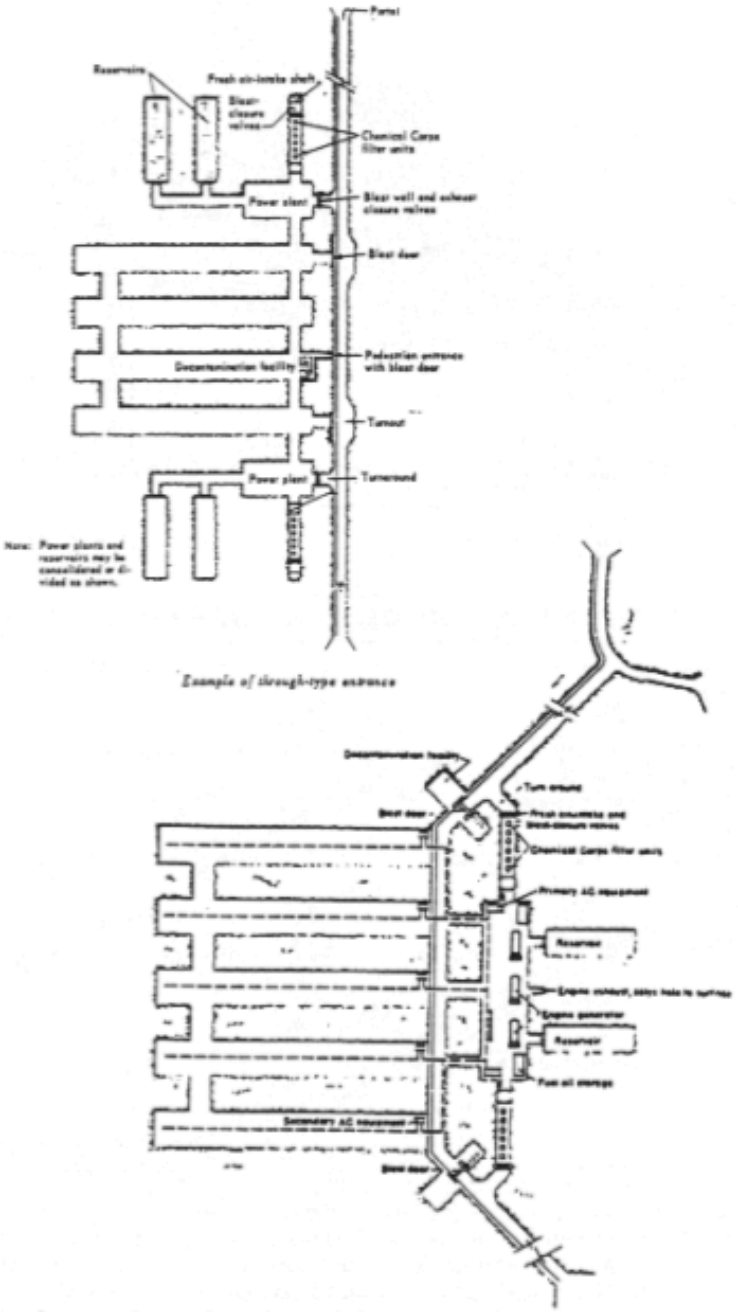
Alleged photo from SS files of a Haunebu II in flight circa 1944. Note the Panzer tank canon mounted underneath the craft. From the German book *Die Dunkle Seite Des Mondes (The DarkSide of the Moon)* by Brad Harris (1996, Pandora Books, Germany).



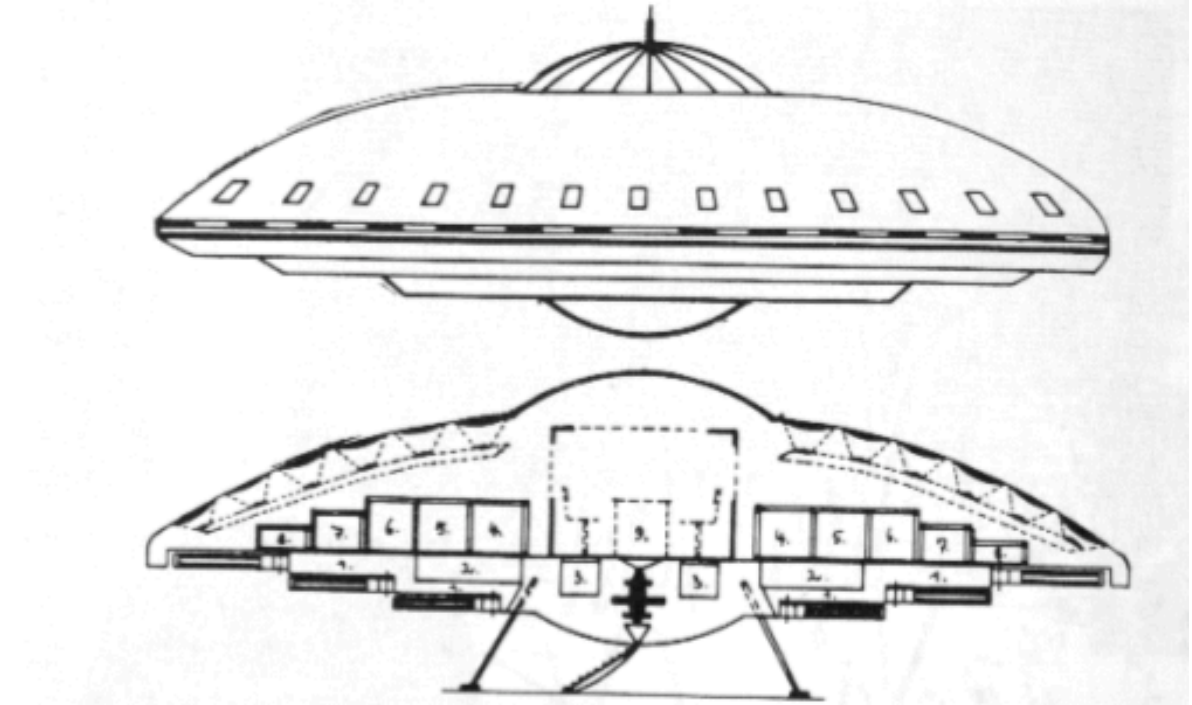
Alleged photocopy of SS plans for a Haunebu III being designed in 1945. From the German book *Die Dunkle Seite Des Mondes (The Dark Side of the Moon)* by Brad Harris (1996, Pandora Books, Germany).

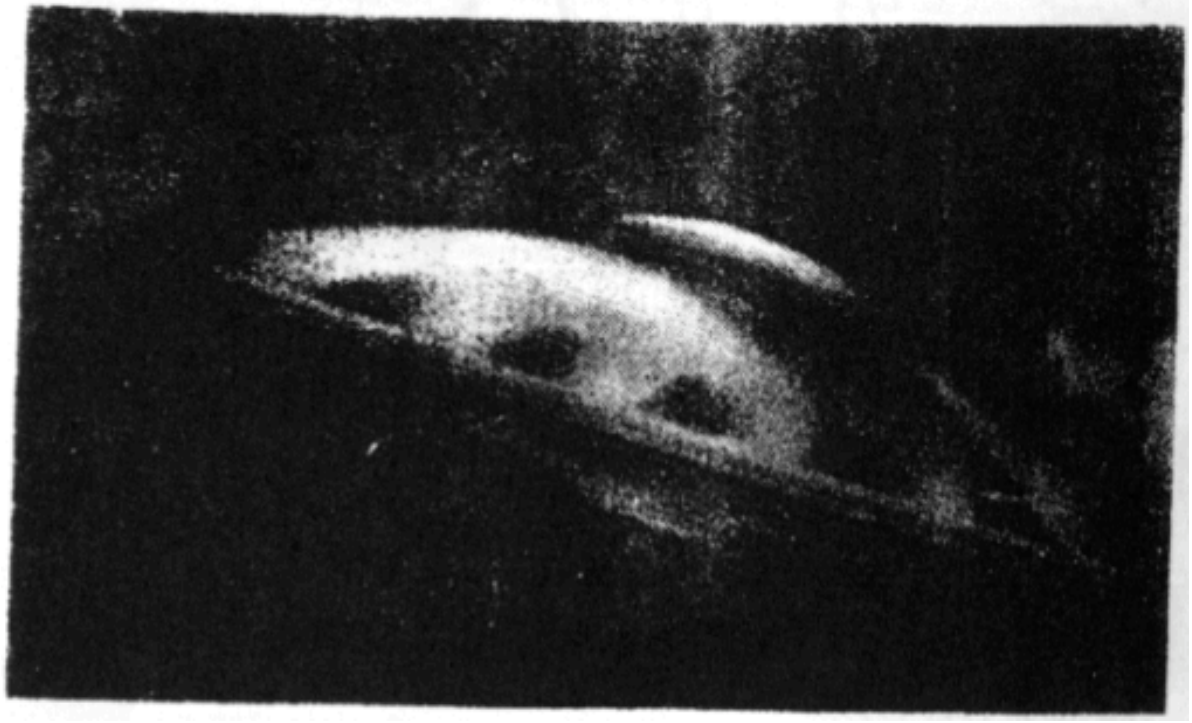


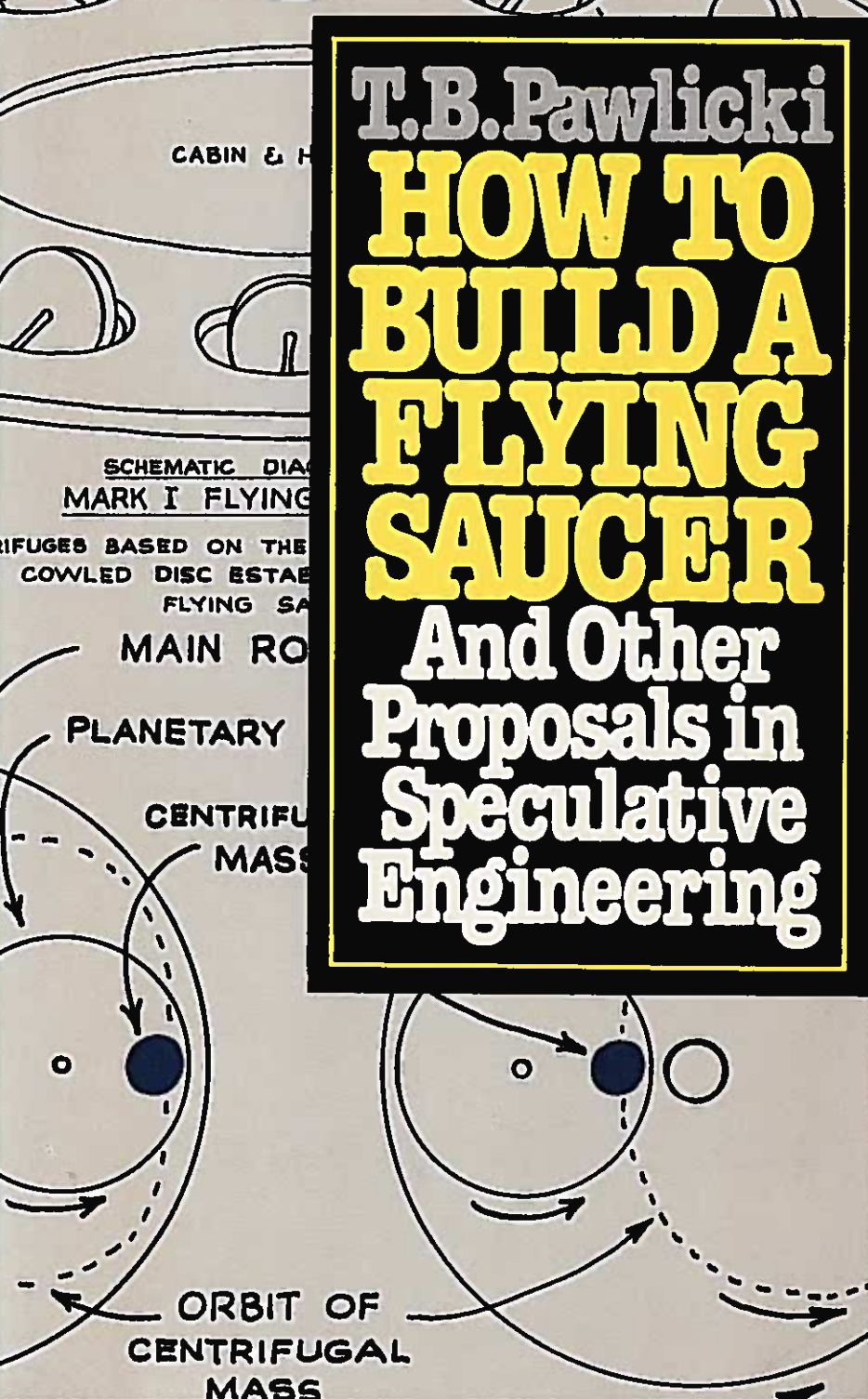
Above: Two methods of constructing a large, deep-underground cavity. Both utilize central shafts, a spiralling perimeter tunnel and work areas at the top and bottom of the area to be excavated. Excavation would proceed downward, starting at the top of the designated sphere. From the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers technical manual *Feasibility of Constructing Large Underground Cavities, Vol. III*. Below: An illustration from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers technical manual *Tunnel Boring Machine Technology for a Deeply Based Missile System. Vol. I, Part 1*. Thanks to Richard Sauder and his book *Underground Bases and Tunnels: What Is the Government Trying To Hide?*



Examples of underground manufacturing and storage facilities from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers technical manual *Design of Underground Installations in Rock: Protective Features and Utilities*. Thanks to Richard Sauder and his book *Underground Bases and Tunnels: What Is the Government Trying To Hide?*







T.B.Pawlicki

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And Other Proposals in Speculative Engineering

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The Library
University of Petroleum & Minerals
Dahran, Saudi Arabia

T. B. PAWLICKI

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Introduction

Before the modern era, there was so little codified knowledge in general circulation that a little extra private knowledge was a powerful thing, especially in the engineering trades. So it was common for tradesmen to band together in closed societies to keep their special power to themselves. In our time, however, no one can possibly know more than a fraction of all the codified knowledge, so power comes from distributing knowledge rather than hoarding it.

Science presents itself as a disinterested enterprise devoted to discovering how the universe unfolds. When scientists discovered that facts were marketable, however, the pursuit of truth and the power devolving from knowledge became organized into an industry. To earn a living, therefore, a scientist must accept a certain way of perceiving how the universe unfolds as reality, and be blind to alternative ways of unfolding. This is why radical and revolutionary discoveries are made so frequently by people working and playing outside the profession of their interest (would Albert Einstein have conceived the theory of relativity if he had not suffered an academic failure permitting him to make his calculations in his spare time while working in an unhurried office?) or by lifetime amateurs like Gregor Mendel (the first known discoverer of genetics), Stanford Ovshinsky (the high-school dropout who discovered amorphous transistors), and Immanuel Velikovsky (who defied union rules by picking up the materials of other trades).

From time to time a layman will make a naive observation of commonplace evidence disregarded by the professionals as too trivial to be worthy of their interest, not immediately profitable enough to justify investment, or politically dangerous to mention. Nevertheless, the simple facts must prevail over current beliefs. This book is the result of this kind of observation.

Each of these stories is the consequence of observations professional people are discouraged from making. All the

ideas, except the concepts of relativity, were worked out during shoptalk with skilled tradesmen in the course of everyday employment. The carpenter holds in his square the mathematics that was the glory of Greece. The boat designer is applying the principles of the most advanced calculus when he plots the curves of a hull. The electrician has fitted his leisure van with the electronic devices Q invents for James Bond. A tradesman possesses knowledge equivalent to professional scientists, and usually possesses somewhat greater skills because he not only has to be able to understand what the executives want, he also has to make these skills work. Most mechanics feel themselves to be at a disadvantage among professional people because they don't know that they possess equivalent knowledge. Because mechanics often do not learn to express themselves verbally in the manner recommended in the *Chicago University Manual of Style*, professional people do not recognize mechanics' learning, either.

Before a professional forum, amateurs—mechanics—look like idiots. Nevertheless, from time to time an amateur makes a naive and commonplace observation of such compelling importance that nothing else matters: Scientific belief must give way before a simple truth, however crudely presented.

This series of essays is the work of a lifetime amateur. These essays are presented as examples of this kind of momentous truth. Each is based on facts you can verify for yourself by making the same observations, and then proceeds to speculation. Each of these stories describes realities contradicting common sense and contradicting the local authorities on matters of science.

When published articles describing these observations brought response from university people, I was surprised to learn that the essential propositions in this book are in agreement with the most advanced thinkers of our time. These radicals are so far out of the common ball park that their very existence is unknown outside circles exchanging private papers. They are of the kind including Erwin Schrödinger, Louis de Broglie, and Nikola Tesla, names that are recognized today although the essence of their thinking remains mysterious. This

is not to say that they endorse everything written in these pages; they don't even agree completely with each other. I believe, however, that you will find the errors insignificant in detail compared to the general conception.

Most amazing of all is being informed that the visionary theorists scattered in isolated outposts beyond the pale of authorized science are not so isolated nor so visionary nor so theoretical as believed. There are also outposts manned by engineers working with less fantasy and more hardware to turn the facts disregarded by the universities into operational machinery.

Refusal to clothe the truth with fiction made it impossible to publish this material for ten years. When "The Crystal Planet" was first submitted, pyramid power made no sense to anyone except a few alchemists. Within the next five years, pyramids became the hottest property since the hula hoop. Less than five years ago, one editor, insisting that the public be given facts instead of fiction, was forced to leave his job. When the article, "How to Build a Flying Saucer" finally appeared in print, after two years of editorial hassles, two editions included waivers of responsibility in case the facts proved true! But the following year, that very article was selected at the MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) international conference in Mexico City for translation into Spanish and publication throughout Latin America. By the end of the seventies, these essays had found their way all around the world, passed from person to person through the mails, and had been reproduced by basement presses until they achieved the kind of circulation enjoyed by liberal Soviet poets. In time, a reply from a Soviet engineer researching radical means of locomotion found its way back through the postal grapevine of UFO freaks! It is a common joke that American antigravity research consists mainly of a budget assigned to the CIA to spy on what the Russians are doing; it seems that the Russians may be reading American science fiction to find out what can be done.

Most of these essays appeared initially as a series of articles in *Pursuit*, the quarterly subscription journal published by the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, with its present public service office at RFD 5, Gales Ferry, Con-

necticut 06335. Each article had to be cut to the editorial slot and still be self-contained. The geometric concepts developed with increasing comprehension and precision over the years.

To amend repetitions and contradictions and bring the material up to date, the articles have been rewritten for easier and more informative reading.

A hundred years ago, a speed of twenty-five miles per hour was legally prohibited in the belief that such terrific velocity would endanger life. Fifty years ago, engineers were certain man could not possibly reach the Moon because no rocket fuel exploded with sufficient velocity to escape the Earth's gravity. The limitation of combustion velocity was overcome by the concept of multiple-stage launchers. Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon without man's making a single new discovery. All that was necessary was to think differently about what was already known. The discoveries described in these essays are already in operation on the weapons proving grounds. One of these days an entire population is going to be annihilated like the citizens of Hiroshima, who did not realize there could be anything to fear from a lone aircraft on a beautiful August morning. Massive destruction seems to be the only way people will accept a revolutionary concept whose time is now.

So if anyone out there really wants to believe in flying saucers, he will ask, "How can we do this saucer thing?" You will see how easy it is when you want to solve the mystery; how easy it is once you accept an attitude of solving one problem at a time as you come to it! If you learn nothing else from this exercise, you will at least have had a lesson in how easy it is to construct, from the facts discarded by orthodoxy, a scientific theory no less tenable than the authorized version.

1.

MEGALITHIC ENGINEERING

How to Build Stonehenge and the Pyramids with Bronze Age Technology

The most generally believed myth prevailing today is that the Earth is a colonial outpost of an extraterrestrial civilization. In recent prehistoric times, this civilization exercised its supersophisticated technology by quarrying inconveniently massive stones, transporting them for inconvenient distances over some of the world's most inconvenient terrain, and then piling them into temples on the scale of mountains—their way of getting their rocks off, so to speak. Whether or not you accept the scenario sold by Erich Von Daniken, scientists and engineers agree that the Great Pyramids of Egypt and other prehistoric megalithic monuments around the world are constructed on such a colossal magnitude that there's no way ordinary human beings could have done it. Even today, the monuments at Abu

Simbel had to be cut into pieces to move them a few hundred yards from the Nile waters rising behind the Aswan Dam because our heaviest machinery was not otherwise able to manage the task. A number of authors, professional archaeologists, and more or less talented amateurs have published calculations proving that the magnitude of the pyramids exceeds all the human resources known to be available for construction at the time.

When I address myself to the construction methods of the pyramid builders, I am forced to turn in my amateur card, since I worked for several years in heavy earth construction. My last employer handled the largest contracts undertaken in this part of the country at the time, and I was being trained to supervise construction of an industrial town site. Whenever I read a story about how the prehistoric megalithic monuments may have been erected, even though I cannot make an on-site job survey, I check all the measurements to see that they agree. Every carpenter who is given plans for three twelve-foot rooms on a thirty-six–foot foundation knows it can't be done. Architects frequently forget to allow for the thickness of the walls because they never have to do the job and because the contractor pays for errors.

If you take the trouble to calculate the volume of a megalith from the dimensions given by various writers, and multiply it by the average weight of stone (with a specific density three times water), you will find the most impressive magnitude of the prehistoric building industry is error in simple arithmetic. Even if we assume that the length and width of the megaliths are not multiplied by literary hype, they are reduced to human proportions by correct calculation. Although Stonehenge could have been built the way the British scientists staged it for television, it wouldn't have been. The operations are regarded as too dangerous by today's unionized workmen. The prehistoric laborers' workmens' compensation would never have approved the contract. Estimating the job as if my employer had been asked to bid on Stonehenge, I found that standard techniques known throughout the trade proved simple and economical. It is inconceivable for the prehistoric engineers to have done it in any other way. Megalithic construc-

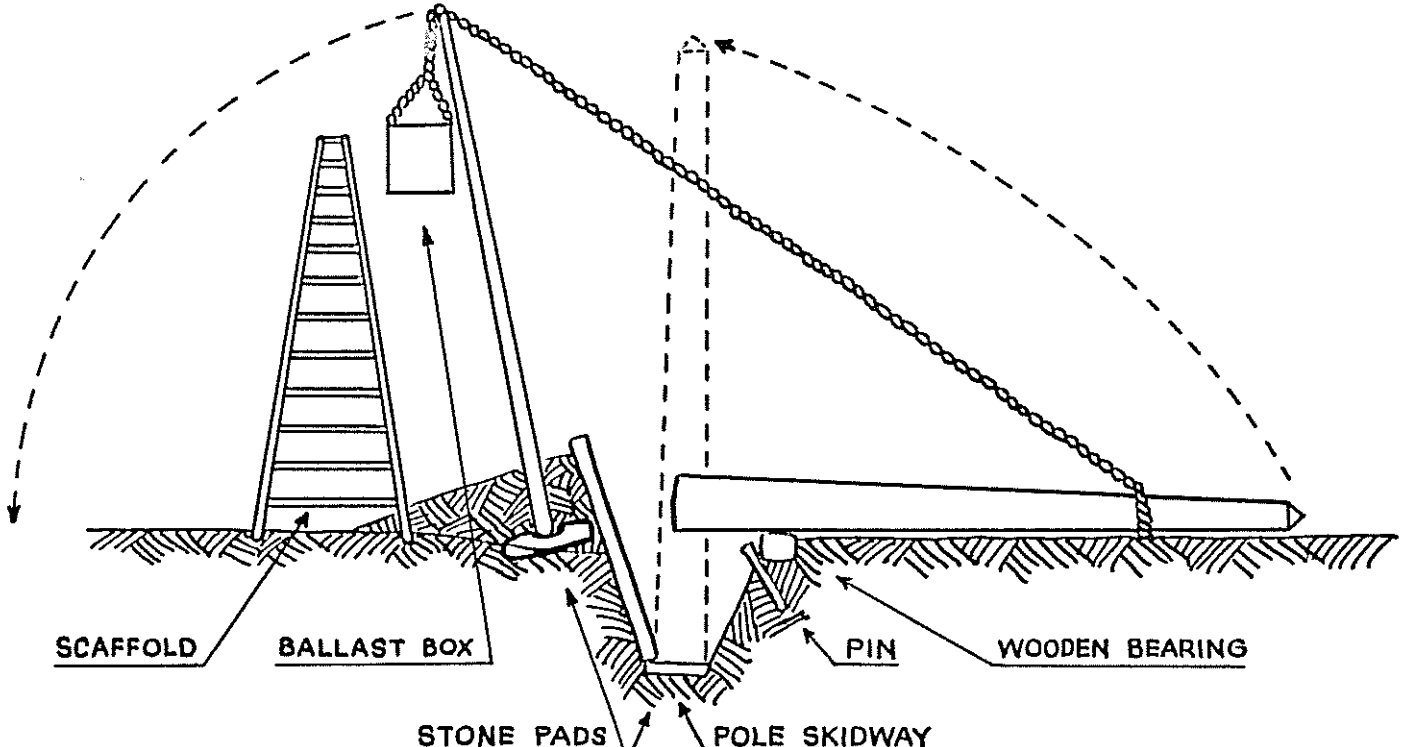
tion was the *usual* method of building public works the world over. In the Stone Age it had to be the most economical technique available, just as steel frame and reinforced concrete is today; and the methods had to be simple enough for gormless apprentices to follow with no more than the usual number of goofs. If scientists had asked tradesmen how megalithic monuments could be built, there never would have been any mystery.

The standard way to erect pylons would have made no scene for Charlton Heston in *The Ten Commandments*. The pylon is drawn to the site on a stoneboat; pallets have been traditional in the moving trades since prehistoric times. A thousand slaves driven by whips are not necessary, because a thirty-foot pylon with an average cross section of five square feet weighs less than fifteen tons. Three hundred slaves, or a dozen oxen, could handle it easily. Even if the ancients had unlimited slaves, they used beasts of burden because animals are more efficient; The primitive Eskimo knows enough to hitch a team of dogs to a sled.

In the socket prepared to receive the pylon, the bottom is laid with a slab of stone for a footing to prevent the pylon's shifting and toppling over in the course of time. The edges of the socket, where the base of the pylon overhangs, is buttressed with logs to resist the pressure of the stone when raised against it.

On the other side of the socket from the pylon, a pole A-frame is raised. A line is fastened to the top of the pylon, passed over the apex of the A-frame, and attached to an empty bucket suspended well above the ground. A scaffold is erected to the bucket so that a chain gang can pass ballast and fill it. When the weight of the ballast in the bucket is sufficient, the A-frame rotates on its legs as the bucket is lowered to the ground, drawing the pylon's base over the socket to the abutment, then raising the top of the pylon as the shaft rotates on the edge of the socket. When the pylon is practically erect, it plops into the socket. Voilà! No sweat. This is the probable method used to erect the posts for the massive triliths at Stonehenge.

Exceedingly massive lintels, such as found in the An-

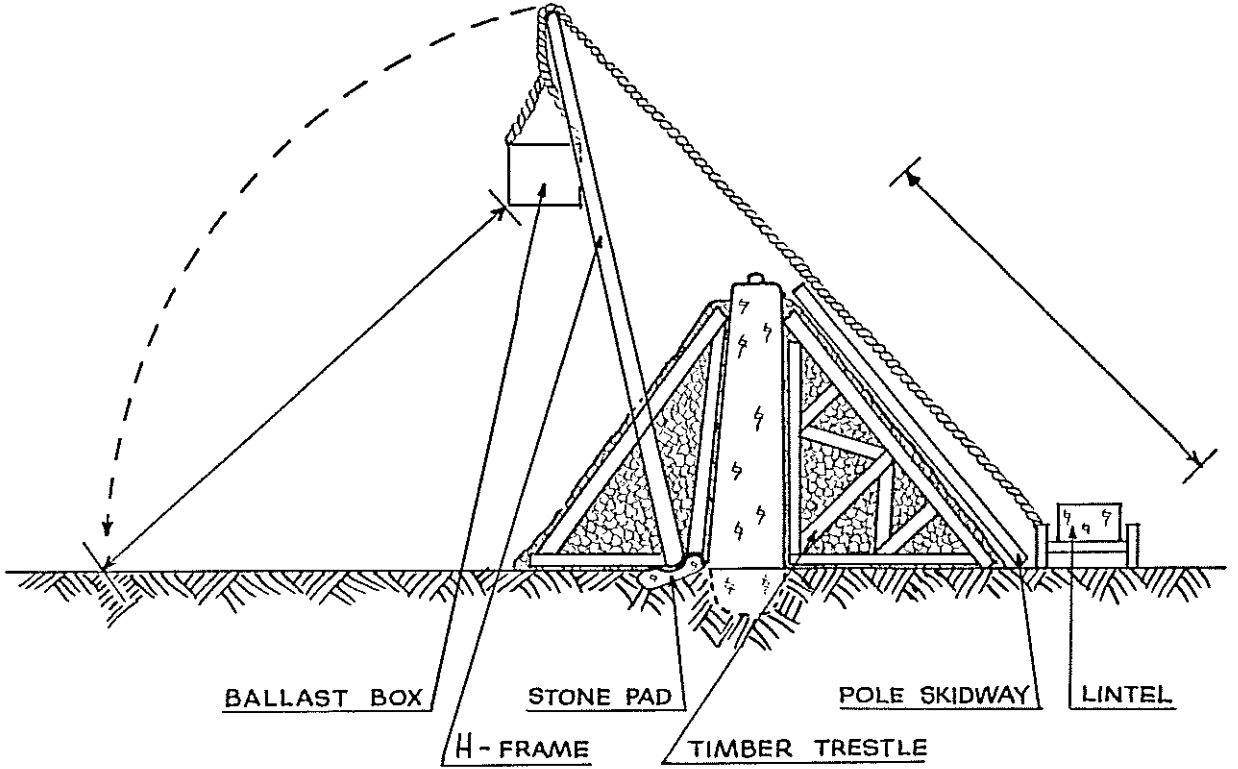


COUNTERWEIGHTED A-FRAME FOR RAISING OBELISK

dean ruins and at Stonehenge, were probably raised to the tops of the posts by a modification of the technique used to erect the posts. First the crew had to buttress the uprights with timbers and earthen fill. Barely a tenth of the posts at Stonehenge are held in their sockets; with so little lateral support on a foundation of broken and compressed rock, the horizontal movement of a lintel being moved over the tops of the posts would have pushed them over; this is a hardhat job. Gerald Hawkins, the decoder of Stonehenge, protests that the labor needed to provide all the posts with buttressing would have exceeded the effort of raising the lintels, but my platoon would be on unemployment insurance the day after they were hired if they didn't have a pair of posts buried for the arrival of the lintel in the morning.

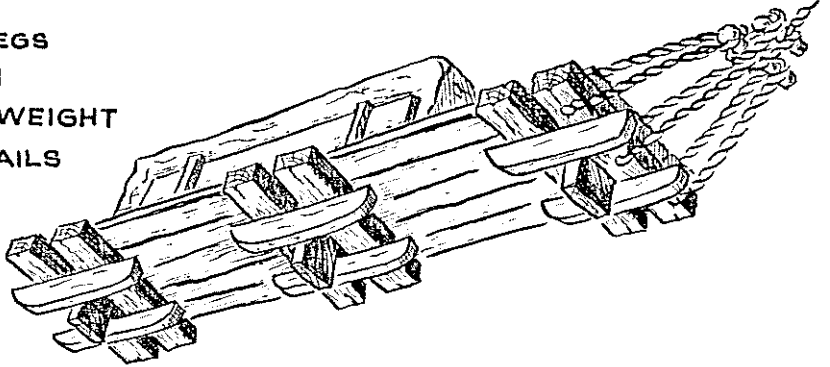
To begin with, experienced workmen look for fill that's easy to shovel. Then they use the same fill for each arch in succession, merely having to fling it over. When the lintel is brought to the base of the buttress on its boat, an H-frame is raised on stone pads on the other side of the arch. Lines are fastened to the stoneboat and thrown over the legs of the H-frame. The weight of a ballast box suspended by the lines is what keeps the H-frame upright. A chain gang mounts a scaffold to fill the ballast box with stones. If the distance over which the box will fall is measured carefully to equal the distance the lintel must rise, the H-frame will slowly rotate on its bottom legs, drawing the lintel up the ramp on the buttress until it comes to a gentle stop right above the pins receiving it.

To skilled laborers who do this kind of work for a living, the only question is why the architects chose a quarry on the other side of the Bristol Channel. The construction specifications of Stonehenge call for about 100 five-ton monoliths to be hauled twenty-five miles overland with a few hundred feet of rise. A five-ton load is no big drag for a couple yoke of oxen. The present structure at Stonehenge is the third of its kind built at the same site. The earlier stones were smaller and probably more numerous. By the time a few dozen sledges had been dragged over the trail from the quarry, the grade would have been cleared, soft spots filled with rocks, and slopes cut down to a comfortable angle. You need only see a path worn

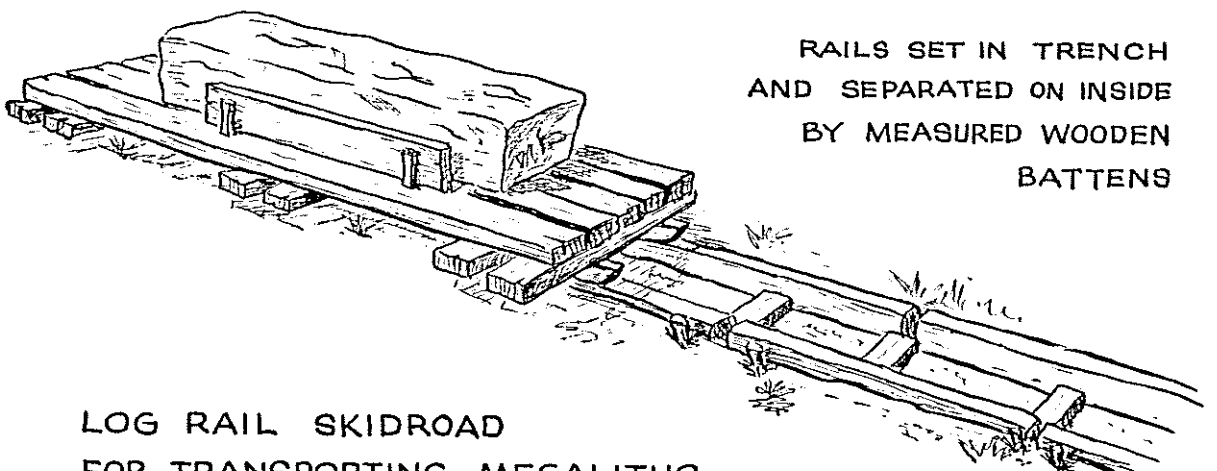


RAISING LINTEL WITH COUNTERWEIGHTED H-FRAME

3 PAIR OF SMALL SKEGS
MINIMIZE FRICTION
WHILE SPREADING WEIGHT
OVER 3 PAIR OF RAILS



RAILS SET IN TRENCH
AND SEPARATED ON INSIDE
BY MEASURED WOODEN
BATTENS



LOG RAIL SKIDROAD
FOR TRANSPORTING MEGALITHS

between farmhouse and outhouse to appreciate how quickly a repeated trail becomes a thoroughfare. To turn the grade into a proper railway, all that is needed is wooden poles laid along the right-of-way for the sledges to slide on. With some lubrication, properly cut skids will slide the stoneboats with less friction than the old Red River carts.

The smoothing of wooden rails for a skidway may seem more laborious than the dressing of the megaliths, but wood is ever so much easier to work. After one monument was completed, the roughly squared durable oak rails would be taken up and laid down for another construction elsewhere; the investment in transport machinery was thus amortized over many jobs. When the rails became crushed to the point where they could no longer bear the weight of sledges, the best sections—like worn-out railway ties—would be gleaned by poor folk for domestic structures, while the broken sections would be used for fuel.

Another shipment of about a hundred more blue stones had to be brought in from a quarry a few miles closer. To move these final megaliths, weighing from thirty to fifty tons, even twenty-mule teams would have sweated. To make the beasts sweat more heavily, between the quarry and the job site there is a low ridge to surmount. Archaeologists have sought the *easiest* grade over the ridge as the way the ancient Britons brought the megaliths to Stonehenge, which is why archaeologists cannot figure out how the monument was built. When there is a lot of altitude to gain in a short distance, however, experienced movers do not seek the easiest grade; they survey the range until they find the *steepest* cliff. Then they build a funicular railway, operated by counterweights, to raise the load as quickly as possible. (Travelers say that funicular transports on cliffsides are still used in England today.) Between the quarry and the job site there is a net loss of altitude, and once the cargo is raised to the summit of the dividing ridge, even fifty tons is no big sweat for teams of oxen to drag downhill.

Constructing the Great Pyramids was not a problem of engineering technique, but of logistics. The scale of the monu-

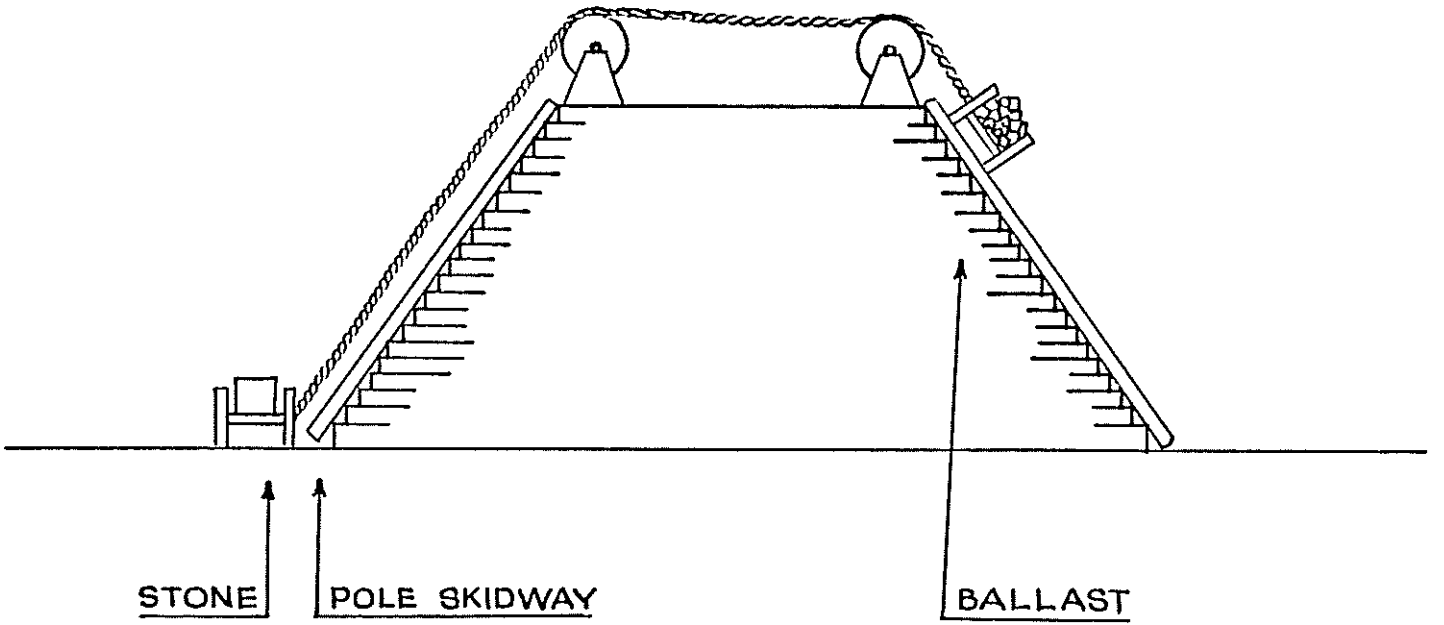
ments is so awesome that it is pure fantasy to estimate on the contract without knowing the resources available.

Logistics aside, the pyramidal design expedites its own construction. To begin with, the pyramid is its own ramp. To raise the building blocks to the working level, all that needs to be done is to lay a pole skidway against the sides. A line is fastened to the stoneboat at the base of the pyramid and passed over a pulley wheel at the top level. The line is then strung right across the top level, passed over another pulley wheel on the opposite side, and fastened to another stoneboat carrying an empty ballast box. This stoneboat is held by the line on another pole skidway laid against that side of the pyramid.

Second, the stepped slope of the pyramid also serves as its own scaffolding. A chain gang standing on the steps passes small stones from the bottom of the pyramid to the ballast box on the top of the slope. When the box is filled, it slides down the skidway, dragging the building block up the other side. When the traverse is completed, both stoneboats are emptied, each load is replaced with its opposite number, and the transport is repeated in the opposite direction.

The Great Pyramid has sides four hundred feet long, so a dozen counterweighted shuttles would be in operation continuously, bringing blocks to the masons faster than they could be laid. As the pyramid rises, the area of working level diminishes; but at the same time, the number of blocks needed to lay each course is reduced by a factor of the square of the shortening of the sides, so the construction rises faster as it goes.

Dragging the pyramid blocks to working level up earthen ramps is one of several well publicized techniques worked out by scientists, including some professional engineers. Earthen ramps are plausible because they are feasible. But this pedestrian kind of engineering is never used by workmen in a competitive industry. An earthen ramp, besides requiring the moving of several times the amount of material involved in the pyramids themselves, won't stay put under long and heavy use. Earth flows under pressure, and the weight of



RAISING STONES TO THE TOP OF A PYRAMID
WITH COUNTERWEIGHTED PULLEYS

the ramps themselves would be sufficient to generate flow. The earthen slopes of railway grades are built on a trestle framework filled with rock to keep them stabilized. It is impossible to walk on fresh earthen fill, nor will fresh fill support several tons of rock and the slaves to haul it. A hard surface must be laid on the ramps to keep feet and load from sinking into it and tearing the ramp down about as fast as it can be rebuilt.

These problems are not insurmountable; all it takes is a lot more work. It is the cost-time-labor inefficiencies that make naive technology impractical. You must remember that pyramid building in ancient Egypt was a big industry, developed over thousands of years, and Egyptian businessmen practically invented accounting.

Critics object that there is no record of the Egyptians using wheels for industrial technology at the time the pyramids are believed to have been built. This is a specious argument when examined in historical context. The only reason we do not know how the pyramids were built is that there is no record to tell us. Without those missing records, we cannot know whether the Egyptians used wheels or not. We do not even know for certain that the people we call the Egyptians built the Great Pyramid in the first place. The only convincing evidence of the time of its construction is a cartouche painted on one of the interior stones signifying that the quarry supplied the order for Cheops.

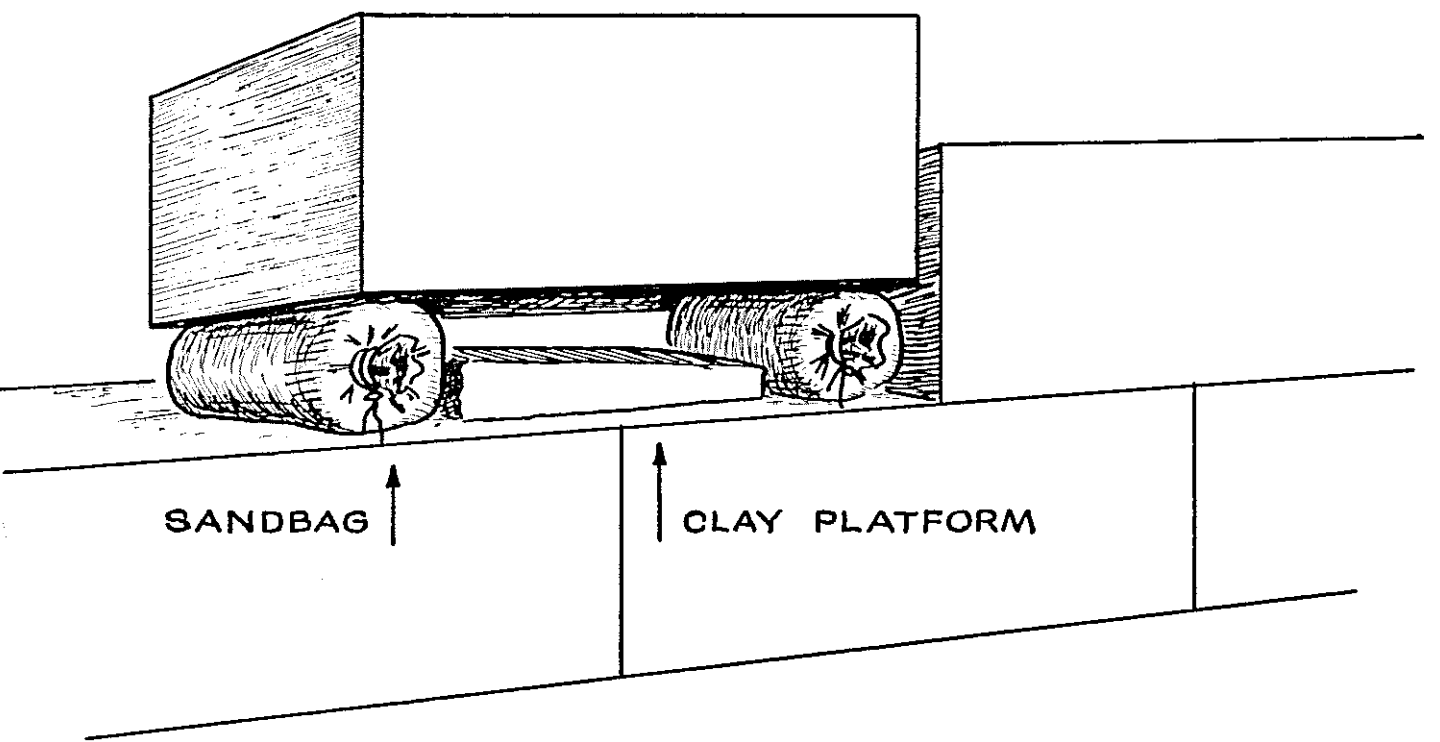
When there is but one piece of evidence, we have to make of it what we can; we cannot deny its significance. But people in the construction business know that when a shipment of three million units is spot-labeled with the customer's order number, marking just one unit is not the practice; in a normal shipment of that amount, at least three thousand stones should be labeled. And why would a shipping label be left on the *interior* facing of a religious monument? The possibility should not be overlooked that the single scription of Cheops's cartouche may be an example of prehistoric graffiti. Until authenticated records are provided, it is not unreasonable to assume that engineers who developed mathematics at least as far as the Greeks, who designed a monument incorporating the ratios of the Earth, Sun, and Moon, who perfected astronomy to the

limit of the unaided eye, and who put a polished finish on a stone mountain with such precision that irregularities are practically undetectable without measurement by laser, probably also used the wheel.

Rather more puzzling is the absence of any record of the ancillary industries needed to support pyramid building. The manufacture of tool bits to cut stone must have employed as much manpower as the transport industry involved in moving monoliths by the ton. Construction men know that the replacement of lost tools is a serious expense for the company and crew. Yet not only is there no record of the means the prehistoric stonecutters used, but no tools have been found in the rubble left behind after construction. Neatness must have been rewarded beyond all other virtues in the ancient Egyptian construction industry; you need only consider the polished casing of the Pyramids to believe it.

Reporters compare the precise setting of the prehistoric megaliths with the casual tolerances of modern stonework and marvel. The only reason modern builders work to a tolerance of a quarter-inch is that there are no practical reasons to be more precise—and powerful economic reasons for not trying to be. (But if you ever visit a dry dock, you will see tonnages thousands of times more massive than the most stupendous works of the ancients set into position with a precision comparable to the Great Pyramid's; if a ship does not balance on its keel exactly where the blocks are set for it, it may topple over and put the dock out of business for several months until it is cut to pieces for removal like the monuments at Abu Simbel. Out of necessity, shipwrights developed techniques for placing hulls by hand because no machinery is big enough.) Given economic reason to be exacting, modern masons can equal the ancients. (The grinding of giant astronomical mirror lenses is a hand job.) In a tradesman's opinion, the only reason the prehistoric megaliths were dressed to tolerances within a millimeter (at least once in a while) is that the labor was economical to perform within the context of the masons' operations.

A megalith brought into position on the course of stone being laid is supported on two leather bags filled with sand, one bag at each end. A platform of viscous clay or mortar is



SETTING MEGALITHS

built up between the sandbags. When the bags are opened, the sand pours out, allowing the stone to settle onto the clay platform. As soon as the bags are free of the weight of the stone, they are snatched away by apprentices (the slow boys can be recognized kneading mortar with the stumps of their arms). If the top surface of the clay is slanted, the megalith will slide by its own weight, tight against its neighbor. The only technical problem is mixing clay to support the stone long enough for maneuvering, but still fluid enough to be squeezed out completely by the time the next stone is brought in for laying.

For a megalith weighing dozens of tons to slide easily over the clay, the broad bearing surfaces must be smoothly dressed. As the smoothing of the broad surfaces cannot be left undone, it is no big deal to dress the abutting ends to an equal finish; the precision of the ends is not critical, so the job can be given to apprentices for their practice. A technique like this would be considered only when the cranes raising the stones to the working course were not adequate for precision setting.

It is likely that the millions of blocks used in the construction of the pyramids were transported from the quarry to the job site over a rail skidway. Rails are far more efficient than log rollers. But once you see construction crews at work, other possibilities come to mind. We know that megaliths were transported by barge over water. Now, one technical problem the ancient merchant marine had to solve was getting heavy crates onto a boat. In those days, you see, boats were comparatively small, and when a massive cargo was carried across the gunwales, the boat turned turtle. So the traditional merchantman's crane was developed, using counterweights to maintain an even keel while loading. In the two hundred years since power winches became universal, it has been forgotten that today's basic machinery was developed when all the power had to be supplied by muscle. Winches in the confined area of a top deck are limited to small loads, and pulleys are limited by friction, unless fitted with roller bearings and chain. So when the ancient longshoremen had a heavy idol to ship to Thebes, they used counterweights to lift the thing as well as get it over

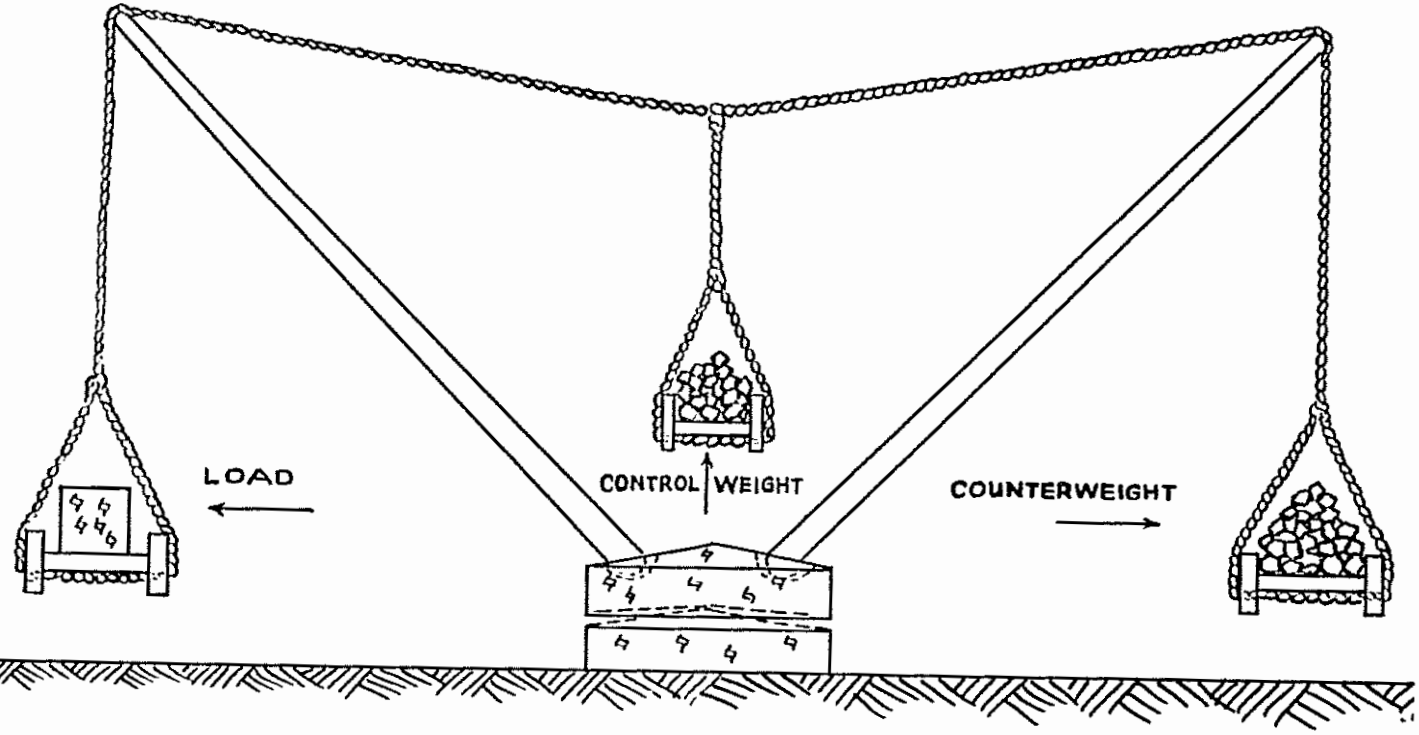
the gunwale without capsizing the boat. Herodotus says that the Egyptians were exceedingly clever in the invention of counterweights.

Once the system of counterweights is developed, construction practice inevitably turns to megaliths, because it is far easier to handle one big stone than to shape the hundreds of little blocks each megalith replaces. By far the biggest advantage of megalithic construction is permanence. Brick buildings can be torn down by every marauding horde that passes through the country, but no one is going to knock over a temple held together by fifty-ton lintels.

The counterweighted cranes developed to pass cargo between ship and shore need not be limited to a single lift. In crowded shipyards today, sections of ships are transported across busy work areas through the air, being passed from one crane to another. Workmen become so skillful that the loads may never be set down between first lift and final deposit. The same principle is practicable for the transport of building stone from the prehistoric quarry to the job site. When heavy cargo is shipped out by the millions of units over hundreds of years, economics justifies the construction of a chain of cranes, set about fifty yards apart, to transport material in a continuous stream over all kinds of terrain—like a pipeline, the most efficient of all material transports.

The design of the merchant ship's crane is scaled up for overland transport of ancient building materials. The base of the transport crane is a stone disc, about six to eight feet in diameter and a foot or two thick. The bottom surface is flat enabling it to rest securely on the ground; the top surface is fashioned into a shallow cone. Another stone disc of the same dimensions is set onto the base. The bottom surface of the top disc is made into a negative cone so that the wheel can rotate, balanced on the base without sliding off.

At opposite sides of the top surface of the upper wheel, hemispherical depressions are carved, about a foot deep and wide enough to contain the fire-hardened butts of a pair of booms. The booms can be extended by splints to extend over one hundred feet upward and outward at a forty–five degree angle. They are held balanced in position by a line passed over



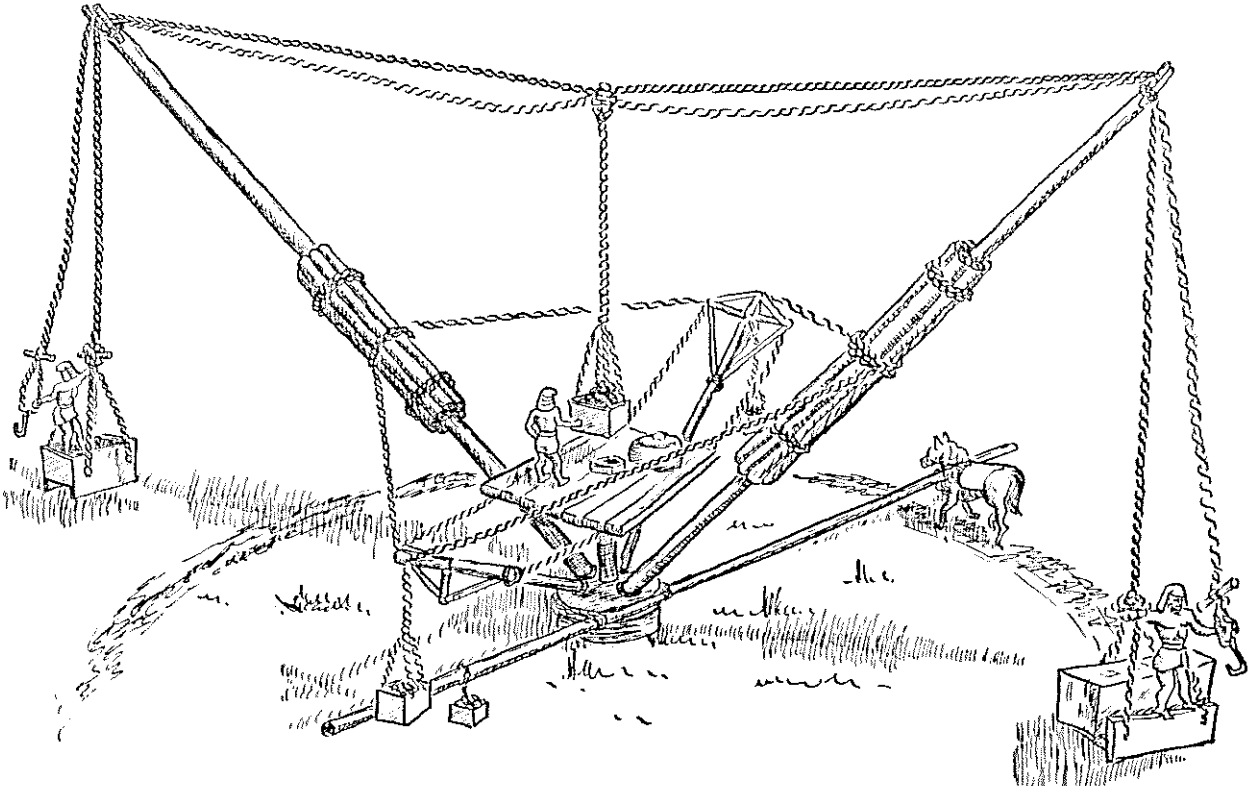
PRINCIPLES OF MEGALITHIC CRANE

their upper ends, from which a heavy container is suspended at each end. Now, if a light line is suspended from the center of the main cross line, a small amount of force will pull the line down; closing the straight angle of the cross line brings the ends of the booms together. As the booms come together, rolling without friction in the cups holding their butts, the top ends rise, lifting the containers. The practical amount of rise is no more than a foot or two before the changing load vectors multiply the tension of the lines to their breaking point. But within this narrow range of efficiency, one man can raise many tons, and the requirements of transport can be served as soon as the load is clear of the ground.

In operation, cargo is loaded onto one container, while the other container is counterbalanced with ballast. When the cargo is a replicated building block, the weight remains constant, so there is no delay in balancing it with a counterweight of known measure. The control line suspended from the cross line carries a counterweight, too, sufficient to balance the container units, so the operator riding the top bearing stone need pull down on the control line with little more than the force required to overcome inertia. The control line also serves to take up slack in the cross line as the hawsers stretch during service. Once off the ground, the load is carried around the reach of the booms by rotating the crane. The friction on the bearing stones is overcome by employing a draft animal.

A chain of these transport cranes would pass a continuous stream of building stone from the quarry to the city at walking speed, pausing only long enough to transfer the loads from one crane to another; while down the other side, an equal weight of ballast would be transported from city to quarry. The ballast side need not be deadheading all the time; instead of ballast, supplies needed by the quarry can be packed for transport in containers of unit weight. This system is low technology, labor intensive and non-polluting; when all the costs are accounted for, we can hardly improve on the efficiency today.

Once industrial machinery is put into production, the men who do the job always add improvements with or without the cooperation of the design office. Sooner or later, it will oc-

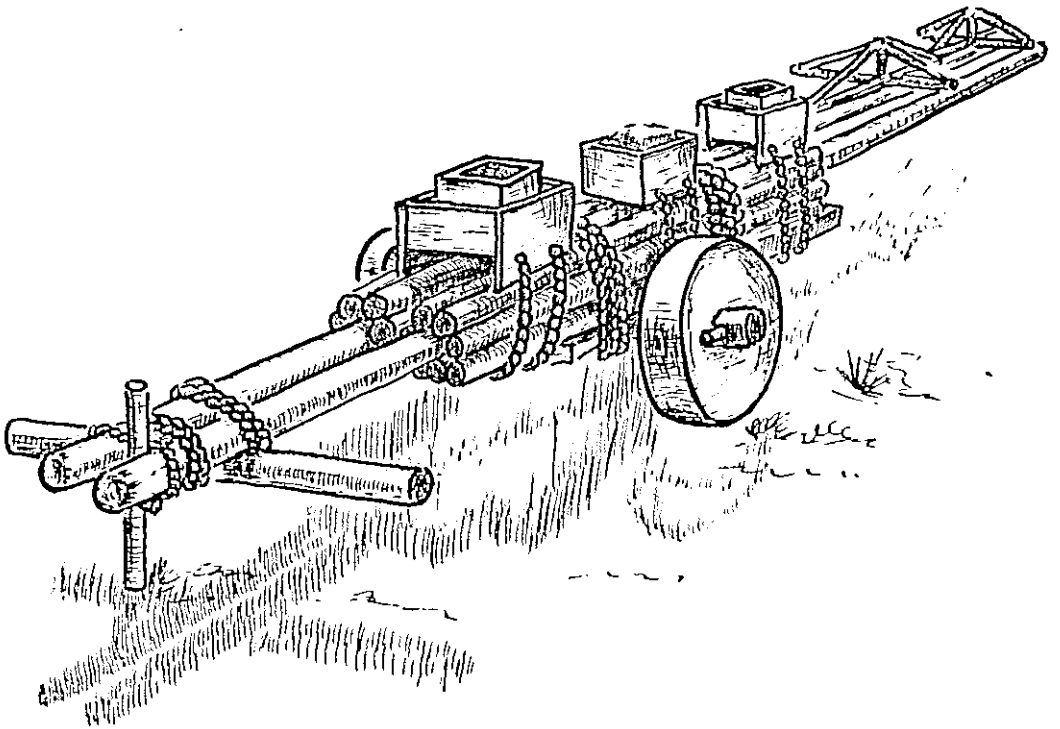


MEGALITHIC CRANE IN OPERATION

cur to a crane jockey that his pony is sweating too hard, so he will drill the center out of the top bearing to form a pipe through which he can pour clay slip to lubricate the bearing. The weight of the load will hold the bearing surfaces so tightly together, and they will be ground to such an even curve, that very little—if any—of the slip will be able to flow between them. So the operator will add a pole to the bottom of the counterweight of the control line; the butt of the pole fits nicely into the lubricating hole. When the weight is pulled down, the tamp is forced onto the clay in the pipe, and waddayaknow —pressure lubrication! An alternate means of lubrication probably used, instead of the fanciful design just described, is the inclusion of naturally oily shoes between the bearing surfaces, like the lignum vitae used today in the heaviest marine bearings.

A stationary crane has limited use, even in an industrial yard. When the ancient engineers designed the transport crane, they made it portable. When the job is completed, components are disassembled. The tamp for the pressure lubrication is passed through holes drilled through the centers of both bearing stones so that they will roll like a pair of wheels joined by an axle. The booms and spars are balanced across the axle. The whole bundle of sticks is tied together by the lines, and the draft animal is hitched up to haul the crane away to the next building site.

The first critic to whom I submitted this engineering system was a retired Master of Exams from Cambridge University, J. Lloyd Brereton, to whom I am indebted for first publication. Brereton reasoned that transport cranes must have been as ubiquitous in the Age of Gold as trailer rigs are on today's highways, so he referred to the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica* to see if any available evidence supports such speculation. Obviously, wood and rope do not outlast the pyramids, so we cannot expect to find any organic remains of the prehistoric transport system. But throughout the sands of the Middle East, archaeologists *have* found huge stone discs in considerable numbers. Tribespeople who found them first have been using these "millstones of the gods" for thousands of years to grind their grain. The hole in the center of the upper disc is designed



MEGALITHIC CRANE READY TO ROLL

to pour in grist, and the conical bearing surfaces allow the flour to flow out around the edge as the stone is turned by a draft animal.

Naturally, modern scientists assume without question that the stones were manufactured for no other purpose. But it is curious that no other societies in the world have developed rotary millstones like the "millstones of the gods"; everywhere else, grain is ground by women rubbing it back and forth in cylindrical bowls in mortar–and–pestle fashion.

The real mystery of the megalithic monuments is that no one over the past two thousand years was able to figure out a way to build them. Yet any competent tradesman could have told the authorities how to build these megalithic monuments, if anyone bothered to ask him. But no one *did* ask, because most people believe their authorities know everything. In Rhodesia there is a magnificent city built of precision masonry, constructed on a monumental scale comparable to the minor pyramids; the natives call the ruins Zimbabwe, and they attribute the construction to their ancestors. The European invaders found it necessary to establish the myth of white supremacy in order to justify their rape of the country. If the black people are capable of constructing cities like Zimbabwe, then the whites cannot possibly be biologically superior. So scientific authorities assured the world that Zimbabwe was constructed by a mysterious civilization, most likely the same people who built the pyramids; but whoever they were, they were not black. Now that Rhodesia has been taken over by democratic parties, the country is being called Zimbabwe by its own people, and the world is accepting as fact that the natives' ancestors are the people who built the monumental city.

This essay is not intended to explain how the prehistoric megalithic engineers *did* build their monumental temples. That question can be answered only by archaeologists on the basis of the evidence they dig up. The problem is, *how could it be possible* for a Neolithic society to have engineered the monuments we find today?

Now just because the engineering outlined in this essay is derived through the oldest traditions of the construction

trade, and proven practical for megalithic monuments, it does not mean that the ancients used these methods or anything like them. Construction contracting is the most creative enterprise. At any given time and place, a contractor avails himself—from a variable selection of resources within his competence—to implement the technology he believes most likely to be executed profitably. A big-time operator like General Pyramids Consolidated, needing to keep its army of slaves busy earning its garlic during a slack century, may very well have put them to work piling earthen ramps up the sides of the pyramids with wicker baskets. On the other hand, I believe the way the ancients transported megaliths for their monuments was to attach a small tuning fork to each stone, causing the module to levitate when the properly tuned vibration was sounded. When a monolith is set to resounding, its vibrations keep it in the air most of the time. During the greater part of the wave cycle, when the mass is floating, a light touch will move it in any direction.

I believe ancient engineers used this technology because the ancient myths describe it. This application of musical theory is far too sophisticated for a Stone Age people to incorporate in their myths unless the authors actually witnessed the technology in operation.

You didn't think I was going to let you go without *some* speculation, did you?

2.

THIS CRYSTAL PLANET

How to Create a Worldwide Communications Network—Still Using Bronze Age Technology

One disturbing puzzle of archaeological science is the number of similarities between some aboriginal cultures widely dispersed around the world. Pyramids, for example, are found not only in Egypt, but also in Peru, in Mexico, on the South Sea Islands, and in China. Moreover, many of the details of construction are identical. The present-day Indians of Peru build reed rafts identical to the ones pictured on the walls of ancient Egypt, and the modern Indian word for this craft is the same word spoken by the Nilots thousands of years ago. There are so many similarities between the Aztec tongue and classic Greek that the early European explorers believed they had discovered a lost Greek colony. Aztec-Greek lexicons have been compiled, and modern exploration is finding remains in South

America indicating a Phoenician origin. In *Mysteries From Forgotten Worlds,* Charles Berlitz reproduces an "alphabet" of pictograms found in the ruins of a prehistoric city of western India and compares it with the undeciphered writing of Easter Island; the glyphs are identical.

The evidence indicates a cultural migration from the centers of Mediterranean civilization across the Atlantic and around the world. Thor Heyerdahl proved this theory feasible by mounting a series of daring expeditions to cross the world's oceans on primitive rafts. Anyone who missed the films can read the adventures of this courageous amateur in his books, *Kon-Tiki* and *The Ra Expeditions.*

Heyerdahl proved that the Queen of Sheba could have hocked the crown jewels to outfit a task force of three papyrus rafts for crossing the Atlantic and finding a sea route to Cipango, dispersing Nilotic culture and smallpox en route. But no original thinker constructs a perfect and complete theory. Eventually so many loose ends accumulate that a better theory is required. Heyerdahl left an awful lot of loose ends.

Ever since the first sailor lost sight of land, survivors of shipwrecks have been cast up on faraway shores. But none of them transplanted a civilization. Aside from knowing how to build boats and sail them, most sailors were barely civilized enough to keep themselves stoned on grog. Any of them lucky enough to survive a greeting from headhunters went native as soon as they saw *wahine.*

Drifting sailors did not disperse culture; they dissipated it. It took centuries for Europe's highly organized and heavily supported American colonies to become self-supporting, and most of them could not survive from Thanksgiving to Christmas without help from the native Indians. For Mediterranean culture to have dispersed on papyrus rafts, the sea lanes between Memphis and Mexico must have carried more traffic than the great ocean liners during the heyday of American immigration.

One other problem Heyerdahl neglected to mention: Like wine and oysters, language does not travel well at pedestrian speeds. Within a generation, language changes; within a lifetime, classical Latin became Italian, French, Spanish, Ru-

manian, and Romansh. If a language is to maintain its identity around the world, rapid communication is required. If Nilotic civilization dispersed to the Americas and the South Pacific, it could not have drifted on rafts. Moreover, when the pyramid builders decided to disperse, they did not roam randomly, but proceeded *directly* to locations comprising a global network.

Inspection of a global relief map reveals that the eastern contours of the Americas conform closely enough to the western contours of Europe and Africa for the two sides of the Atlantic to have been joined together at one time. You will also notice a string of salt lakes, progressively diminishing in size, stretching from the Straits of Gibraltar through the Black Sea and along the northern base of the Himalayas, suggesting that an ocean passage once connected the Atlantic with the Pacific between Eurasia on the north and the Afro-Indian land masses on the south. People have noticed this structure since the first world maps were drawn and the Theory of the Continental Drift was proposed for serious scientific consideration over a hundred years ago. The original theory was disregarded until the undersea drilling of oceanographers after World War II brought up cores that could be explained in no other way.

As you can see for yourself, all the southern land masses duplicate the same shape and contours. South America is a larger, elongated version of the Indian subcontinent. Africa is Australia in capitals. In addition, all these large blocks have a large island off their southeastern coasts: Tierra del Fuego, Madagascar, SriLanka, and Tasmania. Such regularity suggests that the continental slabs did not break off and drift in an entirely haphazard manner. The pattern suggests that the entire southern continent of Gondwanaland must have been formed as a regular crystal during the same heat when the geological crust solidified. The lines of cleavage not only follow regular fracture planes, but are also determined by a regular structure governing the dynamic tectonic forces that cause the Continental Drift. There may be a corresponding regularity in the original contours of the northern continents, but the outlines have been obliterated by the collisions that have occurred since. In artistic analysis, a general rule is to begin with the largest forms first, and then follow the natural subdivisions.

The largest geographical feature on our planet is the Pacific Ocean. Notice that the Pacific Rim forms a rough circle defining about a third of the global surface. With such a large fraction of the geography covered by a circular basin, it follows that the center of the Earth's land masses must be approximately opposite the center of the Pacific. When the globe is turned around, you see that antipodal to the center of the world ocean is the region where Europe, Asia, and Africa are in continental collision.

The distribution of land and sea has all the appearance of a global flow carrying the continental crusts from a pole at the center of the Pacific to the opposite pole. The Americas and the World Island have been separated by a counterflow that does not extend into the circle of the Pacific Rim defining a third of the Earth's surface.

In order that Gondwanaland be formed around the South Pole, we may infer that another tectonic current existed during a primordial geological era, flowing south from the Equator, if not from the North Pole. This flow was reversed from south to north during an intermediary era before the present flow pattern became established. The fact that the South Polar region is a circular plateau ten thousand feet above the sea, whereas the North Polar region is a circular ocean basin, indicates that the tectonic current arises roughly around the South Polar Circle and stops roughly around the North Polar Circle. This coincidence, in turn, suggests the angle of the Polar Axis relative to the plane of the ecliptic is involved with the direction of the tectonic currents, just as this angle determines the currents of global weather patterns. In this era the tectonic currents appear to be aligned along an east-west axis. This suggests catastrophic shifts in the Polar Axis. Now, as it happens, drill cores brought up from the ocean beds do show sudden reversals of the Earth's magnetic field in geological times.

Because almost all the visible features of the planet are in the Eastern Hemisphere, a look at the center of the world may give some clue to account for the peculiar geological distribution. As soon as you perceive that the Pacific Rim draws a rough circle around the Nile Delta, you will notice that many of the lesser geographical structures—including under-

sea ridges—also form circles around the Delta. If you take a compass and scribe these circles, you will eventually have enough data to show that the major land forms follow arcs at intervals of 15 degrees from the Delta, especially the arcs at 90 and 120 degrees. These are the major intervals of spherical surface harmonic overtones.

The pattern is quite obvious; the Earth's surface is defined by vibratory currents. The Moon was found to ring like a bell when struck by the first Lunar Lander in a seismic test. If the Moon is a planetary crystal, why not the Earth?

The Great Pyramid at Giza is located at the center of the world's land masses and in the highest concentration of natural voltage combined with a tolerable climate. When the British inventor Sir W. Siemens climbed to the summit of the Great Pyramid, he found his body discharging sparks as if he were standing on a high-voltage coil. In fact, the atmospheric voltage on the Giza has been measured at 500 per vertical meter, and Siemens should be credited for discovering what Pyramid Power is all about.

The goal of Heyerdahl's first expedition was Easter Island (also known for manifesting very high electromagnetic potentials), the farthest east of a group of South Pacific islands where the pyramids of another prehistoric civilization have been found. And like the Egyptians, the aboriginal people of this region called themselves Children of the Sun. The South Pacific is at the antipodes—180 degrees from the Nile Delta.

In America, from the Great City of the Sun at prehistoric Cuzco to the Great Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacán, a third great-pyramid civilization arose. This culture ranged along an arc 120 degrees from Giza.

A quarter of the way around the world, 90 degrees in the other direction from Giza, recent archaeological digs have uncovered the greatest pyramids known—a thousand feet on a side—buried in the jungles of southern China, and thought to be natural mountains until the overgrowth was cut away. These mountains are the ancestral homelands of the Japanese, who still believe they are Children of the Sun.

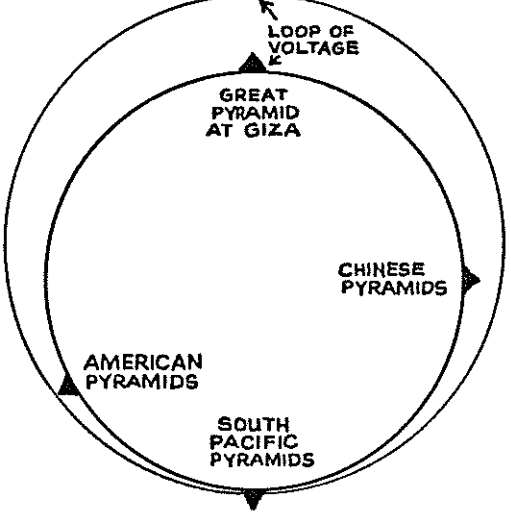
The meaning of this peculiar dispersion was revealed by accident during the early days of World War II. At that

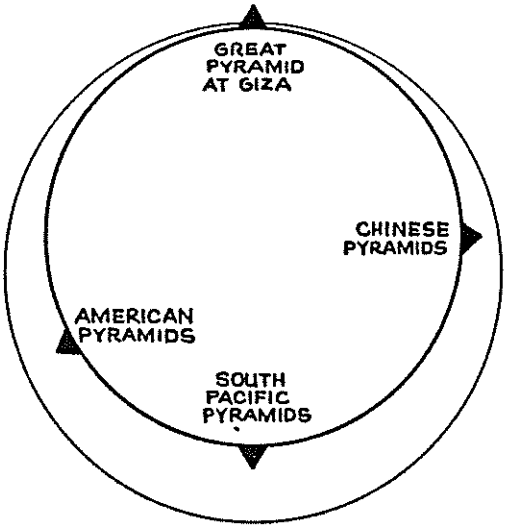
time, radar spotters picked up the echoes of distant aircraft by listening through giant earphones instead of watching blips on fluorescent screens, as is done today. The crews frequently reported hearing whistles of no known cause. Eventually, research reported in *Scientific American* found an ionized layer in the upper atmosphere that filters radio waves selectively in the 7½-cycle-per-second band, and apparently reflects them back to Earth, bringing them to a focus at the antipodes.

When lightning strikes, a broad band of radio waves is emitted, to be heard as static in unfiltered radio sets. The 7½-cycle-per-second band is filtered from lightning discharging at the other side of the world and brought by the Schumann Layer to a focus 180 degrees distant, where the radar spotters heard the filtered static as whistles.

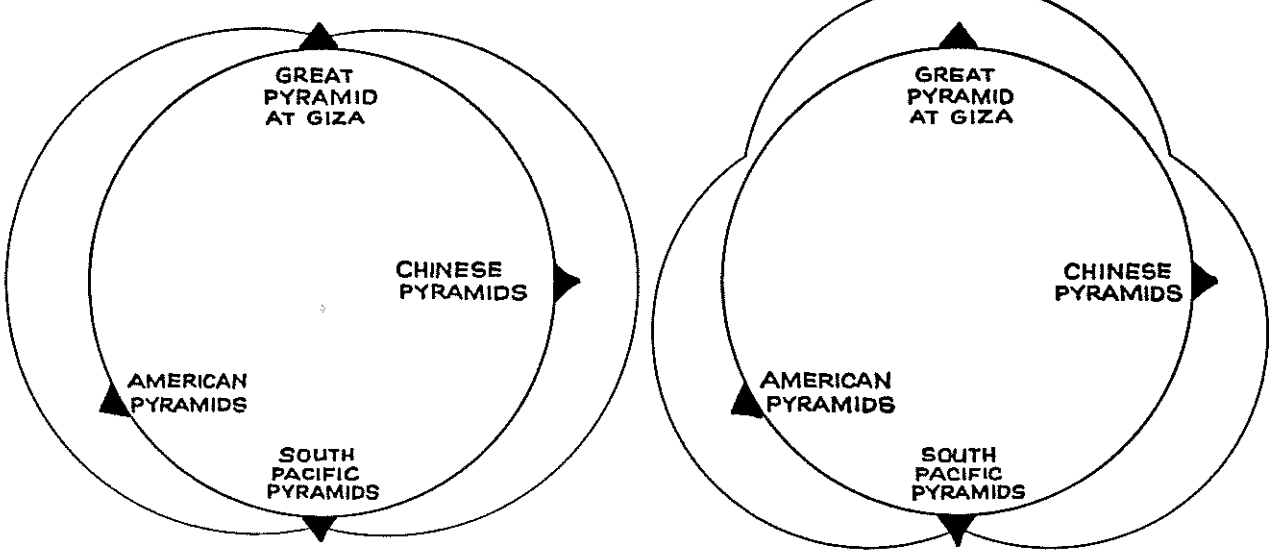
To military engineers, the 7½-cycle-per-second frequency possesses two properties of great value. The Schumann Layer guides this wavelength all around the world without losing signal strength, like light between two mirrors. This wavelength also penetrates water. The United States Navy realized that this was the frequency needed to keep in constant communication with its nuclear submarine fleet, constantly ranging beneath the surface of the world's oceans, and so it constructed a worldwide radio network broadcasting on the 7½ Hz band, called the Sanguine Project—later extended for civilian shipping as the Omega Navigation System.

The striking property of the 7½-cycle-per-second radio wave is that it is exactly 25,000 miles long. A wave broadcast at this frequency will expand in a growing circle until it is as long around as the equator, and then contract until it comes to a focus at the antipodes. At the other side of the world, it reverses phase and direction, expanding again to girdle the globe before returning to another focus at its exact point of origin. The loop of this wave arrives at its point of origin exactly in time to coincide with its own following wave. This means that only a single wave exists at any time, and that the wave encompasses the whole world. The entire planet beats electromagnetically at this frequency, like a cosmic heart. The 7½-cycle-per-second frequency is the fundamental period of surface resonance of the global crystal.





THE FUNDAMENTAL ELECTROMAGNETIC RESONANCE BETWEEN THE EARTH AND ITS SURROUNDING IONOSPHERE CREATES A VOLTAGE LOOP OSCILLATING FROM ONE SIDE OF THE WORLD TO THE OTHER, AS SHOWN IN THIS DIAGRAM.
THE GREAT PYRAMID AT GIZA AND THE GREAT PYRAMIDS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC ARE LOCATED WHERE THE NATURAL GLOBAL VOLTAGE ESTABLISHES THE HIGHEST ELECTRICAL POTENTIAL.



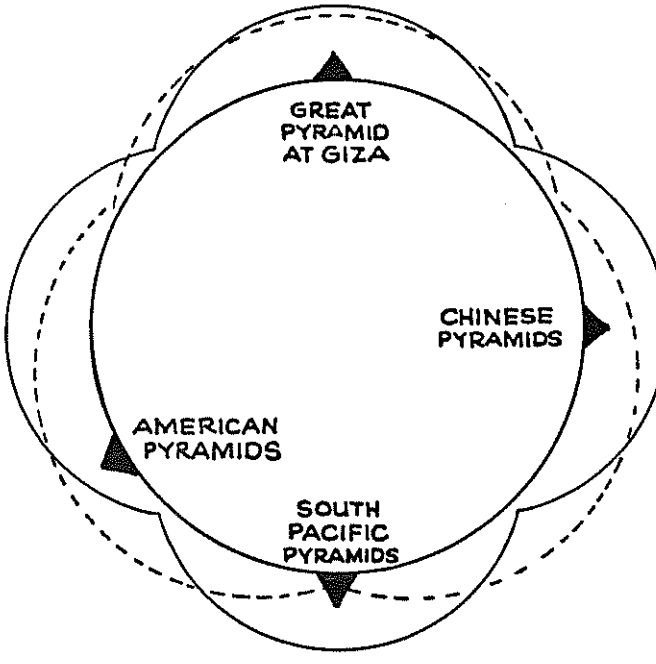
AS THE VOLTAGE LOOP OSCILLATES BETWEEN THE NILE DELTA AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND AT THE ANTIPODES, AN EQUATORIAL LOOP IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE TWO POLES.
THE CHINESE PYRAMIDS ARE FOUND WHERE THE EQUATORIAL LOOP ESTABLISHES THE HIGHEST ELECTRICAL POTENTIAL.

THE AMERICAN PYRAMID CIVILIZATION IS FOUND WHERE THE LOOP OF THE THIRD HARMONIC ESTABLISHES THE HIGHEST ELECTRICAL POTENTIAL.

Resonance in the Schumann Layer means that overtones will be generated at one half the fundamental frequency, one third the fundamental frequency, and one fourth the fundamental frequency, and so on, in successive fractions. The length of the second harmonic overtone is one half the diameter of the Earth, the third harmonic overtone is one third the diameter of the Earth, and the fourth harmonic is one fourth the diameter of the Earth. The pyramid civilization of the South Pacific is halfway around the world from the Nile Delta, the pyramid civilization of America is a third of the way around the world from the Nile Delta, and the forgotten pyramid civilization of prehistoric China is a quarter of the way around the world from the Nile. The great pyramids of the world are located precisely at the places where the strongest electrical potential is concentrated on the Earth, and at the loops of the harmonic standing waves surrounding the Earth. The Schumann Layer functions as a radio loudspeaker with its diaphragm enclosing the entire planet.

The great pyramids of antiquity are a virtual duplication of the modern military radio-communications network, broadcasting on the 7½ Hz band from the main transmission tower on the Giza Plateau, with studios and executive offices in beautiful downtown Memphis.

If the laws governing radio engineering are correctly stated, the pyramids of the world must function as a planetary radio-communications network. The only question is whether the pyramid architects knew what they were doing when they built the original solid-state electronic modules. Ten thousand years from now, astro–archaeologists finding the Telesat Communications modules in stationary orbit around the Earth will likely ask if these electronic capsules were put into orbit (in locations corresponding to the Great Pyramid Network) entirely by accident. Or were they deliberately intended to function as a global communications system? In *Mysteries of the Great Pyramid,* Peter Tompkins reports that all the great cities of prehistory were built up around a central pyramid, and each was located at an exact degree interval from the Great Pyramid at Giza. Now, when settlers are founding a city, their prime considerations are the availability of food, water, de-



WHEN THE FUNDAMENTAL RESONANCE IS SUPERIMPOSED WITH THE SECONDARY, TERTIARY AND QUATERNARY HARMONIC, A STANDING-WAVE VOLTAGE STRUCTURE IS ESTABLISHED, SURROUNDING THE EARTH WITH THE ELECTRICAL VOLTAGE PATTERN SHOWN IN THIS DIAGRAM. ALTHOUGH THE ELECTROMAGNETIC WAVES FLOW AROUND THE WORLD, THE STANDING-WAVE PATTERN REMAINS STATIC.

fense, and trade. Why would a location at a precise degree interval from the Great Pyramid on the Nile Delta be more important? Well, no civilized city can endure without communications.

The radio diaphragm surrounding the Earth is powerful enough to broadcast radio signals at least as far out into interplanetary space as Jupiter. Is there anyone out there listening? Clear NASA photographs received from the space probes reveal a complex of pyramidal structures on the Moon, called the Blair Pinnacles. Had the same photographs been taken anywhere on earth, the Blair Pinnacles would likely be the ruins of a prehistoric temple complex. Mariner 9 has sent back an ambiguous photograph of a colossal pyramidal structure on Mars. If the site proves* artificial, we may be living through the scene from *2001: A Space Odyssey* in which secrecy surrounds the discovery of a polished black monolith in the crater Clavius.

It is technologically feasible for a galactic civilization to implement the principles of pyramidal harmonics to construct a communications network throughout the Solar System, with relays carrying signals to the stars, requiring no power other than the natural resonance of organized space. Such a civilization could very well employ the natives for sweat labor just as the Pentagon hires Eskimos to clear the building sites for the DEW Line. As long as the aborigines can be induced to follow instructions, it isn't necessary that they have the slightest understanding of what they are doing.

Proof that the great pyramids of the world are solid-state electronic modules in a worldwide power-generating and broadcasting network was established over fifty years ago by that superhuman genius, Nikola Tesla. Tesla knew there is a powerful voltage between the Earth and the upper atmosphere; this is what causes lightning to discharge from the Earth to the sky. When an antenna is raised, this voltage climbs it, in a gradient to be concentrated at the tip. Any fluctuation in the natural voltage between Earth and sky generates a flow of electricity in the antenna. This is how a radio receiver works.

**Tom Bearden just reported new data supporting the likelihood of its artificial nature.*

In radio's early days, the current generated in the receiving antenna was fed into a resonating circuit that would filter out the wavelength of the broadcasting station to which it was tuned and amplify the signal until it had enough energy to actuate earphones.

Tesla figured that the Earth would filter out its resonant frequency, amplify the current by its resonance, and function as a capacitor in a circuit as big as the entire planet. He pumped an electric current into the Earth, and tuned to a precise harmonic length of the Earth's resonant frequency. As he expected, the electric wave traveled to the antipodes and bounced back in time to coincide with its own following wave, doubling its amplitude. After repeated amplification in this manner, the electric energy burst from the top of Tesla's pyramidal tower to illuminate the entire countryside with the most spectacular artificial lightning storm ever seen. The surge melted the wiring in all the power generators serving the whole county. No one would supply Tesla with electricity after that.

Undaunted by superabundant success, Tesla continued his experiments to prove that when his antenna was pumping electric waves into the Earth, a standing-wave pattern was generated in the planet's geo-electromagnetic structure. At precise degree intervals, or harmonic fractions thereof, all Tesla had to do was drive a metal rod into the ground and plug in the electric frying pan, hair dryer, or washing machine. Tesla was the last of the big-time pyramid architects.

It was Nikola Tesla who electrified the world with alternating current. To the end of his life, Tesla dreamed of recycling all those unsightly high-voltage electric power transmission towers and replacing them with broadcast power generated and received through the Earth. But if power could be tapped from the Earth, how would Consolidated Edison-General Electric-Standard Oil bill you for it?

If we can all communicate on Pyramid Power, where does Ma Bell cut in? When he died in New York City on a winter night in 1943, Tesla was alone in a hotel room, possessing little more than when he had arrived as an immigrant with four cents in his pockets. The Secret Service immediately

sealed his room, and whatever papers he had were transferred to government vaults, where they remain to this day.

There is one more discovery to be made by an inspection of a global map. The range of the great-pyramid civilizations is limited to the Tropic Zone, but is not quite parallel to the equator. The Great Pyramid at Giza is just about as far north of the Tropic of Cancer as Easter Island is south of the Tropic of Capricorn. If we tilt the Tropic Zone to pass through those two extreme points, we find that the realigned Tropics contain the Pyramid Zone neatly between them.

If the Tropics are tilted in this way, the new North Pole is located in Greenland—which brings up a curious coincidence. Immanuel Velikovsky states that the North Pole was situated in Greenland during an earlier geophysical period. Look at your globe and draw a circle around the area covered by ice during the last era of planetary glaciation. You will find that its center is in Greenland. Now, how it is possible for Siberia to foster subtropical flora and fauna while Chicago is buried under miles of ice, unless the North Pole is in Greenland?

This suggests that the Great Pyramid Broadcasting System depends upon receiving solar radiation at 90 degrees for the most efficient operation. The source of energy must have come from cosmic space. The power generated by the pyramids depends upon the passage of the Sun, the positions of the planets, and the altitude of the ecliptic. The most important duty of the Priests of the Sun was the forecasting of the ephemerides, and—following the construction of the Great Pyramid—their supreme technological achievement was the perfection of mathematical instruments for celestial observation.

The proclamation that pyramid mathematics was developed to forecast the annual flooding of the Nile could be made only by scholars who never worked on a farm. Farmers don't need such minute precision; for thousands of years, crops have been harvested despite religious calendars—the Moslem calendar, for example—running as much as half a year out of sync with the seasons.

The original network was likely constructed before the last geological catastrophe which shifted the Polar Axis. The original pyramid could be counted on to generate vibrations

for millennia without maintenance, except for adjustments to the calendar from time to time. The power stations could even be left as unmanned posts checked occasionally by servicemen. Resident technicians needed no more knowledge of how the solid-state modules worked than the billing office of the Tennessee Valley Authority knows about electrical wiring. Over thousands of years of undisturbed operation, the regular duties of the staff would degenerate into superstitious ritual (just as occurs in every public-service bureaucracy). A major disturbance of the Earth's electromagnetic parameters, however, would result in an immediate, complete, worldwide power failure. And no one would know what to do.

Sudden and violent change in the Earth's electromagnetic structure includes a breakdown of the radiation shield in the ionosphere, admitting massive floods of cosmic radiation to the Earth's surface. All vital and radioactive processes would be affected, so that the carbon dating process archaeologists rely on may not be reliable for times prior to such a catastrophe. (Naturally, professional archaeologists resist any evidence that the carbon dating on which all their work is based may not be valid.) The Great Pyramid at Giza may be very much more ancient than archaeologists are wont to believe; all the other lesser pyramids may very well be comparatively recent copies.

In some civilized centers, the civil service was well enough established to construct more pyramids to replace the ones which no longer functioned at design efficiency, and the dispersed tribes built smaller pyramids where they settled. These copies were built on a smaller, human scale, however, instead of the former superhuman proportions; the massive megaliths were reduced to adobe bricks. But since the builders had lost the science of harmonics (if they ever possessed it in the first place), they copied their pyramids precisely in all the wrong places. When these new structures failed to function, the ignorant and terrified people sacrificed everything they had to the Sun, imploring it to restore function and power to the pyramid. The Aztecs commemorated these supplications and sacrifices until the modern era.

As long as the American physicist remains in his lab

and the American archaeologist remains in his dig, neither specialist will ever suspect that each sees but a part of the whole truth.

Although the Soviet system is inefficient in delivering consumer goods to its people, Communists are more receptive to revolutionary engineering. So while American authorities deny Tesla's discoveries, Soviet engineers have built a complex of Tesla towers in Karelia. Independent amateurs in America have found that the Soviets are using them to alter the natural pattern of electromagnetic standing waves surrounding the Earth. Because the atmosphere carries electrical charge, air currents tend to follow geo-electromagnetic flow patterns. When the natural standing-wave pattern is changed, the climate changes accordingly. Have you noticed?

Independent researchers, comparing the locations of the exceptional number of severe earthquakes during the past decade with the report of Soviet nuclear tests, conjecture that the Reds are using seismic waves to plot the pattern of standing waves defining the interior of the Earth: They give the planet a concentrated shock at a fault line and wait to see where the impulse emerges on the other side of the world. As long as local authorities deny the existence of this technology, how can the victims prove their earthquake was not a natural event?

One of the most competent authorities on Soviet military technology is Tom Bearden, described by *Fate* magazine as a one-man think-tank who overawes his colleagues by his high-octane genius. After retiring from the United States Army with a rank of lieutenant colonel, Bearden was employed by the military defense establishment to design war games, program computers to play them, and serve as chief planning officer for interpreting the results in deploying America's nuclear missile system.

Bearden has come to the conclusion that the sonic booms and flashes of light over the northeastern American seaboard during 1976–77 were the effects of plasma vortices the Soviets' Karelian Tesla towers have succeeded in transmitting through the Earth.

In theory, Bearden says that these plasma vortices can

pack the zap of a hundred-megaton hydrogen bomb. But not to worry; the Soviets are merely target practicing with low-caliber ammunition. Completely retired now, Bearden is organizing amateur scientists throughout the world to establish evidence that the Soviets are really doing these things. (The findings are published in a quarterly bulletin available from P.O. Box 1182, Huntsville, Ala. 35807.) Curiously, his international organization has recently been decimated by a spate of illness, death, violent attacks, destruction of papers and property, and official harassment—everyone who makes noises about Tesla's inventions receives the same treatment. Bearden is playing General Billy Mitchell; if no one listens, it may be Pearl Harbor all over again.

3.

BEYOND VELIKOVSKY

Einstein's Relativity Demonstrated, Mining Pure Energy from Empty Space, and the Green Hills of Mars

Scientific theory preaches that our Solar System condensed from a cloud of galactic dust. Mutual gravitational attraction is calculated to have drawn the nebulous dust particles toward a common center, inducing rotational velocity in the process. When density of dust at the center became high enough, pressure generated heat for the nuclear fusion of a star to develop. Centrifugal force flattened out the primordial nebula into a disc, and then streamers were thrown off to condense independently, forming a system of planets. Photographs of nebulas in deep space illustrate each stage of the evolutionary process, so why couldn't it have happened here just like that?

Well, to begin with, just about every planet in the Solar System exhibits some anomaly that proves the Nebular Hy-

pothesis could not possibly have happened the way we are told in school.

If you refer to the figures supplied by Funk and Wagnall Encyclopedia, you will see that Jupiter has one tenth the diameter of the Sun, but it rotates a hundred times faster. Volume is diameter cubed, and momentum is one half of velocity squared. Therefore, the Sun has a thousand times the volume of Jupiter, but Jupiter has five times the angular momentum. Jupiter is also a fairly dense planet, containing more mass than all the rest of the Solar System combined, outside of the Sun. Therefore, even after we make allowances for difference of radius, quick and dirty calculation indicates that Jupiter has about as much angular momentum as all the rest of the Solar System put together, including the Sun.

But that should not be! You see, if all the rotational energy in the Solar System is generated by gravitational collapse, then almost all the momentum in the Solar System must be concentrated in the Sun. While not altogether impossible, it is exceedingly unlikely for any planetary material to be flung away from a condensing core without losing the rotational momentum it acquired by condensing in the first place.

Venus rotates backward on its axis, and radiates *more* energy than it receives from the Sun. At some stretch of the definition, Venus can be regarded as a miniature star. Dust clouds whirling in space are almost certain to be as homogeneous as any other gaseous mixture, so why is the chemistry of Venus grossly different from all the other inner planets? And why did Venus just happen to lock into a three-two orbital-rotational ratio with the Earth without inducing corresponding changes in the angular momentum of our planet? We are, after all, more alike in size and mass than any other bodies in the system, so any gravitational friction between us should be settled by mutual compromise; instead, Venus gave in to us entirely.

The Earth has by far the largest satellite in the Solar System, and the farthest away. The moon, in fact, is not a satellite of the Earth at all. Moon and Earth form a double planetary system, both going around the Sun while the Moon is perturbed to cross and recross the Earth's orbit. If you draw

the orbits of the Earth and the Moon to scale, you will see for yourself that the Moon never curves around the Earth as the orbit of a true satellite must. The Moon always falls in a curve to the Sun—sometimes more, sometimes less. When the curve is tighter, the Moon accelerates and passes the Earth; when the curve is less, the Moon falls back until it is swept back across the Earth's orbit again.

The polar axes of the Earth and Mars are tilted nearly 30 degrees from the plane of their orbits. When a nebula condenses into a disc, all spins must be in the same plane. One of Mars's satellites, Phobos, completes an orbital revolution before Mars makes a polar rotation. Such excess of angular velocity makes Phobos one body in the solar system that could have been cast off by centrifugal force, but it is generally agreed to be a captured asteroid.

The Nebular Hypothesis does not account for the swarms of broken rocks and planetoids orbiting the sun between Mars and Jupiter.

Jupiter radiates more energy than it receives from the Sun, and seems to be growing hotter. Jupiter really *is* a small star. If so, then the Jovian satellites will eventually be the ideal homes for life to evolve in the Solar System, independently of the Earth. They already have an atmosphere and ice; they need only heat.

Saturn is lighter than water, and stands out with its well-developed ring system. Faint rings have been found circling Jupiter and Uranus too, so it may be supposed that all giant planets have the gravitational intensity sufficient to hold interplanetary dust. The Nebular Hypothesis does not explain why Saturn should be so egregiously favored while Jupiter has practically no rings to show for itself.

The axis of Uranus and the revolutionary plane of all its satellites are at right angles to the plane of the rest of the solar system. As Uranus makes its annual rounds of the Sun, Uranians see the Sun spiral out from one pole until it circles the equator and then spiral in toward the opposite pole, then back again. While the Sun is over the equatorial region, day and night resemble our daily cycle on Earth, but during the season when the Sun shines directly over a pole, it is seen to

circle around the horizon of the respective temperate region giving constant daylight for (Earth) years without interruption; the equator receives constant twilight while the Sun is over either pole. It is impossible for the velocities of the Uranian system to have evolved at right angles to the solar nebula that created it; it had to have been rolled over onto its side by an interplanetary collision.

The amount of energy required to rotate the axis of a spinning body 90 degrees is equal to its rotational momentum. Uranus is one of the giant planets; an impact sufficient to knock a giant planet onto its side could be delivered by nothing less than a direct impact with another giant planet or a near collision with a celestial body many times more massive. But no other planet can possibly exist in the same region of Uranus' solar orbit while traveling in the opposite direction, necessary if a collision is to take place. Therefore, the anomaly of Uranus can be accounted for most satisfactorily by proposing that an alien star entered the Solar System on a collision course from the interstellar reaches.

If the alien star were the same size as Uranus, a direct impact would be necessary to make the Uranian system turn right about. But a *direct* impact would have exploded both celestial bodies and nothing would exist in the Uranian orbit today except another ring of interplanetary rubble. On the other hand, an alien star the size of the Sun would have torn the entire Solar System to pieces by its massive gravitational field. Therefore, we can infer that the alien must have been about ten times the mass of Uranus, and probably traveling at a speed in the range of solar escape velocity.

Neptune has lost control of its satellites. The inner one revolves backward as a singular retrograde planetoid, while the outer satellite has the most eccentric orbit in the entire Solar System, not including the comets.

Because of its small size—and an orbit so eccentric that its radial differential is greater than the entire Solar System, inclusive of Neptune—it is generally accepted that Pluto must have been a satellite of Neptune that escaped into solar orbit. When professional astronomers admit this much and no

more, they are as guilty of prevarication as ecologists who do not mention that oil is burned to charge the batteries of electric cars. You see, there is nothing at the outermost planetary orbit of the Solar System with sufficient energy to multiply the orbital velocity of Pluto by a factor of $\sqrt{2}$ in order that it can escape Neptune.

Unless you postulate an adventitious interplanetary collision course arriving from interstellar space! Every planet in the Solar System violates the physical requirements of the Nebular Hypothesis. An alien star is the obvious solution to a host of astronomical embarrassments. But it also blows a hole through the theory of planetary evolution. This is exactly what Immanuel Velikovsky did.

When Velikovsky published *Worlds in Collision,* he became the victim of most vehement and scurrilous persecution. To all of us plebes who tread streets of concrete, it doesn't make a damn bit of difference how the Solar System came to be in the shape it is in during our mayfly lives. One story is as good as another as long as it stops the kids from asking "How come?" when you want to put them to bed.

This *story* is not a scholarly examination of Velikovsky's theory to determine its validity. But if you look at some evidence everyone can see for himself with a toy telescope, it appears that authorized science is what remains after the editors have left all the contradictory evidence on the cutting-room floor. Let's run the astronomical scraps through the old Moviola to see if we can splice something together that will satisfy the popular demand for sex and violence without overlooking that the Solar System is as scrambled as an air terminal after a bomb blast.

As we fade in, Star Rangers scanning the heavens from their far-flung outposts on top of prehistoric ziggurats sight a "thing" from outer space on a collision course with the Solar System. Of course in prehistoric times, climbing the steps of a two-hundred-foot pyramid was the service range of the contemporary astronauts, but it doesn't really matter whether an expeditionary force intercepts the "thing" while it is still zillions of parsecs distant at Warp 7, or whether we merely wait

until it comes within the Three-Mile Limit and reveals itself. I mean, unless you can evacuate the entire planet, there is nothing you can do about a cosmic "thing" anyway! You can bet your Trekkie button the Federation isn't going to tell the taxpayers the options have expired before everyone can plainly see for himself that it isn't pie in the sky. It is a matter of common knowledge that several asteroids have come close to the Earth in recent years, and who cared, as long as they stayed out of sight?

So when we cut in the next scene, we see that the "thing" is already in the Solar System, close enough for the ancients to see that it is a small dark star. As it passes by Neptune, at the Federation frontier, it is seen on the video scope to reach Neptune's outermost satellite, Triton, just past conjunction. The advent of massive gravitational attraction causes Triton to stop in orbit and plummet into its giant primary. As it falls, Triton gains enough velocity to reestablish itself in another orbit, but revolving in the opposite direction, as it would when negatively accelerated. This is where we find Triton today.

The middle satellite is approaching conjunction with the dark star, so it is accelerated positively until it leaves Neptune and goes into the planet business by itself as Pluto. And this, O Best Beloved, is why we find Pluto returning to its original orbit around Neptune every year, to this very day, just as it must according to the law by Newton. The innermost satellite, Nereid, is in opposition, so the stellar fly-past merely perturbs it into extreme eccentricity.

Velocity in interstellar space is low on the cosmic speedometer, so the dark star is drawn into solar orbit by the close encounter with Neptune.

As it continues its wild fall toward the Sun, the dark star passes through Uranian territory. The titanic waves raised by the interplay of gravitational and electromagnetic fields draw long streamers of gas and particles from the alien and rocks the Uranian System onto its side. The star is now a comet, the most stupendous comet ever seen by mankind, with its dragon head containing more mass than the entire Solar System exclusive of the Sun, and a fiery dragon tail drawn

halfway round the sky, illuminating all the heavens, day and night.

The most concentrated mass of the tail whirls around itself by the snap of the gravitational whip until it condenses into a ball surrounded by rings of the lighter trailing particles. And this, O Best Beloved, is why Saturn is a giant planet lighter than water, as if it were entirely atmospheric, and it is surrounded by a system of rings today. Vestiges of the cometary tail remain yet as rings surrounding Jupiter and Uranus.

Careening drunkenly now, the dark star strikes the next planet, shattering it to bits. The explosion throws the alien into a stable solar orbit and it takes up permanent residence in our system as the violent overlord, Jupiter. And this, O Best Beloved, is why we find most of the angular momentum in the solar system today to be in the Jovian System; it was the ante the dark star brought with it from the interstellar reaches so that it could sit in on our game. We lost the planet Krypton, but the Earth is saved in the final reel. The debris of the interplanetary explosion fills the orbit of Sol 5 with asteroids, a ring around the Sun like a petrified rainbow signifying God's favor with man. Lest you leave this theater thinking there is no scientic proof for this scenario, Dr. Bill Ovendin, a professor at the University of British Columbia, recently programmed a computer with the orbits of all the known comets and discovered that they trace back to a single explosive point in the asteroid belt.

For human interest between the special-effects shots in interplanetary space, we segue Earthside, and pick up the legends overlooked by Velikovsky. In some early era Neptune and Uranus were visible. They were the original titans, and it was natural that Uranus, being the nearest and brightest, would be regarded as the creator of the heavens.

Saturn was called Kronos by the ancient Greeks. Kronos became Chronos, the God of Time. If Saturn has ever occupied the orbit now holding Jupiter, Saturn's original period would be twelve years, and its location in the zodiac would tell the houses of the horoscope. The planet would serve as a celestial timekeeper for astrologers, a profession enjoying the highest social status in those days. As the new cosmic time-

keeper, it was natural for Saturn to usurp the liege formerly bestowed upon Uranus; imperial jealousies are never generously disposed, so it was natural for the Titans to be buried in the black of deep space. Neptune being put out deeper than Uranus, Poseidon became god of the oceans.

But *kronos* is also the etymological root of *corona,* meaning *crown.* Encircled by shining rings, Saturn is indeed the crowned planet, deserving recognition as the supreme god. Now, the rings of Saturn are barely visible to the sharpest eyes; a simple magnifying mirror will bring them into view. If, however, Saturn ever sat on the throne of the Jovian orbit during an interim reign while the crown prince was off to the wars with Krypton, the crown of Kronos would be clearly visible throughout the Solar System. The Saturnian crown is still used artistically to represent the halo of angels, so we may suspect that men once saw the King's Father directly.

Saturn is said to have eaten his children, fatally overlooking Jupiter. This part of the Greek myth could be describing knots of the original cometary tail condensing into visible satellites before spiraling into their primary as the comet settled into stable orbits. The surviving rings we see today may be merely the last vestige of a multijeweled crown.

The myths indicate that there were several changes in the planetary orbits during the creation of the heavens as we now see them. The various poetic histories conform to the hypothesis of a dark star entering the Solar System because it is unlikely for all planets to be aligned so that everything happened during the course of a single preorbital trajectory. Once caught in a cometary orbit after being trapped on Neptune's gravitational trident, Jupiter probably made hundreds of elliptical circuits between successive encounters of the catastrophic kind, leaving plenty of breathing space for mankind to recover between cosmic disasters and make up different myths.

Here is a synopsis of Immanuel Velikovsky's scenario: When Jupiter collided with Krypton, a mass was blown out denser than the Saturnian comet, including some of the rocky core of the doomed planet. The jetsam formed a new, smaller comet swinging tightly around the Sun on an orbit of fifty-four years. Because space is tight in the downtown section of the

solar community (hold tight while we change metaphors again), this comet had close and frequent encounters with all the inner planets. On each strafing run, the inner planets were peppered with meteors. The craters are clearly visible today on Mercury, the Moon, and Mars. The terrestrial craters have been obliterated by our fertile atmosphere, but the fracturing of the Canadian Shield in concentric circles around Hudson's Bay indicates that the northern sea is a meteor crater created by an impact powerful enough to shake the Earth on its axis and probably obliterate large life forms over half a hemisphere; smaller craters pock the entire Atlantic Coast of North America. After a pyrotechnic exchange with Mars, which must have rivaled the spectacle of Jupiter and Uranus for mankind, the daughter comet swung into stable orbit around the Sun as the planet Venus.

The persecution of Velikovsky is most determined from astronomers because it destroys the steady-state theory necessary to make coherent sense out of current measurements. It is necessary to believe that all extant physical activity occurs everywhere at all times at the same rate in order to have a theoretical science and get paid for teaching it. Otherwise all you have is engineering and science fiction. The physical evidence on which Velikovsky has been prosecuted by the establishment is not proclaimed to the public; the excuse is that the public does not understand physics. The result is that Velikovsky was given no chance to defend himself in a manner that habeas corpus is supposed to provide, nor could he put judgment to a public jury.

Insofar as I have been able to get any answer from the enemies of Velikovsky, they base their case on one of Newton's laws conserving momentum. A material body disturbed in its orbit must return to the point of disturbance on each subsequent revolution. The Solar System preserves far too much order today for any collision courses to have occurred in the past, much less the historical past. Most physicists, who are specialists, are satisfied that the law is inviolate. But Einstein opened a completely new and radical conception of Newton's laws.

The solution to Velikovsky's problem is implicated

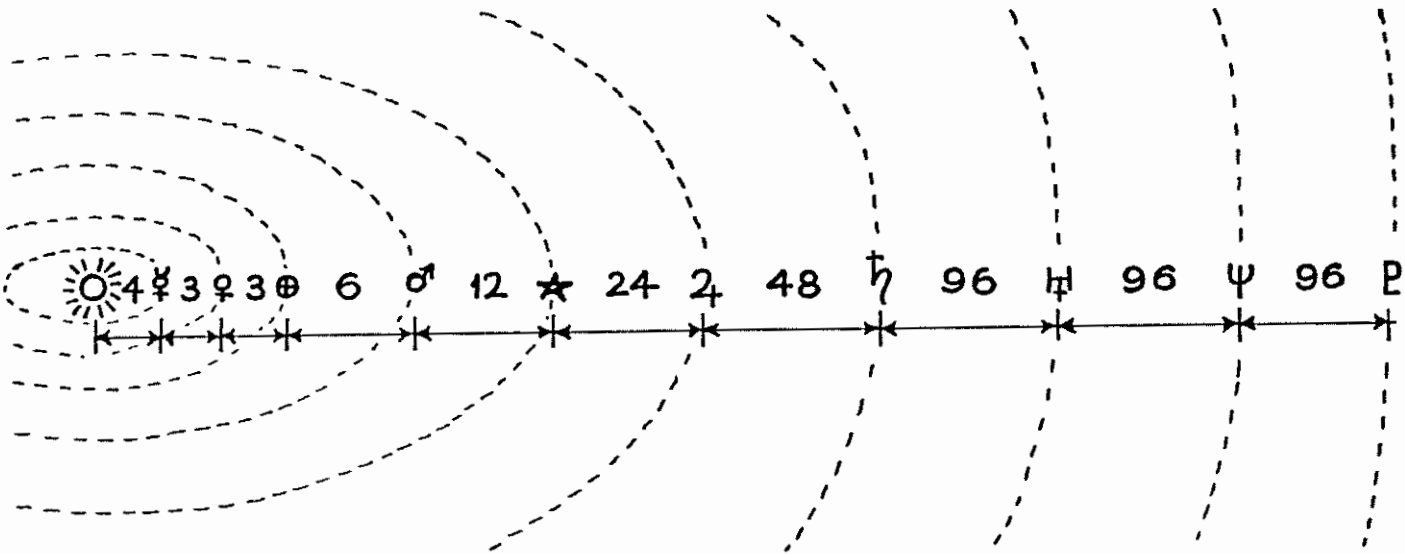
with the solution to another irritating problem bothering astronomers for over two hundred years, Bode's Law of Planetary Harmonics.

Since it became possible to calculate the distance separating planets with more than accidental precision, it has been known that each planetary orbit is twice as far from the Sun as the one nearer; credit for measuring the intervals has been accorded to the German astronomer Johann Elert Bode, for getting his ratios recognized by publication in a hard-core scientific journal. Bode found that if an Astronomical Unit is established as 9,000,000 miles, the following multiples of that Unit are measured between the planets: Sun 4 Mercury 3 Venus 3 Earth 6 Mars 12 Asteroids 24 Jupiter 48 Saturn 96 Uranus 96 Neptune 96 Pluto.

Saturn was the outer limit of the known system when Bode did his number, so the discovery of Uranus was accompanied by great professional excitement to see that Bode's Law was followed indefinitely. But when Neptune and Pluto were discovered to be separated by intervals of 96 Units each, the professional verdict decided that the Law had broken down; and respectable orthodoxy regards the Theory of Planetary Harmonics as an empirical accident with no significance whatsoever.

Upon immediate inspection, the interval between each planet, from Venus to Uranus, increases by a constant factor of two. Bode's Law would be indisputable were it not that Mercury is twice the distance from Venus that the progression demands, and Neptune divides the orbital space between Uranus and Pluto by two. Two is the constant factor throughout, but why does the operation change at the extremes? An almost perfect law like this is what keeps scientists awake more than the 2 A.M. nursing.

Now, in order to understand the conformation of the Solar System, it is exceedingly difficult to avoid the theory of cosmic collisions. In order to understand what happens in the process of cosmic collisions, it is necessary to prove Bode's Law. In order to prove Bode's Law, you must understand relativity. Professional scientists insist that no one can understand



BODE FOUND THAT THE DISTANCE OF EACH PLANET FROM THE SUN ESTABLISHED A REGULAR PATTERN DEFINED BY A FACTOR OF 2.

BODE REDUCED THE APPROXIMATE DISTANCES BETWEEN PLANETARY ORBITS BY THE HIGHEST COMMON FACTOR TO YIELD THE RESPECTIVE RADII IN UNITS OF 9,000,000 MILES, AS ILLUSTRATED IN THIS DIAGRAM.

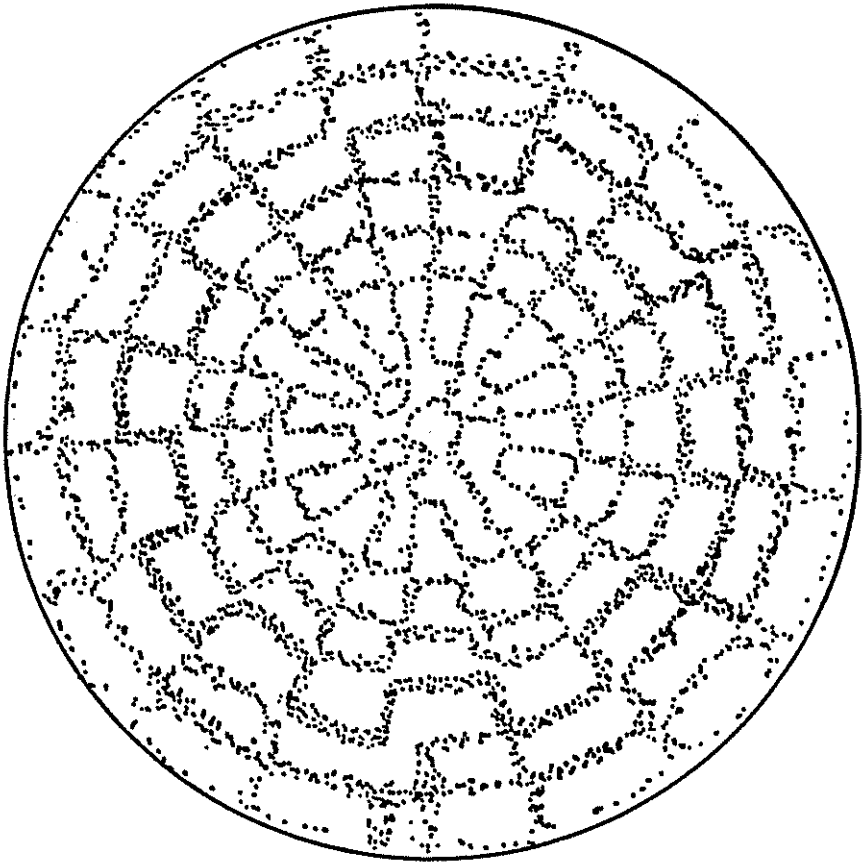
relativity—not even Einstein was able to do that. The impossible will not take a bit longer. Let me show you.

If you find a thin, vibrant disc, dust the surface with powder, and make it resonate to a musical tone, the powder will move into concentric windrows, spaced a wavelength apart. As the circles approach the center, radial vibrations break up the circular pattern. What you see is a model representing the mechanics of Bode's Law and the General Theory of Relativity.

What you see happening is produced by waves of sound traveling through the disc in all directions. As the waves move, they carry the dust with them. Where two waves meet in opposite directions, a wave pattern is created that does not travel. The pattern is called a standing wave. The standing wave beats up and down in the middle of its length, while there is no motion at all on both ends. As an example, two children swinging a skipping rope between them are making a standing-wave pattern with the length of the rope. The wave energy travels back and forth between the two arms swinging the rope; if the traveling waves coming from both ends are not synchronized, the standing-wave pattern breaks down so that you can see the wave motion travel from one end to the other and back again. A ring strung on the rope will be driven by the waves from the loop in the middle to the nodes at the ends.

Most of us armchair physicists will argue at great length before being stirred to dust a disc with powder or observe children skipping rope. But if you will ring for your maid to bring you tea, you will see concentric standing waves on the surface of the fluid in the cup when she puts the tray down on your end table with sufficient impact to generate vibrations.

Those of you who study any one of several versions of this model will eventually notice that the rings representing planetary orbits around the Sun are spaced equal distances apart, whereas the planetary orbits have a difference between each orbit established by the factor of two. The reason the rings of powder on the disc are equally spaced is that the vibration is supplied by waves of equal length. The field of energy constituting the Solar System is defined by waves of all lengths, like white sound. When a full-frequency spectrum of



DISTRIBUTION PATTERN MADE BY POWDER ON A CIRCULAR VIBRATING PLATE

sound is used to generate standing waves around a focal point the longer waves are superimposed through the shorter waves amplifying them in some places and canceling them out in others. The harmonic beats where all waves coincide to amplify and cancel in the same places form rings separated by octave intervals, just as we see in the Solar System.

Since Niels Bohr published the planetary model of the atom, the atom and the Solar System have been understood to be models of each other. Since Erwin Schrödinger proved the wave equations of quantum physics, the atom has been recognized as a standing-wave structure composed of an infinite spectrum of random vibrations. All we have done is say that if the Solar System is a cosmic atom, and if the atom is a standing-wave structure, then the Solar System must be a standing-wave structure too.

Well, if an atom is the essential unit of material, and if an atom is a standing-wave structure, then all material must be standing-wave structures. Therefore, if the solar system is a standing-wave structure, then the entire gravitational field of the Sun must be solid *material.* The only difference between the material of the Sun's gravitational field and the Earth we stand on is density. The wavelengths of gravity are so long that we can walk through them as if the standing waves were insubstantial, like we walk through air. Many people will snort that this deduction is preposterous; the more schooling you have, the more likely you will insist that it isn't so. But have you forgotten that material, by definition, is identical to mass? Einstein's General Theory of Relativity proves that the Sun's gravitational field possesses mass and functions as a massive structure. Einstein knew it all along; he just stopped talking at this point.

Now, why do you suppose that the curtain of silence is dropped at the point where Einstein and Bode and Velikovsky all meet with mutually supporting calculations?

Well, when Einstein published his equation $E = mc^2$, he proved that all material can be converted into energy, the amount of energy depending upon the wavelength of the standing waves forming the material. This means that the Sun's gravitational field—filling all of interplanetary

space—is *solid energy*, just like uranium, waiting to be mined. Now you can see why Einstein is supposed to be incomprehensible, and relativity is taught to make sure no one can understand it. And now you can see why Bode's Law cannot be allowed to be recognized. And now you can understand one reason why Velikovsky had to be given the deStalinization treatment. You see, the military-industrial-financial establishment can stake out a monopoly on uranium, enabling them to charge whatever OPEC demands for oil, but everyone has free access to the Sun's gravitational field. As Al Capp illustrated with his shmoos, industrial society cannot survive if the universe supplies mankind with the necessities of life free of charge.

The military-industrial establishment published the first release of atomic energy from uranium in 1945. Would you like to guess when Einstein's equations were proven by releasing the energy contained in the Sun's gravitational field? According to information available to me, Nikola Tesla gained insight into spacic energy at the beginning of this century, before petroleum was used for much except kerosene lamps; by 1925 he was ready with experimental proofs. Reports have reached me of about a dozen private parties making similar discoveries in their own way; they were all given the deep six, like Tesla got. The latest word is that a party in the Northeast, calling itself X-Tec, is trying to get into the consumer market by generating spacic energy from the Sun's gravitational field; we'll see if it survives any longer than its predecessors. In the meantime, the Soviet military-industrial establishment has managed to secure a monopoly on the free air their citizens are allowed to breathe, so it has no reservations about implementing Tesla's theories for generating electric power from the energy of empty space, and they are proceeding apace while Americans are building windmills to get the same energy the hard way.

The most completely documented chronicles of the development of spacic energy in America is reported in the book, *The Sea of Energy*, published privately by the son of the inventor in Salt Lake City. As far back as 1914, before the First World War, Henry Moray, an electrical engineer, perceived

that solar activity generated radio waves in the Earth's atmosphere. An antenna transforms the electromagnetic waves into a standing electrical wave in the conductor. The energy of this wave is amplified by resonance to provide the power for the primitive radio sets Moray played with. From the operation of the crystal radio, Henry Moray acquired an understanding of the Sun's gravitational field as a cosmic standing-wave structure supported by incredibly high-frequency vibrations from the quantum field.

Natural germanium crystals were used for tuning the early radio receivers. Moray inferred that there was something in crystal geometry that could resonate in tune with the quantum field and transform the field energy into electricity by harmonic amplification. So Moray sought the purest germanium crystals chemists could provide, always complaining that the crystallization was not fine enough. Once the alternating current in his crystals was fed into a step-down transformer, Moray drew enough power to supply household appliances with 500 kilowatts indefinitely.

As a reward for bringing his invention to the United States Government, Moray became the target of hired assassins. His laboratory was destroyed and his credibility ruined so that the design of his "valve" was lost with his death. We can infer, however, that the essential design must be so simple that you can pick up all the components to build your own basement electric-power generator from Radio Shack for less than one thousand dollars. After all, in those days not even Moray had enough knowledge of electronics to build a transistor, and the complexity of a TV circuit was beyond conception. However he did it, he tapped infinite energy, like the technologists of Atlantis, without pollution or explosion from the Sun's gravitational field with a circuit essentially no more complicated than a glorified crystal radio receiver.

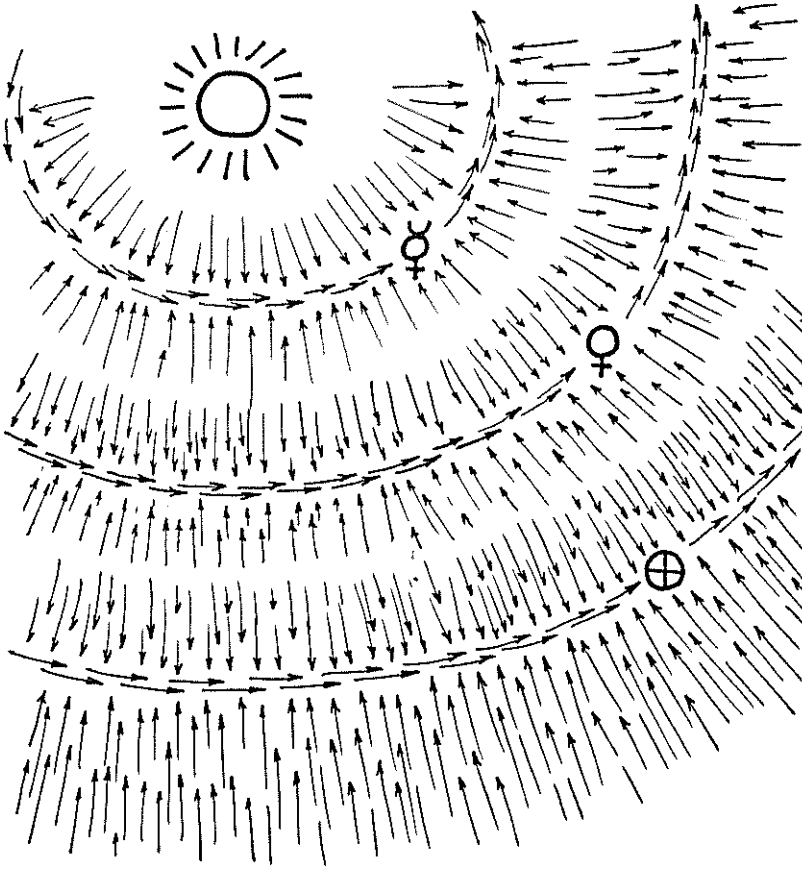
Now that we have made the engineering discoveries which are the goal of this story, we can return along the trail on which we came to prove that the evidence for the prosecution of Immanuel Velikovsky by the defenders of the established faith is unconstitutional. At the same time, we shall make further discoveries opening new possibilities for more fantastic engineering.

We see the powder bounce up and down on the vibrating disc until it settles at the static nodes of the standing waves. Obviously there is a tangible flow from the loops to the nodes. Therefore, any particle supported by the vibrating field will flow from the loops to the nodes like a chip on a stream of water. The loops can be represented as hills and the nodes as valleys for purposes of illustration, but we can see there are no real hills or valleys in a gravitationally defined space; there is only a flow of energy represented by velocity gradients. So any celestial body let loose in the solar gravitational field will "gravitate" toward the nodal orbits as if attracted by some mysterious force. You will recognize that this model is the very representation of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity.

Now you know why a planet finds an orbit at a specific location in the solar gravitational field, but you may wonder why it revolves around the Sun in that orbit. If you examine the vibrating plate intently, you will eventually discern that the flow of energy does not stop at the nodes, but undergoes an abrupt right-angle rotation of velocity with a transformation of wave frequency and speed. The flow now circles the orbital path, carrying the planet with it like a log on a stream of water between banks.

A scientific intelligence can be gauged by the point at which a person accepts an answer as final and satisfying. So we continue to ask why a planet occupies a specific location in its orbit instead of any other location along the length of the circuit. Well, more inspection eventually reveals that the entire nodal circle vibrates as a linear standing-wave structure, composed of all frequencies, like a circular violin string strummed by a breeze. The fundamental frequency of the orbital resonance is subdivided into harmonic intervals, defined by loops and nodes of different energy levels. Residual discords in the harmonics cause the pattern to revolve around the field center. Therefore, once a body is carried by the solar gravitational field to an orbital node, it will be carried farther in the orbit until it settles into the deepest node in the circuit. That is where it will stay as the entire gravitational field revolves.

If this model is true, then there must be a node of the second gravitational harmonic of the Earth's orbit directly opposite us, on the other side of the Sun where we can never see



UNIVERSAL ENERGY IN THE QUANTUM FIELD FLOWING PERPENDICULAR TO THE PLANE OF THE ECLIPTIC MEETS IN MUTUAL OPPOSITION IN THE INTERORBITAL SPACES. DIRECT OPPOSITION ROTATES THE FLOW BY 90° AND REDUCES ITS VELOCITY BY A FACTOR OF C, TRANSFORMING THE QUANTUM FIELD INTO THE SOLAR ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD.

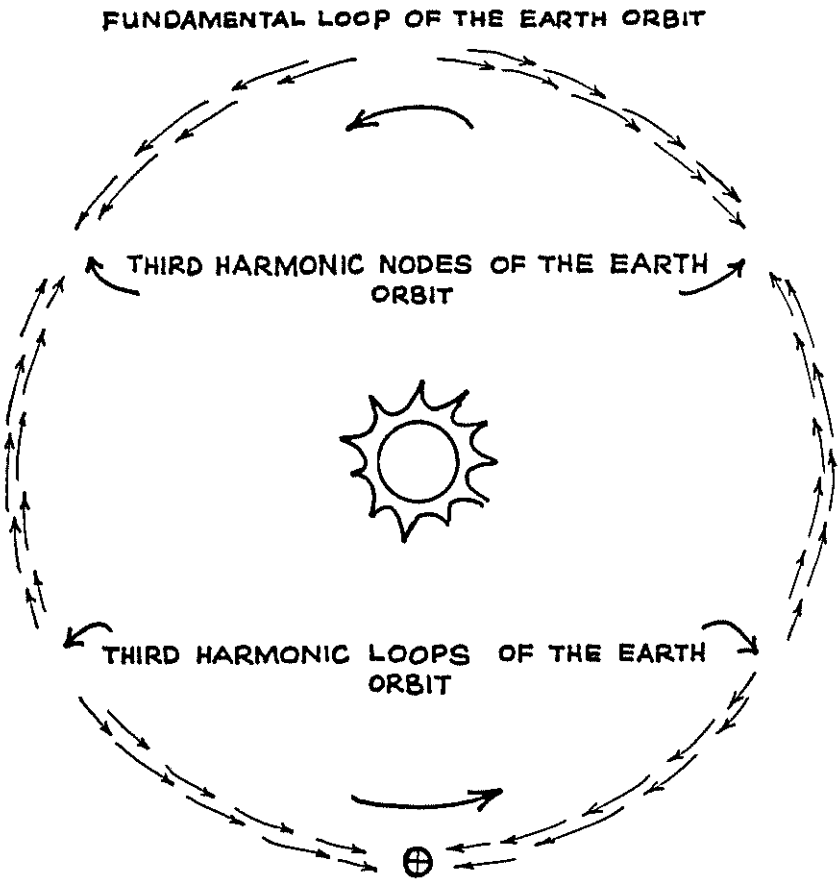
THE ELECTROMAGNETIC FLOW IS RADIAL ON THE PLANE OF THE ECLIPTIC. WHEN THE OPPOSING CURRENTS MEET, ANOTHER ROTATION OF 90° REDUCES WAVE VELOCITY BY A FACTOR OF C, AGAIN, TRANSFORMING THE ENERGY INTO THE GRAVITATIONAL ORBITS CARRYING THE PLANETS ON ITS STREAM

it. This calculation is the probable source of the myth of a counter-Earth. The myth, in fact, is true, but its proof is another story for another book. As far as we are concerned here, astronomers have proven that the counter-Earth cannot possibly exist because there is no evidence of the gravitational effects its mass must produce. The reason the counter-Earth is not found where we see it is that the space in which it is calculated to exist happens to be where the fundamental loop also exists. The fundamental loop cancels the secondary node with enough energy left over to raise a sizable gravitational "hill."

But the fundamental loop flows in *both* directions around the orbit to the tertiary nodes, a pair of gravitational nodes located 120 degrees in both directions from us. Therefore we should expect to find smaller masses of interplanetary material caught in these two depressions. In fact, astronomers have observed aggregations of interplanetary debris collected at both these locations. When we see interplanetary bodies attracted to locations where no central masses exist to establish a gravitational field, we have the proof that gravity is inherent in the flow of energy through space rather than a mysterious force generated by a massive body.

We are forced to the further deduction that Jupiter does not possess the most powerful gravitational field in the Solar System because it possesses almost all of the mass, outside of the Sun. It is possible for Jupiter to have been *created* the most massive body in the Solar System because the greatest gravitational flow in the Sun's field is into that location. Jupiter's gravitational field would exist at that location even if Jupiter were not there to occupy the space.

Another proof for the model is derived from the empirical fact that all planets sweep an equal area of their orbital planes in equal times. Momentum is a time function, and the equation for momentum is identical to the equation for circular area. Therefore, the angular momentum of each orbit is identical throughout the solar gravitational field. The energy flow from the loops to the nodes is in direct proportion to the area of the orbits. The area of the orbits increases at a ratio equal to half the square of the radius. First sight tells you that the momentum of each orbit should increase by one half the



THE CURRENT OF GRAVITATIONAL ENERGY FORMING THE EARTH'S ORBIT RESONATES LIKE A MUSICAL STRING WOUND IN A CIRCLE AND JOINED BY A KNOT. THE EARTH GRAVITATES TO THE PRIME NODE. SMALLER MASSES OF INTERPLANETARY FLOTSAM HAVE GRAVITATED TO THE NODES OF THE TERTIARY HARMONIC OVERTONE. LOOPS AND NODES OF HIGHER HARMONIC OVERTONES SUBDIVIDE BOTH THE ORBITAL AND INTERORBITAL SPACE INTO A CONSTANTLY CHANGING PATTERN OF "HILLS" AND "HOLLOWS" REVOLVING AROUND THE SUN AT ORBITAL VELOCITY.

square of the radius if all the energy from the loop area flows into the nodal line. But the solar field is a compound standing-wave structure; the wavelength of the standing waves increases in direct ratio with the radius. The formula equating energy with wavelength states that momentum varies *inversely* with frequency, so that the difference in energy represented by area is exactly balanced by the difference in energy represented by wavelength. Therefore, the momentum of the solar field must be constant throughout.

A final proof is that escape velocity is $\sqrt{2}$ times orbital velocity. Because the increase in field wavelength is continuous along the gravitational radius, the loop between successive orbits is not exactly between them. The peak of the loop divides the interorbital radius into fractions defined by $\sqrt{2}$, like the intensity of light falls off from a point source. An increase of orbital velocity by a factor of $\sqrt{2}$ gives a planet exactly the amount of momentum it needs to surmount the gravitational hill confining it to its orbital valley; and once over the divide, it is downhill all the way to the next star.

The planets occupy the deepest nodes in the solar gravitational field. But the solar space is filled with an infinite number of higher harmonic nodes, each of which is capable of attracting and holding a mass of material. But the higher the harmonic, the less energy flows into it, so the smaller the mass it can attract and retain.

The gravitational node holding the Moon, for example, is so much weaker than the one holding the Earth that by the time a spaceship acquires enough velocity to escape the Earth, it has far too much momentum for the Moon to hold. You may think that landing on the Moon must be as easy as falling out of bed once an Apollo spaceship passes over the gravitational divide and begins to drop down onto the Moon. But this isn't true. Unless the space shot is aimed for a direct hit on the surface of the Moon, anything leaving the Earth must fly right past the Moon into solar orbit. Getting down is the hardest part.

Residual discords in the solar geometry causes the gravitational hollows to wander along courses described by the

Drunkard's Walk, calculated by the mathematics of Probability. The amount of indirection is directly proportional to the value of the harmonic fraction. This means that the major harmonics represented by the planetary orbits will manifest negligible perturbations during any historic period, while the locations of higher harmonic nodes wander around with increasing randomness. Harmonic coincidence of wandering nodes results in periodic intersections; and once again, the lower the harmonic, the longer the period between intersections, while the higher harmonics are mixing together continuously. A small body caught in the shallow depression of a high node will be tipped out when confluence with a harmonic loop causes a temporary reversal of gravitational flow. If a particle is small enough, it can be carried by waves from node to node throughout interstellar space before it gets trapped by the powerful energy flow of a low harmonic. In fact, interstellar space is filled with dust floating around like this. Only the confluence of a low-harmonic loop with a low-harmonic node is sufficient to reverse the gravitational flow keeping a planet in its orbit. When that happens, planets, stars, and even galaxies are set on collision courses. Human history would be briefer than our two thousand years if low-harmonic loops intersected with low-harmonic nodes more often.

Now we can prove why Venus maintains a near-circular orbit today even though it is possible for her to have arrived in our skies within human memory after a series of catastrophic interplanetary collisions. Celestial bodies of planetary mass gravitate quickly to low-harmonic nodes, and low-harmonic nodes are inherently stable in orbit. Lighter celestial bodies can be retained more or less indefinitely in a succession of higher-harmonic nodes; the higher the harmonic, the more eccentric and unstable the orbit will be. This is why we find the planets to follow regular orbits of circular dimensions while the most eccentric and unstable bodies in the Solar System are also the lightest and most vaporous—the comets.

The flow of energy along high-harmonic orbits, not concentric with the field's center, are probably the "rivers of energy" calculated by Professor Eric Laithwaite, which he

hoped to harness with his gyroscopes. Once these currents are charted, they can be used to carry vehicles throughout the universe like floating on a cosmic jet stream across oceans of space and even time. But this is not a prevenient discovery, either. The Orientals have always known of the existence of Ley Lines, and they use Ley Lines to control the flow of energy in their social and personal space.

Meanwhile, back at the Kangaroo Courthouse, let's see how Velikovsky is making out with his defense. If he uses the proof of Bode's Law to disallow the invocation of Newton's law, Velikovsky runs the risk of incriminating himself by failing to foresee all the inevitable consequences of General Relativity. You see, all the octave orbits are occupied in the solar subdivision. If Venus settled on the residential lot at #2 Sunshine Valley, she probably had to evict a previous tenant. Whom do you suppost got bumped? When Venus arrived, the Moon moved in with Mother, and she has been spending the nights with us ever since. Plato mentions a time when there was no moon in the sky, called the Preselenite Era.

As soon as you begin to play musical orbits with the planets, the distribution of angular momentum in the Solar System is disturbed. When Venus brought additional energy from interstellar space, it meant that the gravitational hollow at #3 Sunnydale Circle must have drifted away from the Sun, while the revolution of the Moon made further adjustments to maintain Conservation. If the proposition of interplanetary collision is essentially valid, the Earth must have been closer to the sun during a previous geophysical era. Merely a few megamillion miles nearer would have added enough extra insolation to provide the Earth with an allover suntan from pole to pole. Geologists know that the Earth *did* have a tropical climate during the Paleozoic Age. Various hypotheses have been proposed to explain this anomaly, but they all require special cases involving a great deal of critical ignorance to remain tenable. Special cases do not a science make; the theory of interplanetary collision eliminates all the obvious anomalies with a single, simple, and provable mechanism.

Now if the Earth were forced to leave the Sunshine

Coast of the Solar Estates and rebuild in the cooler hinterlands, whom do you suppose *we* displaced. It had to be Mars. If Mars were ever closer to the Sun than it is right now, it must have enjoyed the most invigorating climate in the entire Solar System while dinosaurs were sweltering in the swamps of the Tethys Sea. If life is a natural and inevitable process of planetary evolution, intelligent life had to appear on Mars before it began anywhere else.

Mars is large enough to hold an atmosphere capable of supporting terrestrial life forms. There is incontrovertible evidence of large flows of water on Mars. Where you find heat and light and soil and water, you must find life, too, or else you must throw out the Theory of Human Evolution from natural causes and return to Divine Creation.

The professionally published explanation for the evidence of liquid water flowing on Mars is that volcanic heat produced massive eruptions of water from sub-Arean rocks which streamed in a deluge for thousands of miles, carving canyons dozens of miles deep in the Martian continent. The professional statement may, in fact, be true, but the authorities cannot expect any high-school kid to believe it unless a lot of obvious contradictions are accounted for.

To begin with, it is almost as cold as liquid air on Mars; that is carbon dioxide we see frozen at the polar caps through our toy telescopes. Water is not going to flow very far from the source of eruption unless the entire hemisphere is warmed by volcanism to keep the water liquid. Enough heat to warm an entire hemisphere for swimming is not localized volcanism. It is either planetary convulsions or else it is climate.

Next, the range of temperature in which water can flow any distance over the land surface of Mars is restricted to the range of human comfort. Water cannot exist on Mars today because of the near–vacuum conditions, but even if Mars had all the air it could hold, the boiling temperature of water would still be so low that it would vaporize from the heat of volcanism before it flowed any distance.

Finally, the surface gravity of Mars is so low that water isn't going to flow rapidly enough to gouge canyons in its path unless it is constantly cascading. The canyons of Mars are

not the kind of erosion carved by sheets of cascades, but more like the Grand Canyon, requiring a constant flow of water in the same channel for millions of years. This condition could not have been satisfied unless there was enough air on Mars to make a Tibetan feel at home, while the climate was no warmer than the USA and no colder than Canada. The absence of densely grouped meteor bombardment and other evidence of erosion subsequent to the carving of the Arean canyons indicates that Mars enjoyed a terrestrial climate very recently in astronomical time—probably within human memory. Mars probably lost its air, water, and climate by a sudden catastrophe involving heat intense enough to flash its oceans into water vapor.

If Velikovsky's scenario were staged during human memory, the people who saw the action were not living on Earth. They were Martians. As Mars is older than the Earth in its physical evolution, people on Mars may be expected to be more advanced technologically than we are now. Once they saw that alien squatters were going to break their leasehold on Sunny Acres, everyone who could raise the price of a ticket on the space ark would pack their luggage with Kodachrome, disconnect the household utilities, and hop over to the Mediterranean Riviera for the Ice Age—bringing their pyramid and crystal technology with them.

Support for the hypothesis of interplanetary colonization is found in comparative anatomy. The human animal is rather poorly adapted to conditions on Earth. The sunlight is too bright for our eyes and skin, our backbones are too long, our feet are too weak, and our weight is ruinous to posture. If all creatures' morphology is determined by an evolutionary adaptation to its environment, we are best adapted for comfortable living on Mars, providing the climate were sweetened.

The white race appears to be new to this planet; civilization appears to have arrived suddenly and fully blown, then decaying for millennia after its initial appearance before recovering to our present eminence. The prehistoric aborigines of the cradles of civilization say they were conquered by Aryan invaders. The word *Aryan* is a variation of *Arean*, and *Arean* means *Martian*. There is a tribe in the Mideast who

claims its ancestors came from Mars. As myths go, this one requires a sophistication of concept not proper to a primitive tribe; the Earth must be recognized as a planet unsupported in empty space, and the bright reddish star must be recognized as another world.

The most interesting evidence for the Martian origin of the white race, if not an extraterrestrial immigration for all of mankind, is provided by science reporter Gay Gaer Luce in *Body Time*. Biologists acknowledge that the vital rhythms of all creatures are established by their place of origin; this is why subequatorial plants bloom for us in the North at Christmas, and species entrained to the periods of the Moon are believed to have evolved in the tidal ocean. When experimental human subjects are isolated from all terrestrial rhythms as much as possible to discover the free period of the human body, it has been found that most people settle into a daily rhythm of sleep and work of twenty-four hours and forty minutes. Twenty-four hours and forty minutes is the daily period of Mars.

The mechanics of evolution make it practically impossible for any species to develop without integration with its environment, yet this is just what we have managed to do. We are profoundly out of order with the rest of terrestrial life. Everywhere we go, we destroy the natural environment with wholesale insensitivity to its rhythms and balances. We are reconstructing the entire surface of this planet to suit our alien dimensions. The distress we stir on this Earth may be due to the fact we don't belong here.

4.

HOW TO BUILD A FLYING SAUCER

After So Many Amateurs Have Failed

At the end of the nineteenth century, the most distinguished scientists and engineers declared that no known combination of materials and locomotion could be assembled into a practical flying machine. Fifty years later another generation of distinguished scientists and engineers declared that it was technologically infeasible for a rocket ship to reach the moon. Nevertheless, men were getting off the ground and out into space even while these words were uttered.

In the last half of the twentieth century, when technology is advancing faster than reports can reach the public, it is fashionable to hold the pronouncements of yesteryear's experts to ridicule. But there is something anomalous about the consistency with which eminent authorities fail to recognize

technological advances even while they are being made. You must bear in mind that these men are not given to making public pronouncements in haste; their conclusions are reached after exhaustive calculations and proofs, and they are better informed about their subject than anyone else alive. But by and large, revolutionary advances in technology do not contribute to the advantage of established experts, so they tend to believe that the challenge cannot possibly be realized.

The UFO phenomenon is a perversity in the annals of revolutionary engineering. On the one hand, public authorities deny the existence of flying saucers and prove their existence to be impossible. This is just as we should expect from established experts. But on the other hand, people who *believe* that flying saucers exist have produced findings that only tend to prove UFOs are technologically infeasible by any known combination of materials and means of locomotion.

There is reason to suspect that the people who believe in the existence of UFOs do not want to discover the technology because it is not in the true believer's self-interest that a flying saucer be within the capability of human engineering. The true believer wants to believe that UFOs are of extraterrestrial origin because he is seeking some kind of relief from debt and taxes by an alliance with superhuman powers.

If anyone with mechanical ability really wanted to know how a saucer flies, he would study the testimonies to learn the flight characteristics of the craft, and then ask, "How can we do this saucer thing?" This is probably what Wernher Von Braun said when he decided that it was in his self-interest to launch man into space: "How can we get this bird off the ground, and keep it off?"

Well, what is a flying saucer? It is a disc-shaped craft about thirty feet in diameter with a dome in the center accommodating the crew and, presumably, the operating machinery. And it flies. So let us begin by building a disc-shaped air foil, mount the cockpit and the engine under a central canopy, and see if we can make it fly. As a matter of fact, during World War II the United States actually constructed a number of experimental aircraft conforming to these specifications, and photographs of the craft are published from time to time in popu-

lar magazines about science and flight. It is highly likely that some of the UFO reports before 1950 were sightings of these test flights. See how easy it is when you *want* to find answers to a mystery?

The mythical saucer also flies at incredible speeds. Well, the speeds believed possible depend upon the time and the place of the observer. As stated earlier, a hundred years ago, twenty-five miles per hour was legally prohibited in the belief that such terrific velocity would endanger human life. So replace the propellor of the experimental disc airfoil with a modern aerojet engine. Is Mach 3 fast enough for believers?

But the true saucer not only flies, it also hovers. You mean like a Hovercraft? One professional engineer translated Ezekiel's description of heavenly ships as a helicopter-cum-Hovercraft.

But what about the anomalous electromagnetic effects manifest in the space surrounding a flying saucer? Well, Nikola Tesla demonstrated a prototype of an electronic device that was eventually developed into the electron microscope, the television screen, and an aerospace engine called the Ion Drive. Since World War II, the engineering of the Ion Drive has been advanced as the most promising solution to the propulsion of interplanetary spaceships. The Drive operates by charging atomic particles and directing them with electromagnetic force as a jet to the rear, generating a forward thrust in reaction. The advantage of the Ion Drive over chemical rockets is that a spaceship can sweep in the ions it needs from its flight path, like an aerojet sucks in air through its engines. Therefore, the ship must carry only the fuel it needs to generate the power for its chargers; there is no need to carry dead weight in the form of rocket exhaust. There is another advantage to be derived from ion rocketry: The top speed of a reaction engine is limited by the ejection velocity of its exhaust. An ion jet is close to the speed of light. If space travel is ever to be practical, transport will have to achieve a large fraction of the speed of light.

In 1972 the French journal *Science et Avenir* reported Franco-American research into a method of ionizing the airstream flowing over wings to eliminate the sonic boom, a seri-

ous objection to the commercial success of the Concorde. Four years later a picture appeared in an American tabloid of a model aircraft representing the state of current development. The photograph shows a disc-shaped craft, but not so thin as a saucer; it looks more like a flying curling stone. In silent flight, the ionized air flowing around the craft glows as a proper UFO should. The last word comes from an engineering professor at the local university; he has begun the construction of an Ion-Drive Flying Saucer in his backyard.

To the true believer, the flying saucer has no jet. It seems to fly by some kind of antigravity. As antigravity is not known to exist in physical theory or experimental fact in popular science, the saucer is clearly alien and beyond human comprehension. But *antigravity* depends upon what you conceive *gravity* to be, doesn't it?

For all practical purposes, you do not have to understand what Newton and Einstein mean by gravity. Gravity is an acceleration downward, to the center of the earth. Therefore, antigravity is an acceleration upward. As far as practical engineering is concerned, any means to achieve a gain in altitude is an antigravity engine. An airplane is an antigravity engine, a balloon is an antigravity engine, a rocket is an antigravity engine, a stepladder is an antigravity engine. See how easy it is to invent an antigravity engine?

There are three basic kinds of locomotive engines. The primary principle is traction. The foot and the wheel are traction engines. The traction engine depends upon friction against a surrounding medium to generate movement, and locomotion can proceed only as far and as speedily as the surrounding friction will provide. The secondary principle is displacement. The balloon and the submarine rise by displacing a denser medium; they descend by displacing less than their weight. The tertiary drive is the rocket engine. A rocket is driven by reaction from the mass of material it ejects. Although a rocket is most efficient when not impeded by a surrounding medium, it must carry not only its fuel but also the mass it must eject. As a consequence, the rocket is impractical where powerful acceleration is required for extended drives. In chemical rocketry, ten minutes is a long burn for powered

flight. What is needed for practical antigravity locomotion is a fourth principle which does not depend upon a surrounding medium or ejection of mass.

You must take notice that none of the principles of locomotion required any new discovery. They have all been around for thousands of years, and engineering only implemented the principle with increasing efficiency. A fourth principle of locomotion has also been around for thousands of years: It is centrifugal force. Centrifugal force is the principle of the military sling and medieval catapult.

Everyone knows that centrifugal force can overcome gravity. If directed upward, centrifugal force can be used to drive an antigravity engine. The problem engineers have been unable to solve is that centrifugal force is generated in all directions on the plane of the centrifuge. It won't provide locomotion unless the force can be concentrated in one direction. The solution of the sling, of releasing the wheeling at the instant the centrifugal force is directed along the ballistic trajectory, has all the inefficiencies of a cannon. The difficulty of the problem is not real, however. There is a mental block preventing people from perceiving a centrifuge to be anything other than a flywheel.

A bicycle wheel is a flywheel. If you remove the rim and tire, leaving only the spokes sticking out from the hub, you still have a flywheel. In fact, spokes alone make a more efficient flywheel than the complete wheel; this is because momentum goes up only in proportion to mass but with the square of speed. Spokes are made of drawn steel with extreme tensile strength, so spokes alone can generate the highest levels of centrifugal force long after the rim and tire have disintegrated. But spokes alone still generate centrifugal force equally in all directions from the plane of rotation. All you have to do to concentrate centrifugal force in one direction is remove all the spokes but one. That one spoke still functions as a flywheel, even though it is not a wheel any longer.

See how easy it is once you accept an attitude of solving one problem at a time as you come to it? You can even add a weight to the end of the spoke to increase the centrifugal force.

But our centrifuge still generates a centrifugal acceleration in all directions around the plane of rotation even though it doesn't generate acceleration equally in all directions at the same time. All we have managed to do is make the whole ball of wire wobble around the common center of mass between the axle and the free end of the spoke. To solve this problem, now that we have come to it, we need merely to accelerate the spoke through a few degrees of arc and then let it complete the cycle of revolution without power. As long as it is accelerated during the same arc at each cycle, the locomotive will lurch in one direction, albeit intermittently. But don't forget that the piston engine also drives intermittently. The regular centrifugal pulses can be evened out by mounting multiple centrifuges on the same axle so that a pulse from another flywheel takes over as soon as one pulse of power is past its arc.

The next problem facing us is that the momentum imparted to the centrifugal spoke carries it all around the cycle with little loss of velocity. The amount of concentrated centrifugal force carrying the engine in the desired direction is too low to be practical. Momentum is half the product of mass multiplied by velocity squared. Therefore, what we need is a spoke that has a tremendous velocity with minimal mass. They don't make spokes like that for bicycle wheels. A search through the engineers' catalog, however, turns up just the kind of centrifuge we need. An electron has no mass at rest (you cannot find a smaller minimum mass than that); all its mass is inherent in its velocity. So we build an electron raceway in the shape of a doughnut in which we can accelerate an electron to a speed close to that of light. As the speed of light is approached, the energy of acceleration is converted to a momentum approaching infinity. As it happens, an electron accelerator answering our need was developed by the University of California during the last years of World War II. It is called a betatron, and the doughnut is small enough to be carried comfortably in a man's hands.

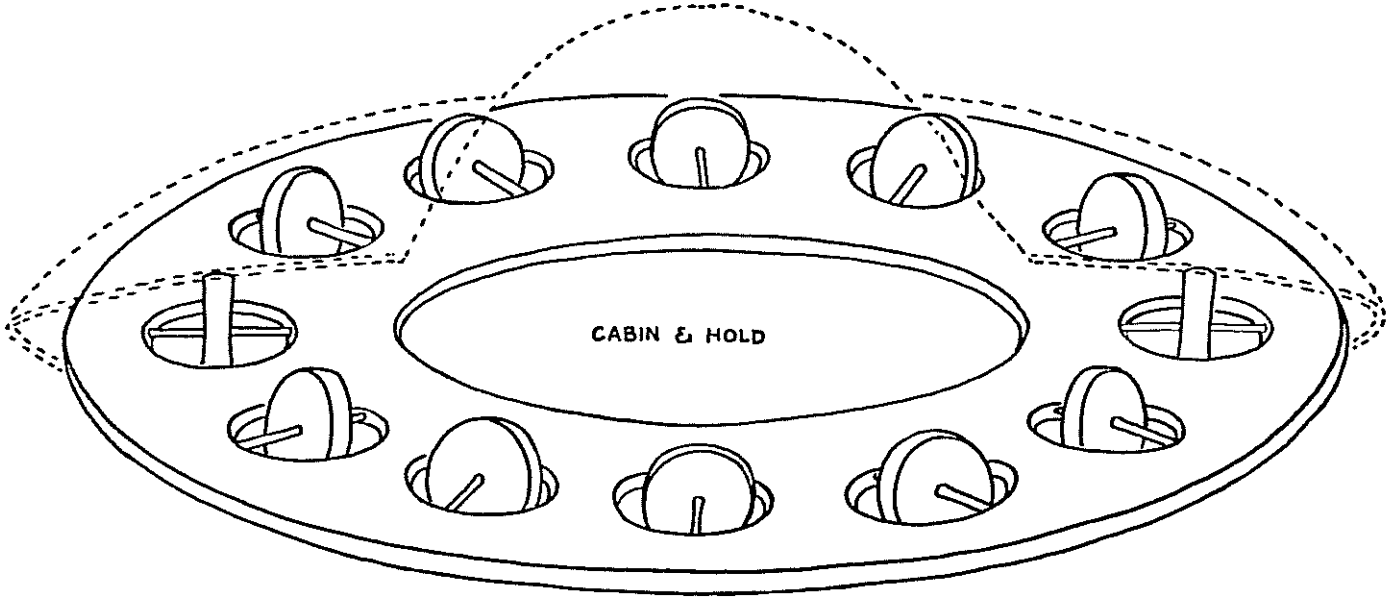
We can visualize the operation of the Mark I from what is known about particle accelerators. To begin with, high-

energy electrons ionize the air surrounding them. This causes the betatrons to glow like an annular neon tube.

Therefore, around the rim of the saucer a ring of lights will glow like a string of shining beads at night. The power required for flight will ionize enough of the surrounding atmosphere to short out all electrical wiring in the vicinity unless it is specially shielded. In theory, the top speed of the Mark I is close to the speed of light; in practice, there are many more problems to be solved before relativistic speeds can be approached.

The peculiar property of microwaves heating all material containing the water molecule means that any animal luckless enough to be nearby may be cooked from the inside out; vegetation will be scorched where a saucer lands; and rocks containing water of crystallization will be blasted. Every housewife with a microwave oven knows all this; only hardheaded scientists and softheaded true believers are completely dumbfounded. The UFOnauts would be cooked by their own engines, too, if they left the flight deck without shielding. This probably explains why a pair of UFOnauts, in a widely published photograph, wear reflective plastic jumpsuits. Mounting the betatrons outboard on a disc is an efficient way to get them away from the crew's compartment, and the plating of the hull shields the interior. At high accelerations, increasing amounts of power are transformed into radiation, making the centrifugal drive inefficient in strong gravitational fields. The most practical employment of this engineering is for large spacecraft, never intended to land. The flying saucers we see are very likely scouting craft sent from mother ships moored in orbit. For brief periods of operation, the heavy fuel consumption of the Mark I can be tolerated, along with radiation leakage—especially when the planet being scouted is not your own.

When you compare the known operating features of particle centrifuges with the eyewitness testimony, it is fairly evident that any expert claiming flying saucers to be utterly beyond any human explanation is not doing his homework, and he should be reexamined for his professional license.



SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM

MARK I FLYING SAUCER

A SERIES OF ELECTRONIC CENTRIFUGES BASED ON THE HYPERSPACE OR PLANETARY GEAR DRIVES AND MOUNTED OUTBOARD ON A COWLED DISC ESTABLISHES THE CHARACTERISTIC PROFILE OF THE FLYING SAUCER.

For dramatic purpose, I have classified the development of the Flying Saucer through five stages:

Mark I—Electronic centrifuges mounted around a fixed disc, outboard.

Mark II—Electronic centrifuges mounted outboard around a rotating disc.

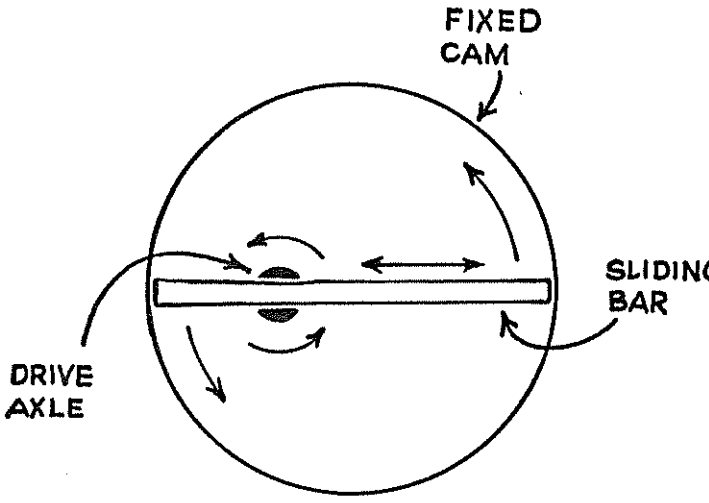
Mark III—Electronic centrifuges mounted outboard around rotating disc, period of cycles tuned to harmonize with ley lines, for jet assist.

Mark IV—Particle centrifuge tuned to modify time coordinates by faster-than-light travel.

Mark V—No centrifuge. Solid state coils and crystal harmonics transforms ambient field directly for dematerialization and rematerialization at destinations in time and space.

Now that the UFO phenomenon has been demystified and reduced to human ken, we can proceed to prove the theory. If your resources are like those of the PLO, you can go ahead and build your own flying saucer without any further information from me, but I have nothing to work with except the junk I can find around the house.

I found an old electric motor that had burned out, but still had a few more turns left in it. I drilled a hole through the driving axle so that an eight-inch bar would slide freely through it. I mounted the motor on a chassis so that the sliding bar would rotate in an eccentric cam. In this way, one end of the bar was always extended in the same direction while the other was always pressed into the driving axle. As both ends had the same angular velocity at all times, the end extending out from the axle always had a higher angular momentum. This resulted in a concentration of centrifugal acceleration in one direction. When I plugged in the motor, the sight of my brainchild lurching ahead—unsteadily, but in a constant direction—gave me a bigger thrill than my baptism of sex—lasted longer, too. But not much longer. In less than twenty seconds the burned-out motor gasped its last and died in a puff of smoke; the test run was broadcast on radio microphone but the spectacle was lost without television. Because my prototype did not survive long enough to make a run in two directions, I had to declare the test inconclusive because of mechanical



ESSENTIAL DESIGN OF THE HYPERSPACE DRIVE

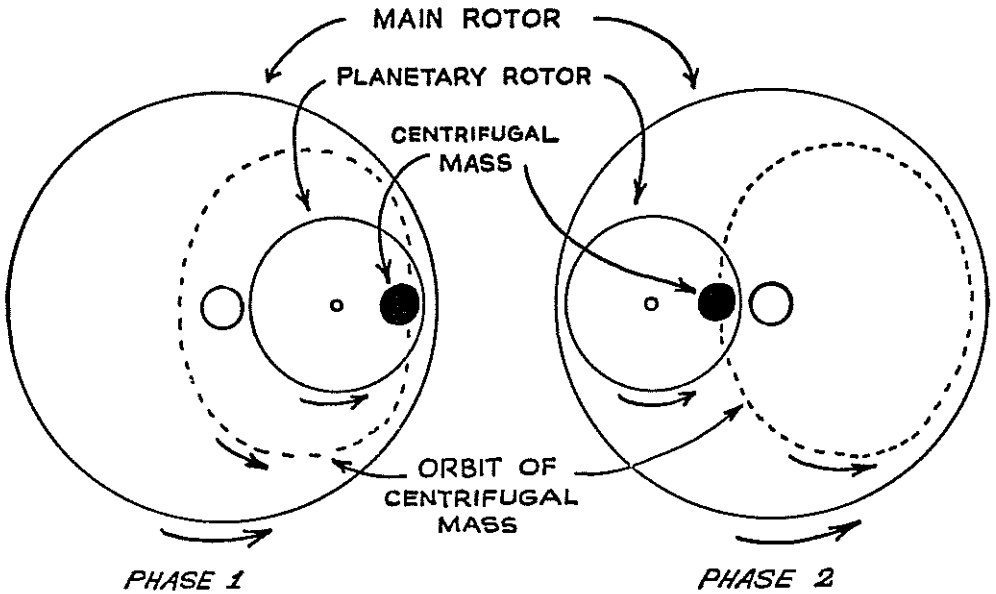
THE ROTATIONAL VELOCITY OF THE OSCILLATOR IS CONSTANT ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DRIVE AXLE. THEREFORE, CENTRIFUGAL ACCELERATION MUST ALWAYS BE HIGHER ON THE LONG EXTENSION.

breakdown. So, what the hell, the Wright brothers didn't get far off the ground the first time they tried, either. Now that I know the critter will move, it is worthwhile to put a few bucks into a new motor, install a clutch, and gear the transmission down. One problem at a time is the way it goes.

A rectified centrifuge small enough to hold in one hand and powered by solar cells, based on my design, could be manufactured for about fifty dollars (depending on production run and competitive bids). Installed in Skylab, it would be sufficient to keep the craft in orbit indefinitely. A larger Hyperspace Drive (as I call this particular design) will provide a small but constant acceleration for interplanetary spacecraft that would accumulate practical velocities over runs of several days.

It is rumored that a gentleman by the name of Dean invented another kind of antigravity engine sometime during the past fifty years, but I have been unable to track down any more information except that its design consists of wheels within wheels. A gentleman in Florida, Hans Schnebel, sent me a description of a machine he built and tested that is probably similar in principle to the Dean Drive. Essentially, a large rotating disc has a smaller rotating disc on one side of the main driving axle. The two wheels are geared together so that a weight mounted on the rim of the smaller wheel is always at the outside of the larger wheel during the same length of arc of each revolution, and always next to the main axle during the opposite arc. What happens is that the velocity of the weight is amplified by harmonic coincidence with the large rotor during one half of its period of revolution, and diminished during the other half cycle. This concentrates momentum in the same quarter continually, to rectify the centrifuge. The result is identical to my Hyperspace Drive, but it has the beauty of continuously rotating motion. Now, if the Dean Drive is made with a huge main rotor—like about thirty feet in diameter—there is enough room to mount a series of smaller wheels around the rim, set in gimbals for attitude control, and Mr. Dean has himself a Model T Flying Saucer requiring no license from the AEC.

In 1975 Professor Eric Laithwaite, Head of the De-



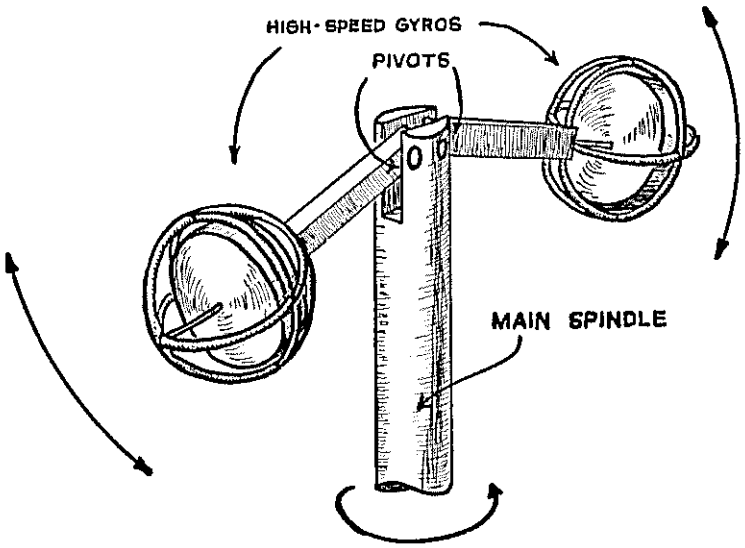
ESSENTIAL DESIGN OF PLANETARY GEAR DRIVE

WHEN THE CENTRIFUGAL MASS IS AT THE RIM OF THE MAIN ROTOR, THE VELOCITY OF THE MASS IS ADDED TO THE VELOCITY OF THE RIM. WHEN THE CENTRIFUGAL MASS IS AT THE AXLE OF THE MAIN ROTOR, THE VELOCITY OF THE MASS IS SUBTRACTED FROM THE VELOCITY OF THE RIM. THEREFORE, CENTRIFUGAL ACCELERATION PREDOMINATES ON THE ONE SIDE.

partment of Electrical Engineering at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in London, England, invented another approach to harnessing the centrifugal force of a gyroscope to power an antigravity engine—well, he almost invented it, but he did not have the sense to hold onto success when he grasped it. Professor Laithwaite is world-renowned for his most creative solutions to the problems of magnetic-levitation-propulsion systems, and the fruit of his brain is operating today in Germany and Japan; his railway trains float in the air while traveling at over 300 miles per hour. If anyone can present the world with a proven and practical antigravity engine, it must be the professor.

Laithwaite satisfied himself that the precessional force causing a gyroscope to wobble has no reaction. This is a clear violation of Newton's Third Law of Motion *as generally conceived.* Laithwaite figured that if he could engage the precessional acceleration while the gyroscope wobbled in one direction and release the precession when it wobbled in other directions, he would be able to demonstrate to a forum of colleagues and critics at the college a rectified centrifuge that worked as a proper antigravity engine. His insight was sound but he did not work it out right. All he succeeded in demonstrating was a *separation between action and reaction,* and his engine did nothing but oscillate violently. Unfortunately, neither Laithwaite nor his critics were looking for a temporal separation between action and reaction, so the loophole he proved in Newton's Third Law was not noticed. Everyone was looking for action *without* reaction, so no one saw anything at all. Innumerable other inventors have constructed engines essentially identical to Laithwaite's, including a young high-school dropout who lived across the street from me.

Another invention is described in U. S. Patent disclosure number 3,653,269, granted to Richard Foster, a retired chemical engineer in Louisiana. Foster mounted his gyroscopes around the rim of a large rotor disc, like a two-cylinder flying saucer. Every time the rotor turns a half cycle, the precessional twist of the gyros in reaction generates a powerful force. During the half cycle when Foster's gyros were twisting in the desired direction, his clutch grabbed and transmitted the power



ESSENTIAL DESIGN
OF THE LAITHWAITE ENGINE

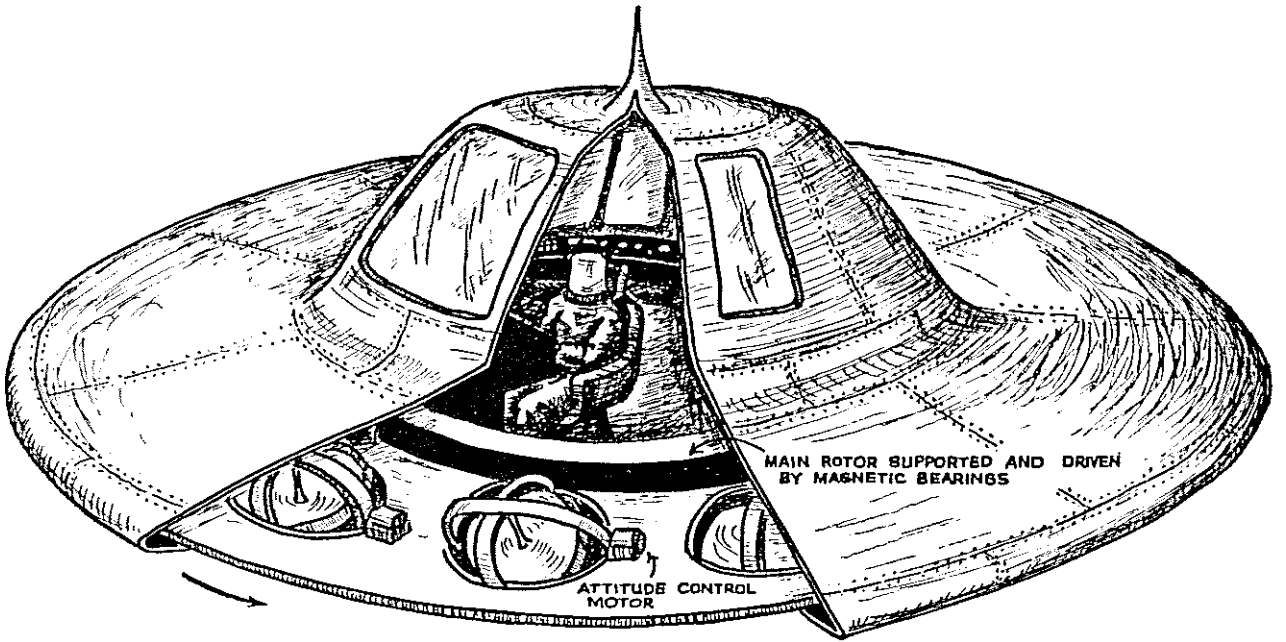
WHEN THE MAIN SPINDLE ROTATES, PRECESSIONAL ACCELERATION CAUSES THE GYROSCOPES TO RISE AND FALL DURING EACH REVOLUTION. THE MECHANICAL PROBLEM IS TO ENGAGE THE RISE OF THE GYROSCOPES TO GENERATE A LIFT WHILE DISENGAGING THE DOWNWARD SWING.

to the driving wheels. During the other half cycle, the gyros twisted freely. Foster claimed his machine traveled four miles per hour before it flew to pieces from centrifugal forces. After examining the patents, I agreed that it looked like it would work, and it certainly would fly to pieces because the bearing mounts were not nearly strong enough to contain the powerful twisting forces his machine generated. Foster's design, however, cannot be included among antigravity engines because it would not operate off the ground. He never claimed it would, and Foster always described his invention truthfully as nothing more than an implementation of the fourth principle of locomotion.

What Laithwaite needed was another rotary component, like the Dean Drive, geared to his engine's oscillations so that they would always be turned to drive in the same direction. As it happens, an Italian by the name of Todeschini recently secured a patent on this idea, and his working model is said to be attracting the interest of European engineers.

When the final rectifying device is added to the essential Laithwaite design, all the moving parts generate the vectors of a vortex, and the velocity generated is the axial thrust of the vortex. Therefore I call inventions based on this design the Vortex Drive.

By replacing the Hyperspace modules of the Mark I Flying Saucer with Vortex modules, still retaining the essential betatron as the centrifuge, performance is improved for the Mark II. To begin with, drive is generated only when the main rotor is revolving, so the saucer can be parked with the motor running. This eliminates the agonizing doubt we all suffered when the Lunar Landers were about to blast off to rejoin the Command Capsule: Will the engine start? This would explain why the ring of lights around the rim of a saucer is said to begin to revolve immediately prior to lift-off. A precessional drive affords a wider range of control, and the responses are more stable than a direct centrifuge. But the most interesting improvement is the result of the *structure* of the electromagnetic field generated by the Vortex Drive. By amplifying and diminishing certain vectors harmonically, the Mark III Flying Saucer can ride the electromagnetic currents of the Earth's



MARK II FLYING SAUCER

ELECTRONIC CENTRIFUGES BASED ON THE VORTEX DRIVE ARE MOUNTED IN GIMBALS TO TURN IN SYNCH WITH THE REVOLUTIONS OF THE MAIN ROTOR DISC.
THE TUNED ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD GENERATED BY THE VORTEX DRIVE CAUSES THE VEHICLE TO BE CARRIED BY THE EARTH'S ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD LIKE A DIRIGIBLE ELECTRON.
CONTROLLED GEOMAGNETIC PROPULSION IMPROVES THE DESIGN EFFICIENCY TO THE MARK III STAGE.

electromagnetic field, like the jet stream. And this is just what we see UFOs doing, don't we, as they are reported running their regular flight corridors during the biennial tourist season. Professor Laithwaite got all this together when he conceived of his antigravity engine as a practical application of his theory of "rivers of energy coursing through space"; he just could not get it off the drawing board the first time.

The flying saucer consumes fuel at a rate that cannot be supplied by all the wells in Arabia. Therefore we have to assume that UFO engineers must have developed a practical and compact atomic fusion reactor. But once the Mark III is perfected, another fuel supply becomes attainable, and no other is so practical for flying saucers. The Moray Valve will draw all the energy a saucer needs from the space through which it flies. The Moray Valve converts the Mark III into a Mark IV Flying Saucer by extending its operating capabilities through *time* as well as space. The Moray Valve, you see, functions by changing the direction of the flow of energy in the sun's gravitational field. It is the velocity of energy that determines motion, and motion determines the flow of time. We shall continue the engineering of flying saucers in the following essays.

My investigation into antigravity engineering brought me a technical report while this typescript was in preparation. Dr. Mason Rose, President of the University for Social Research, published a paper describing the discoveries of Dr. Paul Alfred Biefeld, astronomer and physicist at the California Institute for Advanced Studies, and his assistant, Townsend Brown. In 1923 Biefeld discovered that a heavily charged electrical condensor moved toward its positive pole when suspended in a gravitational field. He assigned Brown to study the effect as a research project. A series of experiments showed Brown that the most efficient shape for a field-propelled condensor was a disc with a central dome. In 1926 Townsend Brown published his paper describing all the construction features and flight characteristics of a flying saucer, conforming to the testimony of the first flight witnessed over Mount Rainier twenty-one years later and corroborated by thousands of witnesses ever since. (The Biefeld-Brown Effect explains why a Mark III rides the electromagnetic jet stream.)

We may speculate that flying saucers spotted from time to time may not only include visitors from other planets and travelers through time, but also fledglings from an unknown number of cuckoos' nests in secret experimental plants all over the world. The space program at Cape Canaveral may be nothing more than a supercolossal theater orchestrated by Cecil B. DeMille to reassure Americans that they are still *número uno* after Russia beat our atomic ace by putting Sputnik into orbit. We need not doubt that the Apollo spaceships got to the Moon, but we may wonder if Neil Armstrong was the first man to land there. The real space program may have been conducted in secret as a spin-off from the Manhattan Project since the end of World War II, and Apollo 13 may have been picked up by a sag wagon to make sure our team scored a home run every time they went to bat. The exploration of space is the most dangerous enterprise ever taken on by a living species. Don't you ever wonder why the Russians are losing men in space like a safari being decimated in headhunter country, while nothing ever happens to our boys except accidents during ground training?

5.

THE PHILOSOPHERS' STONE

How to Transmute the Elements by Engineering the Geometry of Standing Waves

A series of experiments has been carried out in Japan proving that chickens fed a diet deficient in calcium produced, as the end product of their biological processes, *more* calcium than they were given to live on. The conclusion is that the chickens *created* the calcium they needed by transmuting potassium.

This discovery challenges the basic concepts of science, and the more critically a discovery challenges the foundations of scientific belief, the less it is examined at all. But if potassium can be transmuted into calcium (and by chickens, no less!), we had best construct a new model of the atom to explain how this might be possible. So let's get started, at the level of the subatomic particles that seem to be giving theorists so much difficulty.

After observing that light travels in straight lines to cast sharp shadows, Isaac Newton deduced that light beams could exist only if radiant energy possessed the characteristics of atomic particles. But Sir Isaac went on to pass beams of light through prisms, observing the spectrum of colors projected. The fractioning of light into colors is possible *only* if radiant energy possesses the properties of waves. The problem became a matter of determining whether light was particulate or wavy in nature. Theorists decided that the ultimate elemental substance was both particle *and* wave, depending upon what it happened to be doing with itself when observed. Then realists proceeded to advance science without caring what light was. Nevertheless, the problem for the philosophers remains. The properties of particles categorically exclude the properties of waves, so how is it possible for an elemental substance, whatever it is, to manifest both properties in succession?

After the greatest scientists since Newton have given up, all a lay person has to do is take a couple of cartons of quarter-inch ball bearings to a billiard parlor, rent a table, and spread balls on the baize.

After you have managed to arrange them with a mathematically random distribution, you will see that each ball is equally distant from its neighbors. Absolute chaos is identical to perfect order.

Now try to rearrange the balls so that groups are allowed, but the groupings are mathematically random. Eventually the pattern formed by the balls will follow a density of distribution described by the Bell Frequency Curve of random statistics. The Bell Frequency Curve is a sine-wave form; on a plane surface it is manifest as regular clusters, with small groups of roughly equal numbers being roughly equal distances apart. The smaller groups congregate into larger groups until the entire field can be described as a single sine-wave form of low frequency. Once again, you prove that utter disorder is identical to total organization.

If the balls are small enough and numerous enough in relation to the area you have to spread them on, you will discover the aggregations of particles will assume the pattern of a spiral generated by phi, the ratio between successive numbers

in a series extended by adding consecutive numbers together; it is the ratio of 1:1.1618. All natural growth eventually follows the form of a spiral generated by a phi ratio, from the distributions of atoms to the distributions of stars in galaxies. (In other words, the spiral structure of gas clouds in interstellar space is not necessarily due to the process of gravitational contraction and centrifugal force, as proponents of the Nebular Hypothesis of stellar generation would have us believe. The spiral structure is an inevitable consequence of random distribution.)

You can perform this experiment at less cost by making pencil dots on a large piece of paper, but you will be bothered by constant erasing until you get the dots distributed properly. With pencil and paper, however, you can perform the converse experiment. Draw lines at random, each line representing a wave front. If you have enough lines on enough paper, and enough randomness, the result will look exactly like the random distribution of balls on a billiard table, as the intersections of lines form groupings of density.

Whether you perceive a ball to be an atomic particle or an aggregation of particles depends upon the *scale* of your frame of view. Whether you perceive an aggregation to be a particle or a wave depends upon the *scale* of your resolution. At the limit of resolution, all structures register on all instruments of measurement as particles. And all structures that cannot be resolved sharply by the instrument of measurement register as waves. So the nature of the ultimate element is determined by the instruments of measurement; all we can really know about it is what our instruments measure. Whether you choose to interpret reality as waves or particles depends entirely on what you want to do. The manifestations of energy—i.e., motion—yield measurements as waves; the manifestations of static material yield measurements as particles.

As it happens, everything is moving. Therefore, all events yield accurate measurements only as wave functions. The use of the laser for measurement establishes the wave as the elemental unit of space, time, motion, and energy.

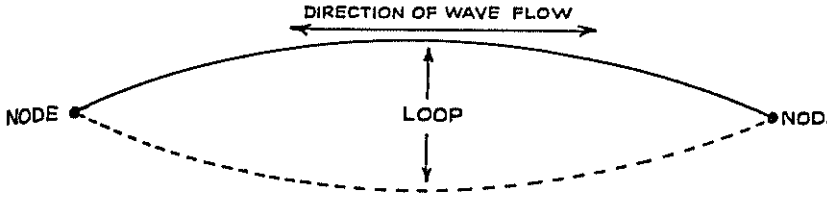
As when Pythagoras studied music, harmonics is still taught from the model of a vibrating string. A plucked string

vibrates back and forth as a unit, forming a standing-wave structure, emitting vibrations through the air to be heard as a musical sound. The tone is the fundamental frequency of the standing wave.

As the string vibrates as a unit, it also divides itself into two halves along its length, and each half vibrates as two individual standing waves independently of the fundamental wave. The frequency of the half lengths is twice the frequency of the fundamental, and the sound emitted is the second harmonic overtone, an octave higher than the fundamental.

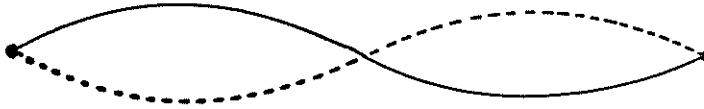
And at the same time as the string vibrates as a unit and as independent halves, it also divides its length into three equal parts, each third vibrating independently to emit a sound three times the frequency of the fundamental, called the third harmonic overtone. At the same time, the string also divides itself into fractional lengths of quarters, fifths, sixths, and so on to the elemental molecular unit of vibration, generating successively higher harmonic overtones all the way. The distribution of energy among the overtones determines the unique sound characteristic of each instrument. This is the way harmonics is taught.

Only one thing is wrong with the course of study: The instructors got it all backward, just as electricians are taught that electricity flows in the opposite direction from the way it really flows. Now all the musicians and acoustic engineers will protest; everyone can see the vibrating string, and the course in harmonics describes exactly what you see—doesn't it? No, what is really happening is random motion. Whether or not you can hear the vibrations of a musical string above the audible threshold, the string is *always* vibrating due to the random molecular agitation of heat. (As far as the string is concerned, the extra vibration it gets from being plucked is just more heat.) Molecular motion along the string arranges itself into increasingly longer sine waves according to the Bell Frequency Curve of random distribution, until all the various fractional vibrations come into phase to generate the fundamental frequency. Fractions which do not coincide with the lower harmonics travel back and forth along the length of the string as moving waves until they come into direct opposition, trans-



A MUSICAL STRING RESONATING AS A UNIT-WAVE SOUNDS ITS FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCY.

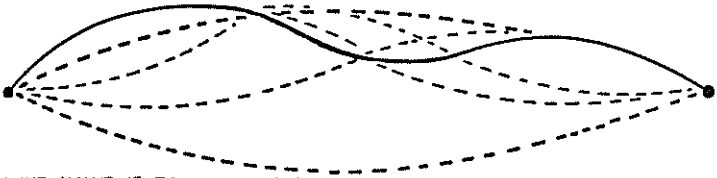
NOTE THAT THE FLOW OF ENERGY ALONG THE LENGTH OF THE STANDING-WAVE IS TRANSFORMED INTO AN ALTERNATING CURRENT FLOWING AT RIGHT-ANGLES ACROSS THE LOOP AFTER A REDUCTION OF WAVELENGTH AND VELOCITY AS DETERMINED BY THE LOOP/LENGTH RATIO.



AT THE SAME TIME THAT A STRING RESONATES AS A UNIT, IT ALSO VIBRATES AS TWO WAVE-UNITS TO SOUND THE SECOND HARMONIC OVERTONE AT TWICE THE FREQUENCY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL.



AND AT THE SAME TIME AS A STRING SOUNDS ITS FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCY AND ITS SECOND HARMONIC OVERTONE, IT ALSO RESONATES AS THREE WAVE-UNITS TO SOUND ITS THIRD HARMONIC OVERTONE AT THREE TIMES THE FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCY, AND SO ON TO INFINITY BY WAY OF THE FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH OVERTONES.



A COMPOUND WAVE IS FORMED BY SUPERIMPOSED HARMONIC OVERTONES.

forming them into electromagnetic radiation. It's the loss of energy through electromagnetic transformation that causes the molecular vibrations to die down.

Electricians continue to learn their subject backward because which way the current flows makes no difference to the wiring; and besides, alternating current flows both ways. So what difference does it make whether harmonics is taught as division or integration? Well, as long as you believe electricity flows from positive to negative, you will never be able to discover and implement electronics.

If you learn harmonics by distributing ball bearings on a pool table, the way Pythagoras did after he was initiated into the higher dimensions and forswore beans, you will discover how the universe unfolds.

An infinite number of particles distributed and moving randomly through infinite space will divide themselves along a fundamental axis; one half moving in one direction and the other half moving in the opposite direction. This flow corresponds to gravity and antigravity. The reason we rarely see antigravity is that all particles belonging to the opposite pole have already departed in the other direction, and very few are left around here.

Each half of the universal particles traveling in opposite directions along the fundamental axis will divide into two groups again, moving in opposite directions along a plane at right angles to the gravitational axis. This secondary harmonic corresponds to the centrifugal and centripetal forces. The second harmonic will also subdivide into another pair of equal and opposite accelerations that can be represented as a cylinder parallel to the centrifugal-centripetal plane. The tertiary harmonic corresponds to the precessional forces.

Like the conventional view of the musical string, the universe can be described as subdividing itself successively until the ultimate particle is reached—whatever that ultimate particle is.

Of course, the universe does not really divide itself in this manner any more than the musical string does. It assembles its harmonics from random motion to coherent undertones. We proceed to analyze from the fundamental to the

overtones only because it is convenient for our habit of thinking. We shall never know where the universal fundamental axis is, nor what the ultimate particle is, because in an infinite universe we must always find ourselves exactly in the middle of an infinite extension in both directions of whatever dimension we happen to be considering. What we call gravity, centrifugal-centripetal, and precessional forces are merely arbitrary conventions established for the convenience of our habitual mode of perception.

Once we perceive that all parts of space contain an indefinite number of particles moving at random to form the force fields we are familiar with, we understand how to engineer field energies directly. You see, one phase of precessional acceleration proceeds in the same direction as antigravity. To invent an antigravity engine, therefore, all you have to do is amplify the centrifugal harmonic until the antigravitational phase of the precessional harmonic exceeds the acceleration of gravity, and then eliminate the gravitational phase. This is exactly what Professor Eric Laithwaite calculated; he failed only because of errors in arithmetic. Other engineers have found the errors and corrected them. Whether or not the Laithwaite Engine worked, the fact remains that all antigravity engineering and all other field engineering can be reduced to the geometry of harmonics generated by random particles.

An infinite universe defined by an infinite number of randomly moving particles establishes the scientific principle of parity, meaning that energy will be equal in all directions and at all locations. In current physics, the concept of the cosmic hologram is still not accepted, so parity is limited to equality of motion in all directions.

When all the vectors of the gravitational-fundamental vibration and the centrifugal-centripetal secondary harmonic and the precessional tertiary harmonic and all the other harmonics are integrated into a resultant, the trajectory of any given particle must follow the course of a spiral vortex with a phi generator. Therefore, any part of space you choose as a frame of reference will be defined by a fundamental field vortex, subdivided into an indefinite number of harmonic overtone vortices.

A vortex can spin in only one direction. Parity demands that for every vortex there must be a countervortex. This is why all dynamic structures are created, like men and women, in equal and opposite numbers.

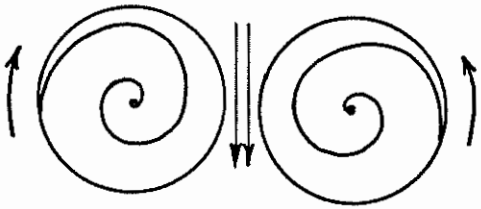
Two vortices spinning in the same direction flow in opposite directions along their interface. Therefore, if pushed together, they will annihilate each other. This is why when particle meets antiparticle, they are transformed into radiant energy. The closer two vortices spinning in the same direction are pushed together, the more energy is brought into opposition along their interface. Therefore, all vortices rotating in the same direction will tend to move away from each other until they are spaced equally apart.

Conversely, two vortices spinning in opposite directions are flowing in the same direction along their interface. Therefore, they tend to merge. But they are not drawn together so much as pushed together by the pressure of similar vortices.

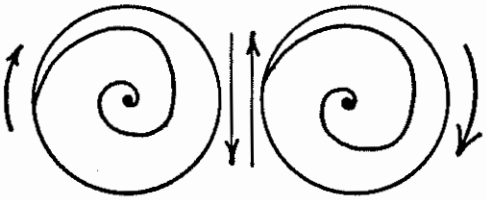
It is evident that the mechanics of vortices determines the force physicists call charge. Spin determines polarity.

Physical experiment has proven conclusively that electrons and protons are monopoles. The fact that electric charge is monopolar while magnetic charge is dipolar is one of the problems in the search for a Unified-Field Theory. If the vortex model is valid, however, electrons and protons should be dipolar, depending on which way they are oriented. But protons *always* repel each other, so all respectable physicists are convinced the vortex model is mistaken.

But protons do *not* always repel each other! When they come close enough together, they cleave together with greater force than any glue known. Physicists call this attraction the nuclear force, and they are unable to explain why it can be so powerful, but only over extremely close distances, within the nucleus of the atom. The answer is self-evident by a simple experiment. If you float a number of bar magnets in a fluid medium, and enclose the experimental setup in an electromagnetic field, the field will align all the magnets in the same direction and they will repel each other—like protons. But if the magnets are small enough, and are brought closely



A RANDOM DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICLES IN UNIVERSAL SPACE CREATES VORTECES IN PAIRS TURNING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. AT THE INTERFACE BETWEEN CONTRAROTATING VORTECES, THE FLOW IS IN THE SAME DIRECTION, SO OPPOSITELY TURNING VORTECES TEND TO MERGE.



AT THE INTERFACE BETWEEN VORTECES TURNING IN THE SAME DIRECTION, THE FLOW IS IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS, SO VORTECES TURNING IN THE SAME DIRECTION TEND TO PUSH AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.

THE BLACK HOLES THROUGH WHICH THE VORTEX FLOWS INTO HYPERSPACE IS THE OPPOSITE POLE OF THE CIRCLE FROM WHICH THE VORTEX FLOWS INTO THIS SPACE. THE BLACK HOLE AND THE WHITE CIRCLE ARE OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE SAME GATE TO AND FROM HYPERSPACE. THE EXPANSION OF THE POINT TO THE CIRCLE WITH SPACE SEPARATING THEM IS THE EFFECT OF PROJECTION BETWEEN HYPERSPACE AND REAL SPACE.

enough together, the mutual attraction of their opposite poles will overcome the force of the external field keeping them aligned—and they will flip, one relative to the other. With opposite poles tightly together, they will cleave together most tenaciously over a short distance. But once separated beyond the critical distance, the external field will align them in the same direction, and they will repel each other again. Scientists have come to perceive the electromagnetic field aligning particles in an atom as *the* electromagnetic field, so when particles flip and join in the nucleus with a thousand times more force than the attraction between proton and electron, a radically new force is postulated.

As it happens, Immanuel Velikovsky proposed an equivalent hypothesis to explain why planets in the Solar System do not collide. You see, if there is mutual gravitational attraction among the planets, they must clump together over the course of time. But observations prove that the planets maintain the greatest possible distance from each other. When an extreme condition is maintained indefinitely, you cannot explain it as accidental; there must be a physical force keeping the planets apart. Unfortunately, it was Velikovsky who proposed this hypothesis, and no scientist who is not independently wealthy and careless of reputation can afford to prove anything that Velikovsky said.

Field forces are defined, by many criteria, so physicists may be on firm ground when they establish a nuclear force distinct from the electromagnetic force—but the experiments proving electrical particles to be monopolar do not contribute to that support.

When harmonic calculations are transferred to spaces of more than one dimension (the musical string is the standard object lesson), the same principles are assumed to be valid. As a consequence, spherical harmonics is interpreted as a circular wave expanding from a point of origin on the global surface, and the harmonic ratios are measured along a radius. This conception works very well as far as it goes, but as you will learn, plane harmonics has some extremely practical differences from linear harmonics.

A plane cannot exist as a vibrating structure unless it

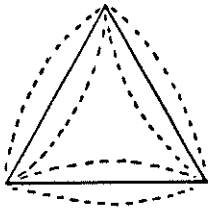
has at least three sides. The triangle, therefore, must be established as the fundamental unit of plane harmonics. When the sides of an equilateral triangle are bisected and joined, the result is four triangles, just as a square makes four squares when its sides are bisected and joined. The operations of plane harmonics apparently observe the rules of plane geometry.

William H. Whamond, writing in *Pursuit*, pointed out that if the sides of a polygon are not of a ratio that mutually reinforces each other's vibrations, the plane structure will disintegrate. All equal-sided polygons maintain their sides by mutual reinforcement, but all those which cannot be triangulated in harmonic ratios must collapse under pressure. It is surprising that Buckminster Fuller was able to build a career without realizing the function of harmonics in maintaining basic stability of structure.

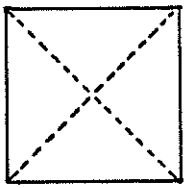
Whamond went further to point out that although stabilizing the dimensions of diagonals may be sufficient for practical structures, theoretical requirements are not satisfied unless the diametric vibrations reinforce the perimetric vibrations to establish the polygon's rigidity through and through. The simplest polygon generated by a mutually harmonic reinforcement of both sides and center is the hexagon. This is the probable reason why six acquired a reputation for being the perfect number among the ancient philosophers, and why a circle's circumference was accepted as being three times its diameter, although every wheelwright knew better.

If you draw a grid of squares, and then draw all the diagonals, you will find yourself with a grid composed of two sets of squares. One set is rotated forty–five degrees from the other, and their dimensions are related to each other by a ratio of $\sqrt{2}$. This self-evident transformation assumes engineering significance when harmonic structures extend into higher dimensions.

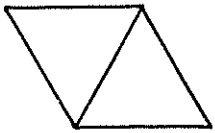
As Buckminster Fuller pointed out, not only is the triangle the basic unit of plane space, but the principle of triangulation also establishes the tetrahedron as the basic unit of solid space. Like the triangle, however, the tetrahedron maintains its structure only by the triangulated rigidity of the mutually reinforcing vibrations of its sides. In order to possess in-



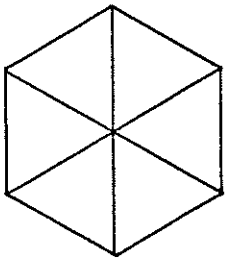
A TRIANGLE IS THE MINIMUM UNIT OF PLANE SPACE, DEFINED BY THREE WAVES IN A MUTUALLY REINFORCING STRUCTURE.



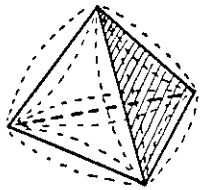
THE SQUARE IS CREATED BY FOUR MUTUALLY REINFORCING VIBRATIONS, BUT THE DIAGONALS ARE OF A RATIO INCOMMENSURABLE WITH THE SIDES IN WAVE UNITS.



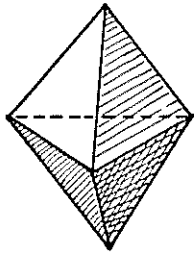
THEREFORE, THE SQUARE TENDS TO COLLAPSE INTO A PAIR OF MUTUALLY REINFORCING TRIANGLES.



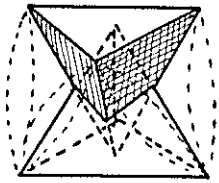
THE HEXAGON IS THE SIMPLEST, SYMMETRICAL PLANE SPACE ESTABLISHED BY A MUTUAL REINFORCEMENT OF THE DIAMETRIC WAVES WITH THE PERIMETRIC WAVES.



THE TETRAHEDRON IS THE MINIMUM UNIT OF VOLUME, DEFINED BY SIX STANDING-WAVES UNITED INTO A STRUCTURE OF MUTUALLY REINFORCING VIBRATIONS.



THE PRINCIPLE OF PARITY AROUND AXES ALIGNED AT RIGHT-ANGLES REQUIRES TETRAHEDRONS TO BE PAIRED.
A PAIR OF TETRAHEDRONS SHARING THE SAME BASE CONSTITUTES THE REGULAR TETRAHEDRON.



A PAIR OF TETRAHEDRONS INTERPENETRATING EACH OTHER POINT TO BASE IS STABILIZED BY A SET OF SIX WAVE UNITS RESONATING BETWEEN THE SIX EXPOSED VERTECES TO FORM A VIRTUAL OCTAHEDRON.
INTERNAL RESONANCE INTEGRATES WITH MUTUALLY REINFORCING EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS TO CREATE A POLYMORPHOUS HARMONIC STRUCTURE.

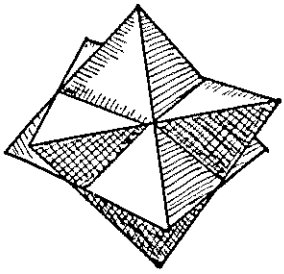
ternal stability, the tetrahedron must be doubled, one intersecting another, with points aligned on a polar axis.

To establish stability, tetrahedrons must always be manifest in mutually opposed and supporting pairs in this way. When this geometrical structure takes form from universal vibrations, however, it is not the simple pair of tetrahedrons it appears to be at first sight.

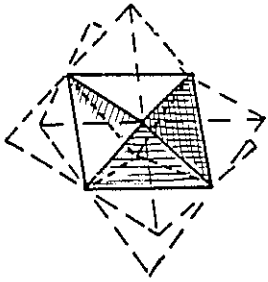
If lines are drawn joining all the points of the paired tetrahedrons, you have a cube. If lines are drawn between the centers of each face of the cube, they form the edges of an octahedron.

If circles scribed around the bases of the two tetrahedrons are divided into five equal arcs and all the points joined by lines, a symmetrical polyhedron defined by twenty equilateral triangles is defined. If all the points are joined by lines through the center of the icosahedron, twenty equal tetrahedrons will be defined. The space defined by an icosahedron is stabilized by mutually reinforcing resonance around all sides, along all edges, and through all diameters. Like the hexagon, the twenty faceted icosahedron is the perfect solid.

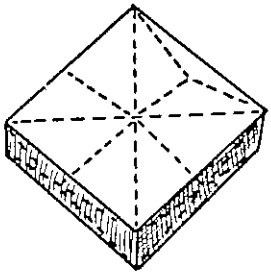
Now, bisecting all the lines forming an icosahedron produces a twelve-sided symmetrical polyhedron called a dodecahedron—the solid projection of the five-pointed star circumscribed by a pentagon. All ratios of the dodecahedron approximate the values of various mystical triangles, but they are incommensurate with the icosahedron by integers; the internal structure of the dodecahedron is irrational, like pi, phi, $\sqrt{2}$, $\sqrt{3}$, $\sqrt{5}$, etc. As you know, the diagonal of a square is related to its sides by $\sqrt{2}$, and the diagonal cross of a square is also the *negative* of the square. The dodecahedron is the negative of the icosahedron. In this context, the octahedron is the negative of the cube. Because a tetrahedron is the elemental unit of solid space, no other polyhedron can function as its inferior negative, so the tetrahedron is rotated 180 degrees to function as its own solid negative. Lines drawn from the points of a tetrahedron to its internal center form a linear structure called the Miraldi angle, resembling a caltrop; this is the true negative of the tetrahedron, but the field rotation required to transform a



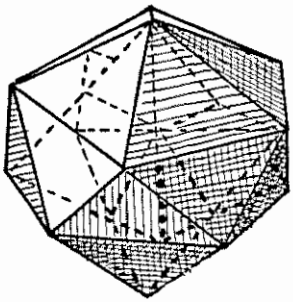
THE PRINCIPLES OF PARITY, HARMONIC INTEGRITY AND ROTATION TOWARDS THE SIMPLEST POSSIBLE ISOMETRIC STRUCTURES UNITES TETRAHEDRONS IN POLAR OPPOSITION BETWEEN FOUR PAIRS OF VERTECES, INTERPENETRATING EACH OTHER AT MIDSECTION. EACH EDGE IS DIVIDED INTO HALVES. EACH POLAR AXIS IS DIVIDED INTO THIRDS. A POLAR PROJECTION SHOWS THE EQUATORIAL PLANE DIVIDED INTO SIXTHS. EACH POINT IS A TETRAHEDRON DEFINED BY EDGES ONE-HALF THE LENGTH OF MAIN TETRAHEDRONS.



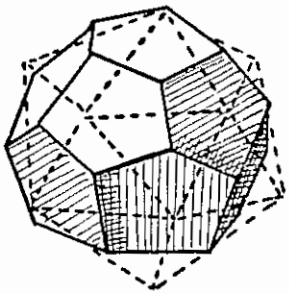
WHEN THE TETRAHEDRONS FORMING THE VERTECES OF THE EIGHT-POINTED SOLID STAR ARE CUT OFF, THE CORE REMAINING CONSTITUTES AN OCTAHEDRON.
THE HARMONIC INTEGRATION OF QUARTERS AND EIGHTHS WITH HALVES AND THIRDS IS REVEALED



WHEN THE VERTICES OF THE PRIME TETRAHEDRONS ARE JOINED BY LINES, A CUBE IS DEFINED.
THE VERTECES OF THE OCTAHEDRON DEFINE THE CENTRES OF THE SQUARES FORMING THE CUBE AND EACH EDGE OF THE PRIME TETRAHEDRONS ESTABLISHES THE DIAGONALS OF THE SQUARES.
NOTE THAT THE AXES OF EACH SOLID HARMONIC IS ROTATED RELATIVE TO THE STRUCTURE WHICH GENERATES IT.
THIS PROVES THAT A GIVEN SET OF VIBRATIONS DEFINES THE FIELD IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT STRUCTURES AT THE SAME TIME IN THE SAME PLACE AS DETERMINED BY THE PHASE HARMONICS INTEGRATING THE SET. A GIVEN STRUCTURE BECOMES TANGIBLE WHEN ITS PHASE IS TUNED TO THE PERCEIVER.



WHEN CIRCLES DRAWN AROUND THE BASES OF A PAIR OF MUTUALLY OPPOSED TETRAHEDRONS ARE DIVIDED INTO FIVE EQUAL SEGMENTS AND THE POINTS JOINED BY LINES, TWENTY EQUILATERAL TRIANGLES ARE FORMED AS THE FACETS OF A REGULAR ICOSAHEDRON. THE TRIANGLES ARE THE BASES OF TWENTY REGULAR TETRAHEDRONS RADIATING FROM THEIR APECES AT THE CENTRE OF THE ICOSAHEDRON.
THE ICOSAHEDRON IS THE SOLID CORRELATIVE OF THE PLANE HEXAGON, BEING STABILIZED BY DIAMETRIC VIBRATIONS MUTUALLY REINFORCING ITS SURFACE VIBRATIONS.

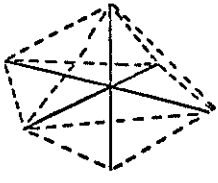


LINES CONNECTING THE CENTRES OF THE FACETS OF THE ICOSAHEDRON DEFINE THE EDGES OF TWELVE PENTAGONS FORMING THE FACETS OF A REGULAR DODECAHEDRON.
THE BISECTING LINES ARE THE CENTRAL AXES OF THE TRIANGLES, RELATED TO THE SIDES AS $\sqrt{3}$ IS TO 2. THEREFORE, THE CENTRAL AXES OF THE TRIANGLES ARE THE NEGATIVES OF THE TRIANGLES AND THE DODECAHEDRON IS THE NEGATIVE OF THE ICOSAHEDRON. CORRELATIVELY, THE OCTAHEDRON IS A PARTIAL NEGATIVE OF THE CUBE.

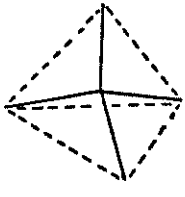
tetrahedron into a caltrop projects the structure into fewer dimensions.

Now, the relationship between a square and its diagonals is a 45-degree rotation on plane space, which is the projection of a rotation of 90 degrees in hyperspace. The relationship between the tetrahedron, the octahedron, the cube, the dodecahedron, and the icosahedron is also established by a definite rotation through hyperspace. The notes of a musical scale are also defined by a definite rotation of energy through hyperspace, which transforms one frequency into another. As an illustration, rotation through hyperspace transforms the wavelength of the side of a square to the wavelength of its diagonal. The ratio of the side to the diagonal is the same as the ratio between G and C# on the musical scale.

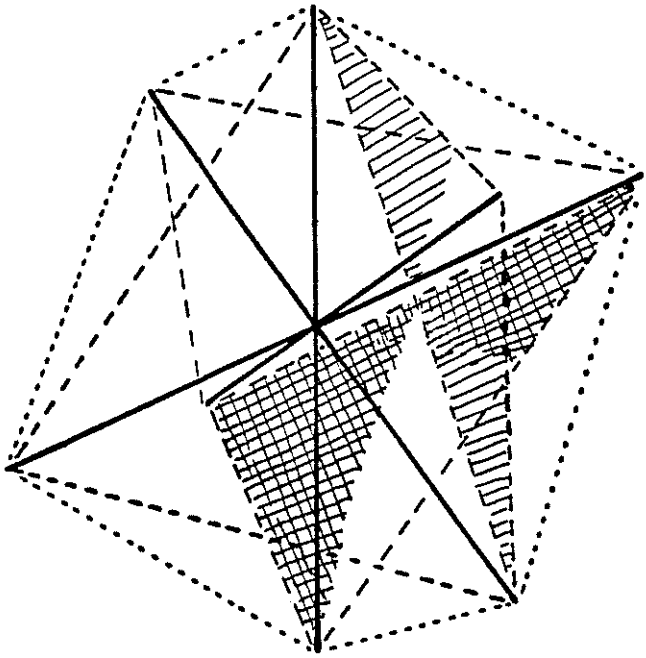
You have just made a discovery sought by philosophers throughout history; the regular Platonic solids are re-



THREE AXES ALIGNED AT RIGHT-ANGLES TO EACH OTHER ESTABLISH THE SIMPLEST STRUCTURE POSSIBLE IN 3-D SPACE. THE NEGATIVE (HYPERSPACIAL) AXES GENERATING THE OCTAHEDRON CONFORM TO THIS LIMITING CASE OF SIMPLICITY. THIS IS WHY RIGHT-ANGLE COORDINATES ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO GEOMETRY INSTEAD OF THE TRIANGULATION FAVOURED BY BUCKMINSTER FULLER.
THE OCTAHEDRON IS THE SIMPLEST STABLE ELEMENT OF GEOMETRY.
THE TETRAHEDRON IS THE THIRD HARMONIC OF THE BASIC OCTAHEDRON



FOUR AXES ALIGNED AT 127° INTERVALS ARE NEEDED TO GENERATE THE TETRAHEDRON. THE PRINCIPLE OF PARITY GIVES LOW PROBABILITY TO TETRAHEDRONS EXISTING BY THEMSELVES; LIKE HYDROGEN ATOMS, THE PREFERRED STATE OF THE TETRAHEDRON IS IN PAIRS. THE SAME AXES WHICH GENERATE THE ELEMENTAL TETRAHEDRON ALSO GENERATE A PROPERLY OPPOSED PAIR WHEN EXTENDED TO DEFINE THE DIAGONALS OF A CUBE.



NOTE THAT THE AXES GENERATING THE OCTAHEDRON FORM THE CORE OF THE TETRAHEDRON PAIR.

THIS MODEL REVEALS THAT THE INTERSECTION OF HYPERSPACIAL FIELDS AT RIGHT ANGLES ON ALL AXES GENERATES OCTAHEDRONAL STRUCTURES IN REAL SPACE. WHEN FIELDS IN HYPERSPACE INTERSECT WITH AXES ALIGNED ALONG THE TERTIARY HARMONIC, CUBIC/TETRAHEDRONAL STRUCTURES ARE CREATED. BY ROTATING HYPERSPACIAL AXES, ALL CONCEIVABLE STRUCTURES CAN BE CREATED IN REALSPACE. THIS IS THE BASIS OF ALCHEMY, MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT. THE MIND IS A HYPERSPACIAL ENTITY CAPABLE OF AUTONOMOUS ROTATION OF FIELD AXES. THE TRANSLATION OF BRAIN MECHANICS INTO TECHNOLOGY IS WHAT PSYCHOTRONIC ENGINEERING IS ALL ABOUT.

lated to each other as musical notes on a hexatonic scale. Extend the sides of the dodecahedron until they meet, and you have the frame of a pair of tetrahedrons exactly twice the size of the pair you started with to continue the scale on the second octave. You have discovered the Music of the Spheres.

Parity is not satisfied by the creation of nuclear particles in the form of equal and opposing standing-wave vortices. The axes of the pair, you see, are both aligned in the same direction; that is a manifestation of directional preference. In order that axes be balanced in all directions, particles must congregate in groups of six: three pairs of mutually opposed particles with the axis of each pair at right angles to the other two. This assemblage puts each vortex at the vertex of an octahedron.

The octahedron is not stable because each pair of vortices grind gears against the other two. But if the equatorial pair of particles move away from each other along the polar axis, the six can mesh together like two pairs of crown gear clusters fitted at right angles to each other.

The vortex model suggests that the basic particle is likely to be composed of three pairs of finer particles bound together in the harmonic structure of an octahedron. The geometry of the three pairs bears a striking correspondence to the characteristics of the elusive quark. Charm, beauty, and color appear to be manifestations of angle in hyperspace; axial angles account for fractional electric charge.

The octahedron still does not quite satisfy parity. The polar pinions of the crown gear clusters are both spinning in the same direction; this will give the octahedron a net charge. If four more pair of vortices, forming the negative of the octahedron, are spaced in a cube arrangement between the vertices of the octahedron, all the gears will spin in the right direction, all spins will be equally opposed, and all axes will be balanced in all directions. The cube-octa is the likely conformation of the neutron. Proof will be slow coming because at least half the particles are in the quantum field at the instant any measurement is made; this is why the quarks are so damned elusive.

The cube-octa contains fourteen particles. If struck, it

could collapse, with twelve arranging themselves around one in the center, in the form of a dodecahedron, while the fourteenth spins free into orbit. The transformation is remarkably similar to what appears to happen when a neutron is converted by impact into a proton and an electron.

If the proton has the geometry of a dodecahedron, it will be a charged particle, so every proton will seek another proton as a mate. This may be why hydrogen is a diatomic molecule. After the neutron collapses, parity is not reestablished absolutely until the helium atom is formed. This would explain why helium is monatomic, with all the properties of an overgrown neutron.

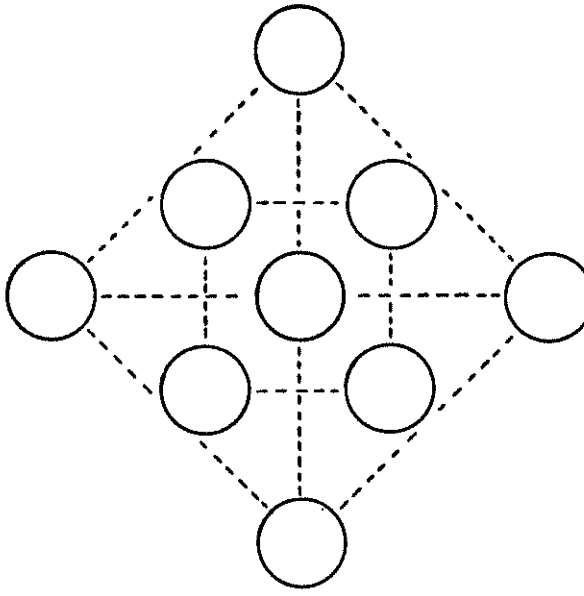
Now that we have our electrons, protons, and neutrons straightened out, let's put them all together!

Niels Bohr described the atom as a miniature Solar System, with the nucleus serving as a Sun, orbited by electron "planets". The Bohr model is represented in all popular scientific literature despite the fact that any child can see it must be impossible. You see, if you have electrons orbiting in all directions around a nucleus, they are bound to collide; and on the atomic time scale, *eventually* is something sooner than a microsecond.

The atomic traffic problem was solved by giving each electron a different radius to orbit, but this solution won't work, either. An electron's wavelength is defined by its orbit. If every electron has its own orbital radius, each electron will manifest a different wavelength. This does not happen.

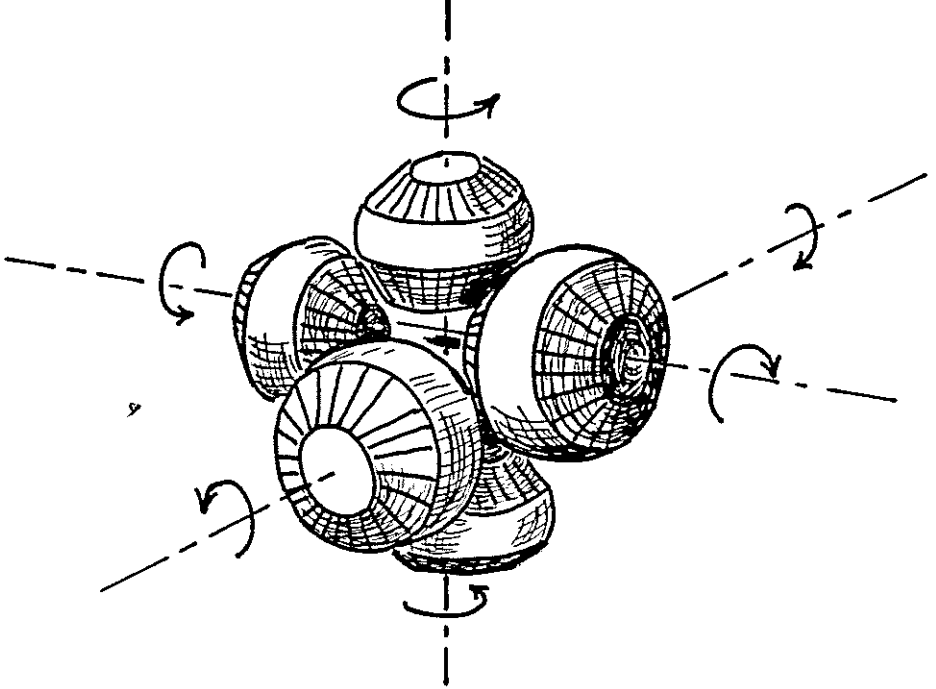
Erwin Schrödinger resolved the problem by proposing that electrons were standing waves, but his equations required three dimensions for each electron. Although the standing-wave equations were accepted, the necessity for multiplied space was not. As a consequence, mathematical physicists are still searching for a model that will make the atom possible! They have given up seeking a model that can be represented as a mechanical structure, and physics builds increasingly complicated and abstract equations.

The model of solid harmonics indicates that the node of the electronic standing wave revolves around the equator of the hydrogen nucleus. The node requires only half the quan-

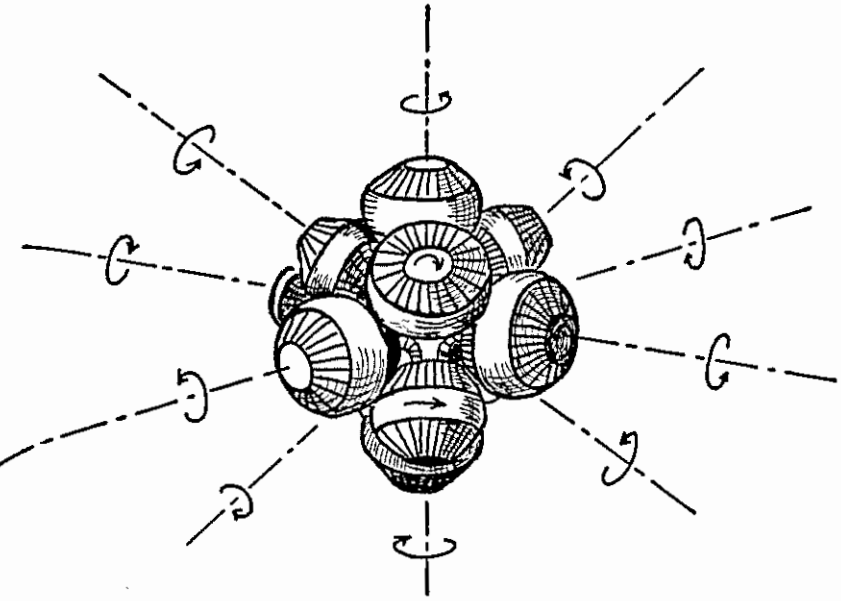


POLAR VIEW OF THE PROBABLE DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRONS IN THE OUTERMOST SHELL OF THE KRYPTON ATOM. THE OPPOSITE HEMISPHERE IS THE SAME.
THE BASIC OCTAHEDRON COMBINED WITH THE CUBE REESTABLISHES THE GEOMETRY OF THE NEUTRON ON A LARGER SCALE.

PARITY OF THE MODEL BREAKS DOWN AT THIS STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT. KRYPTON CAN BE MADE TO COMBINE CHEMICALLY BUT ITS ACTIVITY IS FAR FROM COMMENSURATE WITH THE FAILURE OF PARITY. THEREFORE, ANOTHER HARMONIC FEATURE MUST BE INTRODUCED IF THIS MODEL IS TO REMAIN VALID FOR HEAVIER ELEMENTS.



PARITY DEMANDS THAT VORTECES BE CREATED IN THREE PAIRS OF OPPOSITELY SPINNING SPHERES WITH THEIR AXES ALIGNED AT RIGHT ANGLES.
IN THIS DIAGRAM, THE POLAR VORTECES SPIN IN THE SAME DIRECTION, VIOLATING PARITY.



INTRODUCING AN INTERMEDIARY SET OF VORTECES INTO THE NEGATIVE SPACE, FORMING A CUBE WITHIN THE OCTAHEDRON, CORRECTS THE ROTATION SO THAT EACH POLAR VORTEX ON EACH AXIS SPINS IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. PARITY IS SATISFIED BY ALL DIRECTIONS OF SPIN AND AXIAL ALIGNMENTS.

NOTE THAT THIS STRUCTURE IS A HARMONICALLY INTEGRATED SOLID SCALE CORRESPONDING TO THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES.

IF REALITY IS STRICTLY GOVERNED BY PARITY, AND IF PARITY IS ESTABLISHED BY RANDOM VECTORS, THEN THIS MODEL MUST BE THE PROBABLE STRUCTURE OF THE NEUTRON.

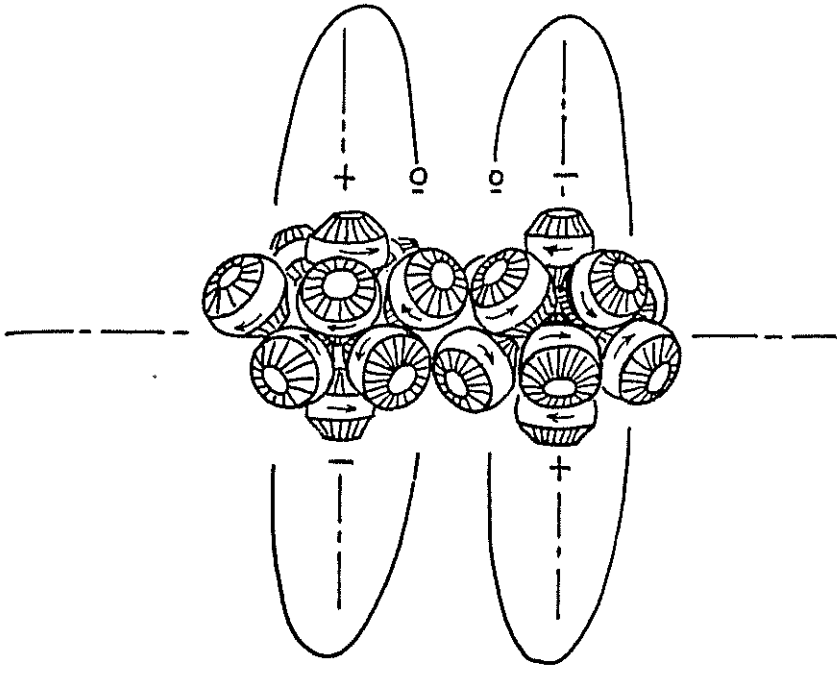
THE SPIN, MASS AND CHARGE OF EACH VORTEX DEPEND ON ITS AXIAL ALIGNMENT TO THE FRAME OF REFERENCE AT THE INSTANT MEASUREMENT IS MADE. THEREFORE, THE NATURE OF SUBATOMIC PARTICLES MUST BE INDEFINITE IN THEIR VARIETIES. THE ONLY CONSTANT IS THE FREQUENCY AND STABILITY OF EACH HARMONIC STRUCTURE AS ESTABLISHED BY PROBABILITY.

tum orbital space it has, so another electron can share the same shell to form a helium atom. To maintain parity, each moves to a polar hemisphere separated by the equator, and revolves in opposite directions.

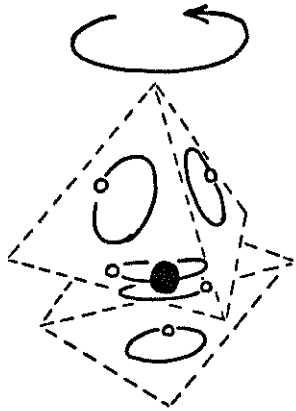
Space is insufficient for a third electron, so the lithium atom must start another shell. The second shell has enough area for eight electrons, so the surface of each hemisphere is divided harmonically into successive halves, thirds, and quarters. Apparently the equatorial division establishes a hemispherical sector that is never crossed. The eight facets form the sides of an octahedron (the ubiquitous octahedron again) and each facet has just enough room to hold an electron; each facet is a quantum unit of space relative to the frequency of the electron. When the octahedron is complete, the atom is electrically neutral, as all octahedrons with their gears running smoothly are supposed to be. Neon is almost as inert as helium, but parity must be observed; and a second octahedron is laid over the first with the spins of each electron aligned at a different angle. The fourth orbital shell has sufficient radius for its surface to hold many more electrons. If you move the eight electrons to the vertices of the octahedron harmonic structure, so that each hemisphere is covered by a square pyramid with the equatorial cleavage separating them, you will find enough room to add another electron to the center of each facet, defining a cube-octa. The total of electrons will be eighteen; this is the number of electrons proven to be established in the subsequent shells in the generation of the Periodical Table of Elements. The electrons of each shell align their axes to balance parity.

But apparently it is a long way from helium to the next perfect atomic geometry. If the equatorial cleft is retained throughout the generation of elements, the model of heavier atoms will assume the dumbbell configuration of the electromagnetic field surrounding a bar magnet. (Structural weakness at the waist may be the reason that atoms heavier than bismuth break spontaneously.)

To illustrate how the geometry works in practice, the atom of carbon has a pair of miter caps, one over each polar hemisphere. There is space for two more electrons in each



THE PROTON PROBABLY ASSUMES THE STRUCTURE OF THE DODECAHEDRON. THE DODECAHEDRON ASSEMBLAGE OF VORTECES HAS THE POLAR PAIR SPINNING IN THE SAME DIRECTION, GIVING THE PROTON A NET CHARGE. THE CHARGE IS NEUTRALIZED WHEN THE PROTON UNITS IN PAIRS ALIGNED IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS CREATE THE HYDROGEN MOLECULE ILLUSTRATED ABOVE. THE HYDROGEN MOLECULE STILL FAILS AXIAL PARITY, SO HYDROGEN REMAINS CHEMICALLY ACTIVE. THE ADDITION OF A PAIR OF NEUTRONS BETWEEN THE ELECTRONS ON AN AXIS PERPENDICULAR TO THIS PLANE ESTABLISHES THE AXIAL STRUCTURE OF THE OCTAHEDRON, MAKING THE HELIUM ATOM UTTERLY INERT.



THE OXYGEN ATOM PROBABLY HAS THREE ELECTRONS REVOLVING IN PLANES FORMING A TETRAHEDRON OVER EACH POLAR HEMISPHERE. THE RADIUS OF REVOLUTION IS THE SAME FOR ALL ELECTRONS IN ALL SHELLS SO THAT THE FREQUENCY OF THE ELECTRON CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS CONSTANT. THE SHELLS SPIN AROUND THE NUCLEUS, SATISFYING THE EXPERIMENTAL BASIS OF THE BOHR MODEL. THE STATE OF ATOMIC EXCITEMENT IS DETERMINED BY THE VARIABLE RADIUS OF THE SHELL AS IT IS TRANSFORMED FROM ONE HARMONIC OVERTONE TO ANOTHER.

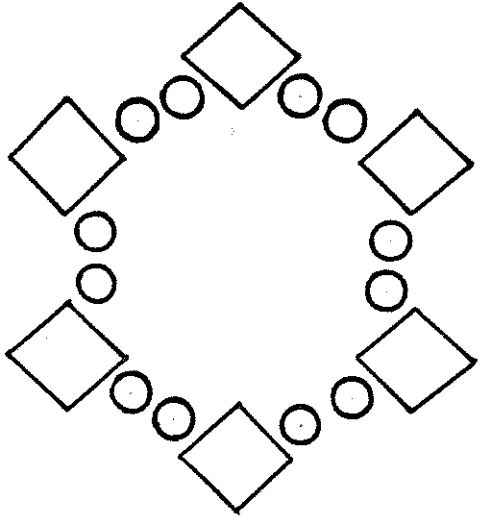
hemisphere to complete the octahedron. When it takes the electrons attached to hydrogen atoms, the hydrogen nucleus is going to stick out as a lump. In order to maintain parity, the angles at which the hydrogen atoms will join the carbon atom to form methane conform to the points of a tetrahedron. This fact is taken for granted in stereochemistry today, but established authorities put down the first chemist who suggested that molecules had solid structures, quite different from the empirical formulas used to describe them.

The oxygen atom is capped by three-sided pyramids with room for one more electron in each hemisphere. Parity allows a 120-degree angle between the hydrogen nuclei, and so water forms ice crystals in a hexagonal geometry.

Outside of the innermost shells, electrons do not orbit the nucleus of their atoms at all; they orbit the space of their octahedronal facet at a constant radius. This geometry makes it possible to avert collisions and maintain a constant frequency of orbit, regardless of an electron's distance from its atomic center. When atoms are excited by absorbing radiation, a rotation in hyperspace causes the shells to move out to a greater radius from the nucleus to the positions calculated from experiment.

You have been taken along this line of superficial physics and chemistry to give you a basis for the possibility that all molecular structures are generated from the elementary geometry of the Platonic solids, with the elements combined in various combinations of harmonically integrated angles, like crystals. If this is so, then each chemical element and compound will resonate in sympathy to a specific geometric solid. Furthermore, each solid structure can be excited and modulated by musical sound. This is not a novel concept, but the very basis of alchemy.

Now, each solid can be transformed into another structure by a regular rotation through the hyperspace of the quantum field. Each chemical atom is also transformed by a rotation of its geometrical structure in hyperspace. Therefore, by employing tuned vibrations it is theoretically possible to transform lead into gold (or gold into oil, which is considerably more valuable these days).



WHEN A HYDROGEN ATOM COMBINES WITH EACH POLAR HEMISPHERE OF THE OXYGEN ATOM, THE HEXAHEDRON GEOMETRY IS TRANSFORMED INTO THE STABLE OCTAHEDRON. THE PLANES OF THE OCTAHEDRON MEET THE POLAR AXIS AT AN ANGLE LITTLE MORE THAN 30°.
THEREFORE, WHEN WATER MOLECULES ARE CRYSTALLIZED BY THE HYDROGEN BOND, THE SNOWFLAKE TAKES FORM AS A HEXAGON.

Fitting experimental data to the theory of solid harmonics is a task requiring professional competence. Even if the essential concept is correct, conflicting data is turning up day by day inspiring many false starts.

In the meantime, back at the bench, we have discovered the Philosopher's Stone. If a birdbrain can transmute the elements, so can engineering geniuses—as soon as we figure out how those stupid chickens did it.

6.

TIME TRAVEL

How to Navigate the Streams of Time Through Hyperspace

The technology dominating a civilization is determined by the concept of reality believed by its social leaders. Concepts of reality are axioms which cannot be tested. This is not to say that cultural beliefs are refractory to proof; it is impossible for people to examine their concepts of reality because there is a mental block at the depths of individual and collective psychology enforced by taboo. The concept of reality must be guarded inviolate from question. Merely to think about it begins to dissolve its absolute power over us and leads to the transformation of one person after another until the civilization disintegrates.

The fundamental and unquestionable concepts of our civilization are Absolute Time, Absolute Space extending in

three dimensions, Absolute Velocity, and Conservation. These realities are so self-evident to us that we are unable to perceive evidence to the contrary. We cannot believe that people in other times and places do not perceive time and space as we do. If we could see the everyday life of the Middle Ages, as it was experienced by the average person who lived then, we should regard the entire population of medieval Europe as paranoid schizophrenic. When Einstein proved that time, space, velocity, and conservation were not absolute but mutable, the heresy was allowed to exist only because it was expressed in a language defying all comprehension.

Modern inquisitors state that the psychedelic experience provides no insight into the nature of reality, as the mystic heretics claim; the psychedelic experience is nothing but the hallucinations of a disordered mind. But Einstein pointed out that it takes only a single contradictory fact of evidence to demolish a scientific theory. So of all the various psychedelic experiences, we need only one to prove that the prevailing concepts of reality must be profoundly mistaken. It is fairly common for freaks to experience time flowing backward. Now, for time to be experienced in retrograde, it is necessary that a person have a clear and continuous memory of the future. If the concept of absolute time is true, then it is absolutely impossible for anyone to experience a memory of the future, no matter how disordered his mind may be. Therefore, time cannot be absolute.

Mystics are handicapped by lacking scientific concepts to explain their experience in scientific terms to scientific critics. Anyone who has passed high-school science, however, has all the scientific concepts needed to comprehend both the psychedelic experience and the Theory of Relativity, provided he is an acute observer and uses common sense instead of believing the professional gurus.

To show you how easy it is to break the taboo maintaining mistaken concepts of reality, Buckminster Fuller holds a global map of the world in his hand so that a triangle drawn on its surface can enclose 270 degrees of angle. The first man who got his observation of spherical geometry published in a hard-core scientific journal is regarded as a great mathematical

genius, but everyone has always seen that gores on a curved surface enclose more or less than 180 degrees of angle. Tailors and sheet-metal mechanics have practiced spherical geometry since prehistoric times.

Spherical geometry leads directly to the Theory of Relativity and the transformation of our civilization by introducing radically different concepts of reality. The atomic bomb and atomic power are merely the first technological advances made possible by the new beliefs. A number of more or less simple models will enable you to understand the consequences of Relativity and the incredible technology already under study in laboratories for research and development.

Take a flat sheet of metal or vibrant plastic, sprinkle its top surface with a fine powder, and strum a bow across one of its edges. The sheet will resonate like a violin string. The sonic wavelengths which coincide harmonically with the dimensions of the particles of powder will cause the particles to vibrate sympathetically and bounce up and down. These vibrations carry the particles with them, making the pattern of the field of sound waves visible. This Plate Flutter Model illustrates the structure of the entire universe and shows how it unfolds.

Sound vibrations travel eleven hundred feet a second in air, faster in solids, so their movement is much too rapid for the eye to follow on a small plate. What you see are standing waves formed when radiant vibrations meet from opposite directions. It may help you to understand standing waves by studying waves on a body of water. Water molecules vibrate as waves traveling through the liquid with sonic velocity. Where these waves intersect to augment each other, a wave pattern is created that doesn't move. If enough sonic waves augment each other at the same location, the standing-wave pattern grows large enough to be seen as waves rising and falling on the surface of the water. A standing wave is like a stroboscopic image, whereby a high-speed, repeating pattern is made to appear to move slowly.

In an ideal experiment, the pattern of the standing waves would reveal only the structure of the sound vibrations. A real model, however, is limited to revealing only the pat-

terns which conform to the resonance of the particles and the plate. Furthermore, sound waves are three-dimensional structures; they fill solid space. All the model can show is a plane section through the solid field of sound waves. These limitations must be borne in mind when reading the experiments.

You can change the frequency of the tuning by sounding another note. You can change the way the vibrations meet by cutting the plate to other shapes. If you use a chord for sounding, instead of a single note, a change of individual notes in the chord will change the patterns. If you use a tuning fork to apply sound to the plate, the patterns will change according to the position of the fork, and you can use more than one fork to alter tuning by varying their positions one to another. The powder will respond to all these changes by moving to form other patterns in other places.

Watch closely while tuning is changed. As opposing vibrations are shifted from perfect congruence, the standing-wave patterns move. As a standing-wave pattern acquires velocity, its extension in the line of travel contracts. What you are seeing is an illustration of the Fitzgerald Contraction described in Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity happening right in front of your eyes.

Time is defined by vibrations. If you inspect a standing-wave pattern intently, you will see that as it acquires velocity, it vibrates more slowly; the reciprocating motion is transformed into linear motion. What you are seeing is the slowing down of time as velocity is increased. In most cases, the motion will require high-speed movie film to make it fully visible.

A standing-wave structure manifests all the properties of material mass in physical equations. When a standing-wave pattern is accelerated to the velocity of the radiant waves which create it, its three-dimensional structure disappears altogether. What you are looking at now is the conversion of pure matter into pure energy, as described by Einstein in his famous equation, $E = mc^2$. An atomic bomb is nothing more than the explosive acceleration of solid atoms to the velocity of light, at which speed the material is transformed into radiant waves.

The model makes it obvious that no material structure can be accelerated to a speed greater than the speed of the waves which create it. This is why the speed of light is the limiting velocity for all material bodies.

If time slows down in your frame of reference as you acquire velocity, the time of the frame surrounding you appears to accelerate in comparison. The effect is the same as traveling through time into the future. The Theory of Relativity makes it theoretically possible to travel through time.

In fact, when you leave the city at the end of the day to spend the night in the suburbs, the city you return to is shifted into the future relative to where it would be if you spent the night in a downtown hotel. The shift is negligible, however, because the speed and duration of your commutation is nominal relative to the flow of time. If you could travel to the Sun and back at the speed of light, the Earth would progress sixteen minutes into the future while you were experiencing no passage of time at all. You would have to travel to the nearest star and back at the speed of light to step off your time shuttle ten years in the future.

Acceleration to the speed of light takes you on a one-way trip into the future. Without a return ticket, the trip is as attractive as dying. If acceleration transports you to the future, then you must travel at less than zero velocity to return to the past. It is possible to have less than nothing in your bank account by overdrawing, but moving slower than standing still seems impossible. Minus velocity only appears to be impossible, however, because of the way we think about speed. In the mathematics of relativity, less than zero velocity is equivalent to hyperlight velocity, like five to noon is merely another way of saying fifty-five minutes after eleven o'clock.

The logic of traveling backward in time is as simple as the logic of traveling forward into the future. You see, all acceleration must be through time as well as space. From zero velocity to light velocity, all travel must be into the future. There is only one way to go after the velocity of light is exceeded. That way is back into the past.

You have just seen the Plate Flutter Model demonstrate Einstein's proof that no material body can be accelerated

above the speed of light, so how is it possible to attain the hyperlight velocities required to travel backward into time? Intensive analysis of the Plate Flutter Model will show you that although no standing wave can exceed the speed of light, the information contained in the pattern of the standing wave can be accelerated to infinite velocity in the form of a shear-wave pattern.

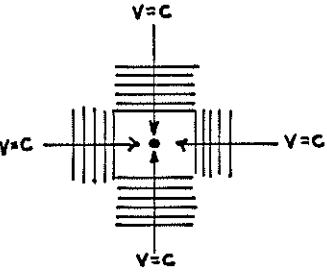
A shear wave is illustrated by the angle formed by a pair of scissors. As the blades close, the point of the intersection accelerates to infinite velocity.

A material standing-wave structure is a highly compounded shear-wave structure. A standing wave is created when a pair of radiant waves meet at an angle of 180 degrees, interpenetrating each other. Three pairs of mutually opposed radiant waves must meet at the intersection of three axes, all at right angles to each other, to generate a solid-material body. The acceleration of a body in a field is the effect of a rotation of the flow axes of the radiant waves which generate it.

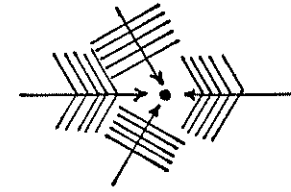
As the straight angle closes like a pair of scissors on one axis, the standing wave accelerates at right angles to the direction of radiant-wave flow. You can observe this in moiré patterns available from the Edmund Scientific Company, advertised in many technical magazines on the newsstand.

As a standing wave acquires shear velocity, it can be seen to disintegrate in the line of travel; its material dimensions are transformed into radiation according to the Fitzgerald Contraction. The radiation emitted ranges from the gravity waves broadcast by a massive body accelerated in a gravitation field to the synchrotron radiation beamed by an atomic particle accelerated in an electromagnetic field. This disintegration is apparent only to observers in the original frame of reference. To the accelerated body, it is the observers at the home base of reference that disintegrate into pure radiation.

As an accelerating body disintegrates along the axis of travel, it re-forms along an axis proceeding at right angles to the line of travel. As a result, the standing wave is observed to veer to the right as Relativistic velocities are reached. This is the reason for the right-hand rule learned by electrical engineers.

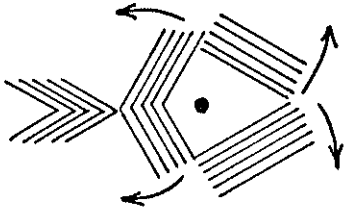


SHEAR VELOCITY

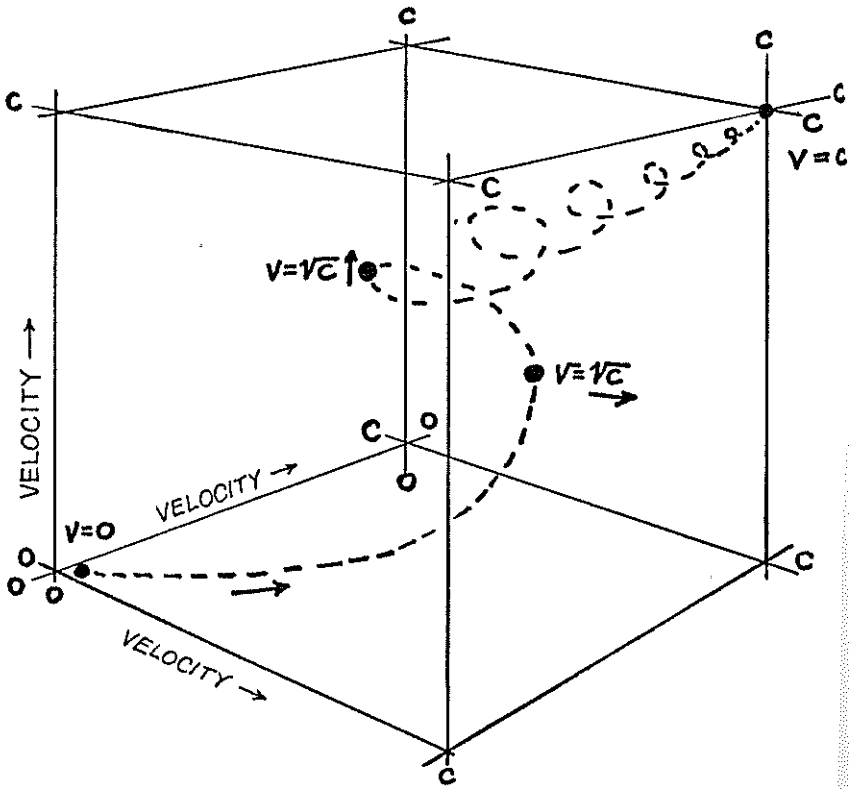


ALL MATERIAL BODIES ARE STANDING-WAVE STRUCTURES CREATED BY UNIVERSAL VIBRATIONS COMING TO A FOCUS FROM ALL DIRECTIONS IN PROPER PHASE AND RETURNING TO THE QUANTUM FIELD AT THE PARTICULATE CENTRE.

ALL BODIES MOVE AS THEIR PROPER WAVEFRONTS ROTATE ON THE PLANE OF THEIR FLOW. WAVEFRONT ROTATION IS DUE TO THE ROTATION OF THE UNIVERSAL FIELD AROUND THE AXES OF PHASE AND FREQUENCY.



AS SHEAR VELOCITY APPROACHES THE SPEED OF LIGHT, THE TRAILING WAVEFRONTS LAG BEHIND THE MOVING BODY. AS THE VELOCITY OF THE SHEAR ANGLE OPENING THE LINE OF TRAVEL EQUALS AND THEN EXCEEDS THE FLOW VELOCITY OF THE WAVES, THE REDUCTION OF THE FREQUENCY OF THE WAVES CREATING THE ACCELERATING BODY IS MANIFEST AS A SLOWING OF TIME UNTIL TIME STOPS. WHEN THE ROTATIONAL VELOCITY MOVING AWAY FROM THE FOCAL POINT EXCEEDS THE WAVE VELOCITY FLOWING TO THE BODY, THE WAVE VECTORS ARE REVERSED IN DIRECTION AND TIME FLOWS BACKWARD.



AS AN EVENT IS ACCELERATED, IT FOLLOWS THE RIGHT-HAND RULE GOVERNING ELECTROMAGNETIC VECTORS TO TRACE THE TRAJECTORY OF A SPIRAL VORTEX.

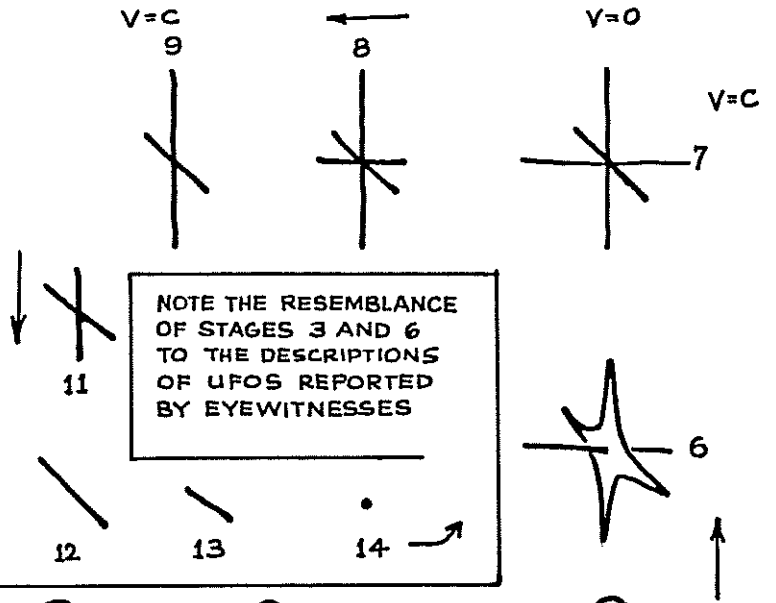
As an accelerating body acquires velocity on the second axis of travel, it begins to disintegrate in that direction also, and re-form along a third axis at right angles to the other two. As a consequence, all particles moving at Relativistic velocities are seen to travel in a corkscrew trajectory. The velocity of light is never quite reached in any direction because the trajectory curves over an angle of 45 degrees every time the velocity on the relevant axis reaches $\frac{c}{\sqrt{2}}$.

The speed of light is reached on all axes simultaneously when all the flow axes of the waves which create the standing wave rotate through a total of 540 degrees. At this point, the 3 axes of generation close from 180 degrees to zero degrees simultaneously; the standing wave disappears over the event horizon of a Black Hole at the speed of light, and jumps to infinite velocity. At the speed of light, the traveling body is transformed into pure radiation. When the information contained in that radiation flips into the Black Hole, the waves themselves explode in all directions into the quantum field in the form of virtual particles.

If the coordinates of the moiré pattern are properly programmed into a computer to be projected onto a screen, a strange phenomenon will become manifest when the three generating axes become parallel. The standing-wave pattern is reconstructed the instant it passes through the Black Hole and the corkscrew trajectory unwinds, reversing the directions it took while accelerating. The information exploded into the quantum field re-forms the original standing wave, but now the acceleration is reversed. Time flows backward. We cannot see images of events flowing backward in time on the other side of Black Holes because all the radiation containing this information is flowing at the speed of light away from us. The past is reached by passing through a Black Hole. Whatever can be demonstrated by a tangible model can be translated into practical engineering.

As soon as explorers leave familiar landmarks by venturing over land or sea, they are in danger of becoming lost. As long as exploration was confined to the surface of a small planet, adventurers could wander all over the world with a fair

A SPHERICAL EVENT IS TRANSFORMED INTO ITS NEGATIVE BY COMPRESSION OF ITS EXTENSION ALONG EACH AXIS IN SUCCESSION AS IT ACCELERATES AROUND THE TRAJECTORY OF A VORTEX TOWARDS THE VELOCITY OF LIGHT. AN ACCELERATED EVENT DOES NOT REACH C ON EACH AXIS IN SUCCESSION, BUT TURNS TO C ON ALL AXES AT THE SAME TIME. THEREFORE, THE ACTUAL TRANSFORMATION PROCEEDS THROUGH STAGES 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 14, WITHOUT ANY EXTENSION COMPLETELY DISAPPEARING BEFORE ALL EXTENSIONS ARE COMPRESSED TO A POINT



chance of blundering their way back home. The advent of space exploration, however, demanded accurate courses plotted before the first Mercury capsule blasted off from Cape Canaveral; the navigator had to know exactly where to go and how to get back. Traveling to the future is not quite so simple as hopping into a time shuttle and going. Which way do you go?

If you blast off at the speed of light and return six months later to the location you left, all you will find is empty space. The Earth and the Solar System will be long gone in their galactic orbits, six months away. To reach a future Earth, you must plot a return course that will bring you to the location the earth will occupy at the other side of its orbit six months from now.

Relativity proves that the future lies in a straight line in any direction. The past extends from the line of travel at right angles in all directions. This is the basis of navigation through time. But if the future of this Earth lies only in the direction taken by this Earth along its trajectory in space, what future can possibly lie in all other directions? Each direction of travel leads to a different future. When Einstein demolished the concept of absolute time, he proved that each location in the universe travels a unique trajectory constituting a unique stream of time.

The reason time has been so refractory to scientific understanding is that we have conceived time to be a special kind of dimension. But time is not a dimension at all, any more than fire is the element the Greeks believed it to be. Time is measured in units of intervals, spans, durations, speed, and sequence; each of these measurements refers to a dimension of the waves constituting the universal field of vibrations. Einstein showed that a stream of time is defined by the unique sequence in which events are experienced at each location. Once Relativity proved that events follow each other in a unique sequence at each location, an infinite number of unique time streams must flow through the universe. Each time stream is identical to the course of travel in space.

The existence of alternative time streams can be deduced from a simple thought experiment. When you look at

the Sun, the image of the Sun takes its place in your time stream in a certain spatial sequence relative to all the other events you experience. When you move, the position of the Sun relative to all other events in the universe changes in your perspective. Each relationship defines a different time stream. We are always moving through space. New time streams are created every time an observer changes directions. The creation of new time streams by steering courses in life is the basis of the concept of free will and an undetermined future. We are all spinning through space together on this planet, so the difference between everyone's personal time stream amounts to no more than a difference in the time of day when we look at the Sun.

Although sequence is created uniquely by each observer in the course of existence, events are eternal. This paradox can be explained by referring again to the Plate Flutter Model.

If the model is cut into the shape of a square and strummed along one edge, the powder will move from the edges to form a diagonal cross. The free vibration of the edges drives the powder to the diagonals, where there is no vibration at all. The edges represent a pole of pure radiant waves while the diagonals represent an opposite pole of pure standing waves. Between the two poles, the sonic velocity of the radiant waves is reduced along a line of continuous transformation toward standing waves. If a chord comprising a full range of musical notes is used to activate the model, the harmonic interactions of the different notes generate a sequence of audible undertones, and the patterns formed by the powder will move to correspond to the continuously changing harmonic beats. When the harmonic interactions exhaust all permutations of tone and sequence, the entire pattern in time and space will repeat itself again. This means that all the events the field of vibrations can possibly generate must exist somewhere in the field at all times as a wave pattern forming or disintegrating between the poles of pure radiation and pure standing waves. An event manifest as a standing wave represents a material body existing in the immediate present. All the wave patterns proceeding from the radiant pole toward the standing-wave

pole constitute events of the future. All the wave patterns proceeding from the standing-wave pole toward the radiant pole constitute events of the past. In other words, everything that ever existed, everything that exists, everything that ever will exist, and everything that can possibly exist exists right now somewhere in the universal field of vibrations as a wave pattern in a state of continuous transformation.

Not only does every possible event exist at all times, somewhere in the field, as a wave pattern in a state of becoming real or disintegrating, but every event also exists everywhere throughout the entire field as a wave pattern in a state of realization or decomposition. To illustrate this deduction, waves reaching us from the Sun are manifest as a standing-wave structure when they come to a focus to form the Earth at this location. But radiation does not change from pure waves to pure matter the instant it reaches us. Over the entire distance from the Sun, wave patterns are building up the structure which will become the Earth when the radiation arrives here. The pattern of what the Earth will be in eight minutes' time already exists 93 million miles from us in space. By measuring the alignment of waves in the ambient field wherever we are, it is theoretically possible to calculate the location of any event in the universe and the time at which it will become manifest as a material body at that location. This is how a navigator plots courses through time.

Space is filled solid with vibrations. If all possible events exist as a wave pattern throughout the universe, it means that the space in your room must be filled with incompletely formed patterns of yourself doing whatever else you could be doing if you were not reading this. When you put this down and move, the standing-wave structure of your body disintegrates at the location where you are, here and now, and reforms in a succession of proximate locations along the path of your movement. But when you move, the wave pattern of you reading this continues to exist in an unmaterialized state. Outside of your home, patterns of you doing everything you can possibly do cover the entire Earth, not to mention other patterns of the Earth filling universal space. This is the basis of the science-fiction theory of alternative realities. Each se-

quence of events relating all possible events constitutes parallel time streams. Given enough time, all possible events must become materialized and all possible sequences must become realized. On another time stream, the Confederate States of America is defeated by a Soviet-Nazi Axis in World War II. I'd like to know where I missed the intersection with the time stream where I am irresistible to nubile blondes; that is probably the time stream where I become allergic to penicillin. This may not be the best of all possible worlds, but it isn't the worst, either.

Pure wave energy is not a mathematical abstraction. You can see it with your eyes. Each wave is seen as a light of the color defined by its frequency. Of course, we can see no more than a small spectrum with normal vision, but our eyes are sufficient to establish the principle. We cannot see a standing-wave structure because all material is a perfect black body. What we see is radiation emitted from either black bodies or white bodies. Between these two poles, radiation carries information of its source in the form of wave patterns. This information is not a mathematical abstraction either, because you can see it, too. Wave patterns between pure light and pure material exist as images.

Images which can be brought to a focus are called real images. We can see real images because our eyes can bring the waves to a focus. Images which cannot be brought to a focus are called virtual images. We cannot see virtual images. The space in your room is filled solid with wave patterns of yourself doing all the things you could possibly do if you were not reading this, but you cannot see these patterns because they are virtual images.

The reason virtual images cannot be seen can be demonstrated by looking at the Sun; don't burn out your retinas. You can see the real image of the Sun only along the radial line of sight. There is another image of the Sun just beside your head, but you cannot see it because the radiation does not impinge upon you. As long as you are where you are, the images of the Sun filling all the space around you cannot be seen. The other side of the Sun can never be seen from here because all the radiation is going away from us at the speed of light.

The images of the Sun on all sides of you are virtual images on your time stream. Alternative realities exist in the quantum field as virtual state. All radiations in the virtual state of the quantum field possess a vector at right angles to our line of sight. This vector reduces the velocity of waves radiating toward us so that it no longer has the velocity of light at the point of impact. Therefore, no electromagnetic interaction can take place. Whatever does not interact with us does not exist as a real substance.

The solution to the Michelson-Morley paradox is *not* that light always travels at the same speed regardless of the relative velocities of the source and observer. "Light" waves travel at all velocities conforming to the classical Newtonian laws of relativity—but only the waves traveling 186,000 miles per second can be detected as light. Waves of all other velocities are not detectable, so they disappear into the virtual state of the quantum field as corresponding waves "materialize" from the cosmic plenum to maintain the absolute velocity of light.

A lens makes it possible to bend the flow of radiation so that virtual images are transformed into real images, making it possible for us to see parallel time streams. If you will take the lens of your camera—or a simple reading glass—to cast an image onto a small screen, you will make another discovery about the structure of the universe that will demolish your conceptions of reality and contribute further to the technological achievement of time travel.

Our cultural concepts lead us to perceive the image cast by a lens as two-dimensional. This is so self-evident to us that we cannot understand how anyone could possibly see anything other than a plane image. The image cast by your lens is really three-dimensional. You can prove it by moving the screen along the axis of projection to reveal an infinite number of planes of focus.

The normal lens transmits an image from an acceptance angle of 45 degrees square. Fish-eye lenses accept radiation within an angle of 180 degrees square. In theory, an ideal lens can transmit an infinite spectrum; a pinhole functions as this kind of lens. If you can imagine your lens as a fish eye

with perfect transmission, you can see that within the image cone it projects, there is all the information required to reconstruct a replica of everything in the universe on the objective side. But light goes through a lens both ways. On the other side of the lens there is an image cone projected containing all the visual information pertaining to the other half of the universe. As most of this information is contained within a sphere you can cup in your hands, you can see that you can literally hold the entire universe in your hand. That is an awesome lot of information to pack into a handful of space.

You may remark that the image cone does not contain all the information needed to reconstruct everything in the universe because most of the universe is hidden behind obstructions to the line of sight. But no material structure is absolutely opaque. Radiation streams through everything. Material opaque to our eyes merely transforms the incoming radiation to invisible wavelengths. With proper technology, the radiation emitted by an opaque object can be transformed back to visible light so that we can see through the opaque material. Image amplifiers used on night scopes are examples to prove that your lens does, in fact, project all the information of the universe into its image cone.

Cultural concepts lead us to perceive that the information projected by a lens is received from a more or less distant source. If you know enough about photography to use filters, you know that all the information contained in the image cone existed a microsecond earlier at the surface of the objective element. In other words, all the information needed to reconstruct the entire universe exists at the surface of your lens, whether or not it is brought to a focus by projection into the image cone.

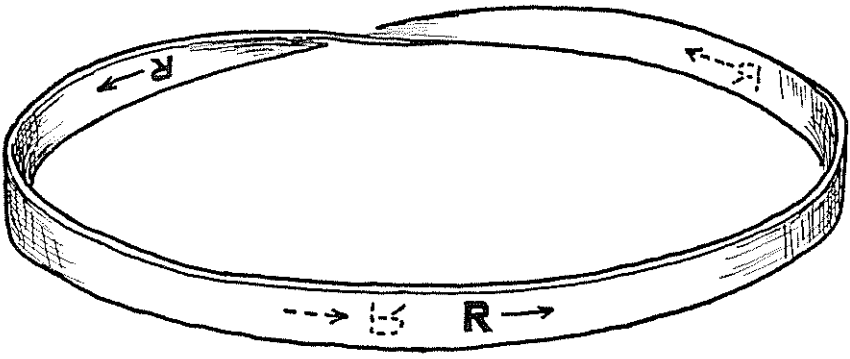
Now, move your lens around. You will find that no matter where the lens is located, it always projects a pair of image cones containing all the information in the universe. You have just proven that in the real universe, every part contains all the information of the whole universe. A structure that contains all its information in all its parts is a hologram. The universe manifests the structure of an infinite hologram.

In a universe possessing the structure of an infinite

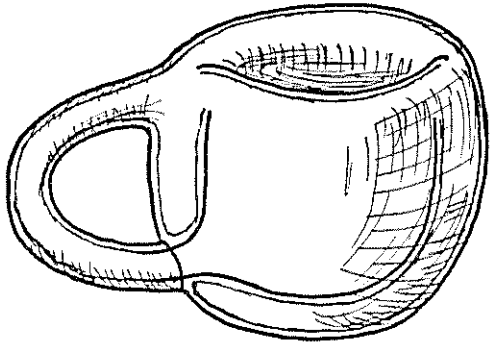
hologram, every possible event not only exists in material form somewhere at some time, but every possible event must exist everywhere all the time in a material form. In other words, the universe contains an infinite number of three-dimensional material structures in the same location at the same time. This can be possible only if the universal hologram extends into a fourth dimension of space. Space is not filled solid with dense material because all standing waves except the ones we can see and touch exist in the virtual state of the quantum field. The quantum field, therefore, is the fourth dimension. All events that are going to happen and all events that have happened are invisible and intangible to us because they exist in the virtual state; this is why Einstein described time as a fourth dimension. Actually, the time Einstein referred to is a fifth dimension extending through the quantum field; the fourth dimension to be discovered was energy level defined by frequency. When Max Planck discovered the quantum effect, he discovered a fourth dimension without knowing it.

The photographic lens cannot show you that virtual images of past and future events exist right here and now; much less can you see them exist in a material state. But another simple model will demonstrate the principle. Cut a strip of paper about an inch wide and two feet long. Put a half twist into its length and paste the two ends together. This construction is called the Möbius Strip. The Strip is a model of plane space extending for an infinite distance while rotating around 360 degrees on one axis and 180 degrees around the other. The Strip appears to have two sides and two edges, but if you trace a line with a pencil along one side, you will return to your starting point after traveling 720 degrees of length without crossing over an end or an edge. Likewise, if you trace along one edge, you will find that you have covered "both" edges without raising the pencil from the paper. The Möbius Strip has only one side and one edge.

Now, if you trace a line around 360 degrees of length, you will find yourself back at your starting point but on the "other side" of the paper, a paradox because there is no other side to a Möbius Strip. If the Strip were an ideal plane, the back side and the front side must not only be the same side,



THE MÖBIUS STRIP



THE KLEIN BOTTLE

but they must also be in the very same space. If you cut a small asymmetrical figure—such as the letter L—from a piece of paper, and move it around the Möbius Strip for 360 degrees to reach the "opposite" side, you will see that its orientation has been reversed up for down. In other words, traveling to the farthest end of a Möbius Strip is identical to remaining where you are and rotating the structure of your body 180 degrees on a horizontal axis.

Regardless of its length, any location on a Möbius Strip can be defined by a distance expressed as degrees around its circumference. If the length of the Möbius Strip is reduced to zero as a limiting case, it means that traveling to any location on its length is identical to rotating the equivalent number of degrees around a horizontal axis without changing location at all.

A universal hologram must possess the structure of a Möbius Strip; the only difference is that universal space rotates around five axes instead of two. This means that the farthest end of the universe occupies the same three-dimensional location as your material body does right now.

A standing-wave structure is the black-body pole of the universal field. The opposite pole is pure radiant energy. If our material body is what exists here, then pure light must be found at the farthest end of the universe where time ends.

But both poles of the universe exist in the same place, separated only by axial rotation of wave flow. Therefore, each person's body must be filled with light. This light can be seen in certain states of consciousness—it is the human aura.

The rotation of wave flow from the radiant pole is what transforms pure radiation into wave patterns and wave patterns into solid material and vice versa. In between the two poles of light and darkness, the wave patterns pass through stages of radiation as real images. These images are what we see radiating as photons from all objects. This radiation is the only way that black bodies can be seen.

It is the rotation of the line of sight that makes it impossible to see images of the Sun radiating on all sides of us. Therefore, it must be rotation of the axis of wave flow that transforms the material structures existing in the quantum field as virtual images of infinite probability into real images

we can see and then into real material and back again. The rotation of wave axes is identical to the flow of time.

If the two poles of the universe coexist in our bodies, then all the images in the quantum field must also exist within our bodies. As these images are transformed from the virtual state to the real state, they become visible as the form of ideas in the mind.

The farthest end of the universe is the ultimate goal of all exploration. Now that we have reached it, we find that it has been here all the time. Because the universe is a hologram, we also find that our personal bodies contain a perfect replica of the entire universe. This is what William Blake saw when he discovered the universe in a grain of sand.

Outside of our personal bodies, the universe is perceived only as images—real images and virtual images. All images are replicated in the human body, forming the stream of ideas we call consciousness. Therefore, your mind already contains all the knowledge informing the entire universe. The real images in your mind constitute your state of consciousness. The virtual images in your mind constitute your unconscious. The whole universe is a state of consciousness, and the quantum field is identical to mind. The dichotomy of mind and matter, one of the basic conceptions of this civilization, is resolved. Although the discovery that the quantum field is identical to the mind blows the heads of Western scientists like a dose of acid, the fact that everything is a creation of mind is the basic concept of Oriental civilizations. This is why Orientals perceive space, time, and conservation differently from the way we do, and they developed a different technology. We call them backward mystics because we cannot comprehend that what they say and do are real.

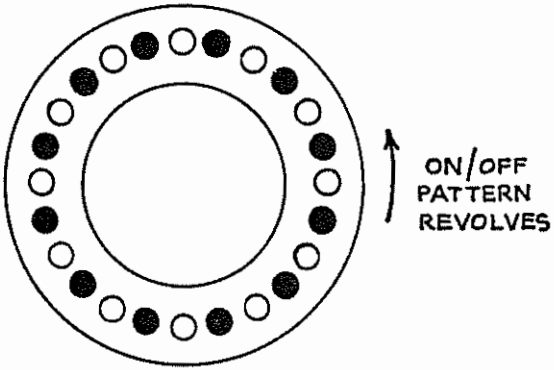
The conclusion is inescapable. Time travel is a head trip. In fact, all transportation is a head trip. The Oriental mystics have always been telling us that *everything* is a head trip. It was this understanding that led them to train their minds to achieve the powers we call Psi, clairvoyance, telepathy, visions of the future, memories of past lives, levitation, soul travel, and the miraculous materializations commemorated in the miracles performed by Jesus. All that we disbelieve as mysticism

is another kind of science, and all that we call science is our kind of magic. Whatever can be done by a mystical transformation of the human mind can be duplicated and made more reliable with technological assistance. This is why drugs are useful to stimulate the psychedelic experience, and why television has replaced clairvoyance, even in Japan.

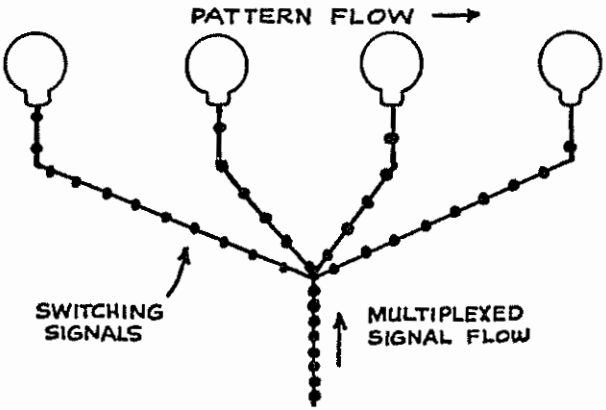
So now we can understand that the achievement of scheduled time travel devolves on giving technological stimulation to the mind of the traveler. Chemicals have the troubles associated with blasting the mind in all directions at once. Television is limited to network scheduling. What we need is a portable TV transceiver in every garage capable of focusing on any location in the quantum field.

Note well that the camera lens reverses the orientation of the projected image—up for down, right for left, and proximity for infinite, like traveling around a Möbius Strip. The virtual state of alternative realities in the quantum field of time is the *negative* of material reality.

The lens shows us that it is possible to bring virtual images into focus as real images. The time transport, therefore, will be modeled after the operation of a fishbowl lens, capable of rotating waves flowing from all directions so that they come to a focal point at the intersection of three axes to materialize as a real structure. The principle has already been proven for the practicability of this kind of lens, beginning with the experiments of Nikola Tesla. The best-confirmed proof for transforming information from the quantum field to this reality is provided by the inventions of Henry Moray. An array of electrical transformers amplifying the geometry of a crystal lattice will function as a variable-focus zoom lens to rotate the flow of waves in a resonant chamber contained within its coils. David John Graham of Toronto has already put an electronic head transport on the market in competition with street drugs; his invention stimulates a psychedelic state by rotating its passenger in an electromagnetic field. It can be speculated that the Mark IV flying saucers use the electromagnetic field generated by the annular particle accelerators as a tunable transformer to bring about its levitation, flight, dematerialization into a holographic image, and materialization at other times and place.



IF LAMPS IN A SERIES AROUND A CIRCLE ARE WIRED SO THAT EACH ONE SWITCHES ON AS SOON AS IT "SEES" THE ONE NEXT TO IT GO ON, AND SWITCHES OFF AS SOON AS IT "SEES" THE ONE NEXT TO IT GO OFF, THE PATTERN OF LIGHT WILL REVOLVE AROUND THE CIRCLE AT A SPEED CLOSE TO "C".



SWITCHING SIGNALS CONDUCTED TO A SERIES OF LAMPS SO THAT EACH ONE GOES ON AFTER THE ONE NEXT TO IT, BUT BEFORE IT CAN "SEE" THE LIGHT OF ITS NEIGHBOR WILL CREATE A PATTERN CHASING AROUND THE CIRCLE FASTER THAN LIGHT, SENDING INFORMATION BEYOND THE "C" BARRIER OF RELATIVITY. BY REPLACING THE LAMPS WITH ARMATURES, AN ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELD CAN BE MADE TO SPIN FASTER THAN LIGHT WITH NO MOVING MECHANICAL PARTS. REPLACEMENT OF THE MAIN ROTOR AND GIMBAL GEARS WITH SOLID STATE ELECTRONICS CONVERTS THE MARK III FLYING SAUCER INTO A MARK IV TIME TRANSPORT.

Optical engineering has already proven the principles involved in the engineering of a variable-focus transformer with an acceptance angle of 360 degrees solid. When you look at the Sun, you are seeing rays diverging from a point source, and the image you see contains the past of the point source. Therefore, the past is found on diverging radiation. A converging lens is used to bring diverging radiation to a focus as a real image. When real images projected from all directions are brought to a common focal point in the resonant chamber contained by the transforming coils, a real material structure is created. The process is the reversal of the operations that make an atomic bomb explode. Conversely, radiation coming to you from all directions contains the information of your personal future on your unique time stream. Therefore, the future is found in the ambient field of the universal hologram by a lens that selectively filters the converging rays of a specific angle and bends them apart by a diverging optical formula. Diverging radiation contains virtual images, so another converg ing lens must bend the incoming radiation again to bring the virtual images into focus as a real image. When the real images are brought to focus from all directions, the future reality be comes materialized in the resonant chamber. Outside the resonant chamber, the transformers alter the angles of radiation from the capsule perceived by observers so that the time transport is seen to condense into the future or explode into the past, disappearing from detection as well as view.

Time is a function of field acceleration. Therefore, any engineering that can accelerate the acceleration of any field will serve as a time transport. If, for example, you can build a vehicle that will be accelerated by a gravitational field, you will eventually reach the velocity of light and disappear through a Black Hole. We already know that time travel can be achieved in this manner, and we already have a vehicle that is being accelerated in a gravitational field. We are traveling through time on the Spaceship Earth. What we want is to accelerate the gravitational acceleration so that we can get to the future sooner or later than everyone else in this planetary time stream.

As Einstein proved, a traveler can reduce the velocity of his personal time stream and reach the future by increasing the gravitational acceleration generated by a vehicle containing him. Conversely, a traveler can reach the past by reducing the attractive forces holding his personal material together; reducing cohesive forces is identical to achieving hyperlight velocity so that matter waves explode into the quantum field. Time travel, therefore, is implicit in the antigravity engineering of flying saucers.

The most clearly defined experiment proving the feasibility of field engineering by the tuned focus of ambient radiation was performed by directing the beams of four microwave generators to a resonant chamber in the center. A hundred-gram weight suspended over the focal point loses seventy-five milligrams. A reduction in the acceleration of gravity can be expressed as a negative acceleration added to the universal constant. A negative acceleration of gravity carries a vehicle into the past. This experiment shifted the hundred-gram weight into the past about as far as orbiting astronauts are shifted into the future, but the achievement is as significant as splitting an atom of uranium for the first time. It is only a matter of time before enough engineers will have undergone a change of basic concepts of reality so that the manpower required to field a flying saucer, complete with its operational infrastructure, is assembled.

If time travel is feasible, then it must be inevitable on some time stream or other. If time travel is achieved on our time stream, then it must be achieved in our future because we have no record of the technology being developed in our past. If a future people have achieved time travel, we should expect an expedition of future historians to have visited us by now on their field trips into primitive civilizations. As we know no future anthropologists resident in our camp, it is reasonable to conclude that time travel was never achieved in our future; the theory will never be developed beyond speculation.

But time travel is not so simple as Margaret Mead taking a trip to New Guinea. Our belief about reality determines whether any records of visitors from the future will be entered into our annals. A lot of people testify that they have

seen flying saucers, and a lot of photographs have been published. Nevertheless, all of the evidence and testimony have been denied credence by the authorities. I have little doubt that most of the reports are either mistaken identity or hoaxes, but even if they were true, the authorities would still deny the facts. Unless the UFOnauts decide to announce their presence to everyone by means of their own superior communications technology, we could be a colony of a galactic empire and never know it; the aborigines of the East Indies were colonies of the European nations for centuries without knowing that white men existed.

The beliefs a person holds determine what he will perceive of reality. According to Magellan's log book, cited by Lawrence Blair in *Rhythms of Vision*, the barefoot natives of Patagonia could not see the European ships when they arrived at South America for the first time. To the aborigines, the shore party appeared out of thin air on the beach. Eventually the shamans discerned a faint image of the tall ships riding anchor offshore. They pointed the images out to their tribespeople, and after everyone concentrated on the concept of giant sailing ships for a long time, the galleons materialized. And then the aborigines were annihilated by cultural shock. The UFO phenomenon is presenting our civilization with the same kind of experience.

Cruising the seas of time in a Mark V Flying Saucer is a profoundly different reality from sailing a Spanish galleon. When the time transport lifts off its launching pad on a trip to the past, it rises straight up on an antigravity beam and explodes into virtual radiation. The virtual radiation comes to a focus to form real images at the destination. The formation of a real image is attended with electromagnetic effects in the focal space; this is why disturbances are manifest where UFOs appear. Although a saucer from the future appears as an image to us, the vehicle is perfectly solid to its crew; it is we that appear to be a ghostly image. As a holographic image, the Saucer can maneuver without being subject to inertial forces generated by their incredible accelerations.

As an image, the Mark V is actually a mental structure. Whether or not one of us natives will be able to perceive

a flying saucer depends on whether that person's consciousness is tuned to the proper time stream. All of us do not see the same material structures in this reality, as you realize in court; much less do we all perceive the same real images. What is a tangible body to some people is a real image to others. By and large, there is general agreement within any given civilization as to which patterns are solid material and which are merely images. The Patagonians, for example, perceived the European vessels to be images when they were first able to see them, while other people will perceive the images on a movie screen as material bodies.

At the borderline between real images and virtual images there is much less agreement as to which is real. When you experience a hallucination, the images you see are perfectly real to you, but they are merely virtual images to everyone else. If someone else could see your virtual image too, he would not regard it as a hallucination. Other cultures have a whole world of images which they recognize as real—the colony at Findhorn, for example—but those images are virtual to us, so we say that the whole community is subject to mass hallucination. The Mark V Flying Saucer travels along flight corridors where virtual images are transformed into real images. These corridors are the creation of the universal field as radiant energies are transformed into terra firma. Along these corridors, some people will see flying saucers, and other people won't. Some cameras will register a real image on film and others won't. An image will appear on some wavelengths while being absent on others. As long as the basic concept of our civilization maintains that whatever is real must be equally real for all observers, and all the more equal to all laboratory instruments, the flying saucer must be ignored as unreal.

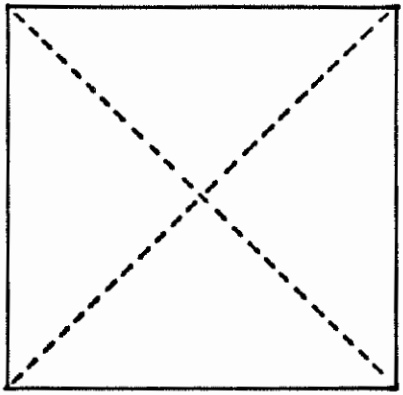
Modern Americans are not altogether unlike the barefoot Patagonians who were psychologically blind to the sight of a superior technology. There are historical records of time travelers among us, but they are not perceived even by the people who read them. The twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus was written over three thousand years ago. Regardless of the distortions accumulated over the millennia of successive translations, there is not the slightest doubt that the King James Ver-

sion has been reproduced to the letter for over three centuries; antique copies are still available to anyone determined to establish the date of printing. Now, if you follow the directions the Lord gave to Moses for constructing the Ark of the Covenant, you will build yourself a spark-gap radio transceiver powered by a Leyden-type condenser, almost identical to the models Marconi began his experiments with. Shittimwood is no longer stocked, and the price of gold is a barrel of oil, but pine and aluminum foil can be substituted. The Ark of the Covenant has been recognizable as an electronic device for the past hundred years; finding a modern radio in ancient Judea is as significant as finding a flying saucer in modern America. As long as the first is ignored and denied, even when you have the palpable evidence in your hands, you can be reasonably sure that the other will not be recognized on sight.

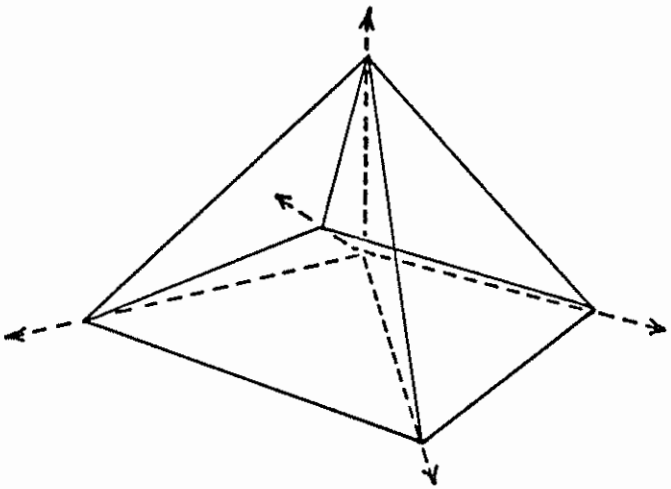
Critics disregard the Ark of the Covenant as a coincidence. After all, many religious artifacts have electrical properties. But the Bible clearly states that God told Moses to use the Ark for communication with Him. The Ark of the Covenant was intended to be used as a radio. Any God worthy of His divinity communicates to His Chosen People by means of mystical visions vouchsafed to Holy Prophets, so how come the Lord who walked the Earth as a man had to equip Moses with CB?

Radio cannot possibly be developed outside of a society so widely spread that electronic communication is necessary to keep it organized. The description of the Ark of the Covenent in the Holy Bible is proof that a vast and technologically sophisticated society existed on this Earth over three thousand years ago, within historical time, without leaving any recognition of their existence.

In the heart of the Great Pyramid there is a stone coffer said to possess the same volume as the Ark of the Covenant. Considering the precision demanded by the Lord in the dimensions of the Ark, it is difficult to accept the coincidence between the Ark and the coffer as chance. The Pyramid is a solid-state module in a worldwide radio-communications network capable of broadcasting and receiving intelligence throughout interplanetary space. The Ark of the Covenant has



THE SQUARE AND ITS DIAGONALS ARE NEGATIVES OF EACH OTHER.



THE PYRAMID TRANSFORMS RADIANT ENERGY CONFORMING TO ITS STRUCTURE INTO ITS NEGATIVE FORM AND BEAMS THE INFORMATION ALONG THE NEGATIVE AXES.

the features of a mobile remote unit in the broadcasting system.

As well as being a radio, the Great Pyramid is the most precise and durable clock known to exist. Navigation through the seas of time is impossible without a chronometer of absolute accuracy. The Great Pyramid could not be better designed to function as an unmanned radio beacon marking traffic lanes through the holographic oceans of the universe. If this is so, we may expect to find other pyramids on other planets, like the black monolith in *2001: A Space Odyssey.*

The most fascinating problem of time travel is the Time-Loop Paradox. What happens when a traveler from the future meets his ancestors and alters history? It is generally concluded that any alteration of the past will cause the future to disappear, leaving the time trekkers stranded. The Time-Loop Paradox is inevitable if time travel is ever achieved, so this is the main argument against the feasibility of the technology. The Time-Loop Paradox, however, is a figment of the concept of absolute time. As soon as time trekkers touch down in the past, they create an alternative time stream, running more or less parallel to the manifold time streams we call our own world time, but existing in the virtual state of the quantum field. When the trekkers want to return home, they beam themselves back to the future and then across the angular distance separating the two divergent time streams. The proof that absolute time does not exist provides a Time-Loop Exclusion principle that makes the Time-Loop Paradox impossible.

The beliefs a society holds about reality determine the technology it will develop. The technology determines the direction and the range the civilization will develop. As long as beliefs are constant, technology proceeds slowly and steadily to the limit of belief. When the limit of belief is reached, the development of technology must stop. At this point, the civilization becomes old and decays. But all people do not accept the same beliefs. Those who do not agree with the cultural limitations are regarded as mystics, if not disregarded as insane. The leaders who take technology to the limit of the culture are the people in the most favored position to carry technology beyond the limits of belief. Advanced physicists have reached the lim-

its of our civilization right now, and this is why the rest of us in the rear regard them as reverting to mysticism.

The insights and discoveries of the scientific vanguard cannot be believed by the people in the mainstream of civilization, nor can the facts make sense because the new information contradicts the basic concepts holding the civilization together. Taboo prohibits thinking about the basic concepts.

If it should ever happen that a party acquires the means to advance technology beyond the limits set by the culture, new concepts drive engineering to a quantum leap beyond the ken of ordinary people. When the force of this engineering becomes too great for the mainstream to deny, like the atomic bomb was introduced to the citizens of Japan, the civilization is subjected to cultural shock. The shock forces social leaders to examine the basic concepts of reality; the taboo is broken. When the taboo is breached, the civilization must collapse. Although it was the Japanese who were the target of the atomic bomb, Americans are also being subjected to cultural shock from the advance of technology, so the civilization of the victors is doomed to dissolution along with the vanquished. The only way to survive the collapse of civilization is by reconstructing the basic concepts of reality capable of comprehending the facts of life as rapidly as the old beliefs are swept away. Those who are capable of reconstructing their beliefs suffer a psychological death and rebirth into a new reality; they transfigure their civilization as a consequence of their personal renaissance and they become the founding fathers of a new civilization on the ruins of the old.

The development of any system of beliefs by expression through a technology fertilizes the seeds of doubt, which must eventually transform belief. The technology of Rome led ineluctably to the monotheism of Christendom. Unfortunately for the Romans, most of them were unable to change their beliefs before collapse set in, so little remains of Rome except ruins and an alphabet. The monotheistic belief of Christianity made it possible for an agrarian society to become transformed into an industrialized society. Industry brought belief of God into question by bringing the power of machinery into existence. The leaders of the industrial society changed their be-

liefs just as rapidly as technology advanced beyond the limits of the writers of the Holy Bible, so when Sir Isaac Newton appeared to lead civilization into a new age by proclaiming a Third Testament of classical physical laws, the transition was made without the usual traumata of death and rebirth. Albert Einstein is the latest prophet; he gave us a Fourth Testament of universal laws to guide us into the coming holographic age. The Japanese civilization has built-in feedback mechanisms enabling them to examine their basic concepts of reality at the drop of an atomic bomb, and reconstruct new concepts without dying from shock.

The industrial development of time travel, therefore, will be subsumed into the systems familiar to us, with no more changes than the technology enforces for its operation. Time travel begins with the testimony of prophetic visionaries who are disregarded as insane. But as soon as a few solitary freaks produce convincing proof that time travel is really possible, think tanks begin to organize around the world to do research, completely unknown to the general public. Then the military takes over and nothing more is heard for a generation. After all the mistakes and expenses are underwritten by the taxpayers, the machinery is handed over to Pan Am and Aeroflot to operate at a profit.

Time travel will be sold to the public when trips can be packaged like Cook's Tours. It would be impolitic to shatter faith in established reality by opening alternative time streams; commercial transport will be limited to the current time stream, and all other channels will be reserved for military patrol and exploration. You will buy your ticket for a vacation on a planet in the Sirian System much as you go to a travel agency for a trip to Hawaii. Departures are scheduled by harmonic windows through hyperspace, as sailing ships wait for wind and tide. All seats are coach class because transit is instantaneous. As soon as the mooring lines are cast off, beams of radiation come to a focus on the starship, and it dematerializes while accelerating straight up to the velocity of light. No one plays holographic chess to pass the time en route, because rematerialization at Starport follows immediately after takeoff. After docking, passengers are discharged. The crew takes leave

to exotic fleshpots, cargo is off-loaded, and the officers prepare ship's articles for the return voyage. The return of the starship to Earthport could be scheduled for any time before or after the original departure, but there would be continual problems if tourists returned home before they left, and if they remained away more than a month, their employers would complain. Two weeks is just about the time everyone needs to complete the paperwork between shipments. The only limit on the time that travelers spend on the Sirian planet is the amount of money they take with them. The one problem defying solution is negotiating scale with the Space Jockeys' Interplanetary Union for time worked in hyperspace.

The holographic civilization is based on a concept of infinities. Infinity is supposed to be beyond any human conception and apprehendable only by God. But it isn't. It is our cultural beliefs alone that make it impossible for us to conceive of infinity. As holograms become increasingly understood, the concept of infinity will become as self-evident as any other basic belief, and we shall take another faculty for granted, a faculty hitherto perceived as an attribute of divinity.

Holographic concepts do not merely advance technology. The achievement of time travel literally demolishes the cosmos and creates a new Earth under new heavens. When it is possible to travel to the future, time ceases to exist as we know it. The future becomes an immediate present, just as Los Angeles is the suburb of New York to the jet set. The power to travel through time is the power to create sequence at will. Sequence is the principle of order by which all reality is established. Therefore, the technology of time travel confers upon the technocrats the power to create entire worlds to order. The engineers accede to the power of the immortal gods, transcending time and space.

When we meet the gods, we shall find that they are us.

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NAZI SAUCERS SECRET WEAPONS



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PREFACE

This book is a guide into the world of German flying discs. You may have picked up this guide because you are unfamiliar with the German production of flying saucers during World War Two. The basics of this production will be revealed to you in the following pages. An adventure awaits you.

On the other hand, you may be looking for nothing more than a rational explanation of the UFO phenomenon. The UFO phenomenon involves sightings of unidentified flying objects. This means that any unidentified flying object is a UFO, regardless of its alleged source. Because the object is unidentified, the object's source is also undetermined. Only a leap of faith can connect UFOs to an extraterrestrial course without first introducing proof. A radical hypothesis such as an extraterrestrial origin of UFOs requires overwhelming proof in order to be generally accepted. No such overwhelming extraterrestrial proof has ever been offered which has stood up to scrutiny. No crashed alien craft have ever been produced by anyone, inside or outside government. Likewise, no alien bodies have ever been found. No extraterrestrial culture, or alien technology has ever been uncovered by anyone. There is simply no actual evidence at all linking UFOs with an extraterrestrial source. Therefore, no such leap of faith should be made. We need to start all over again. All rational earthly explanations need to be exhausted before any extraterrestrial theories are even put forth.

Unfortunately, the simple truth is that, for the most part, UFO research has done a leap-frog to the extraterrestrial explanation without ever adequately exploring and exhausting a terrestrial origin. This statement is inclusive of everyone regardless of background or education. It applies to the charlatan UFO attention-getters as well as to former NASA scientists with Ph.D.s. This is the condition of our current state of affairs in the UFO world.

Let me expound on this. For over fifty years, the UFO research paradigm has been fundamentally wrong. A proper attempt to explain the UFO phenomenon would involve a gathering or the evidence and then explanation by proceeding from simple solutions involving known facts and conditions and totally exhausting these as possibilities before postulating explanations, conditions, or entities not represented by fact. Only after known facts fail us can we move on to postulate explanations beyond our realm of experience.

Even then, an idea which may fit the observed facts but which is not in evidence itself cannot be accepted as fact until it is tested. This is nothing new. This is simply the way logic and science test new explanations of reality. This method is the foundation of our modern western technological culture.

Unfortunately, research in the field of flying saucer phenomena has never been undertaken with this principle in mind. More and more frequently, UFOs are attributed to an extraterrestrial source by the media, or the "witnesses", as a sort of knee-jerk reaction. It seems if one sees something for which he has no prior reference, then it must be extraterrestrial as a matter of course. Over the years sightings have become "encounters," then "abductions." Such reports are increasing even as the use of regression hypnosis replaces the scientific method for finding the truth. The same individuals often have repeated "experiences" each of which becomes stranger than the last.

If no real research has ever been done on the UFO phenomena, then how has thesis extraterrestrial theory crept into popular culture? One simple answer is the media. The media loves extraterrestrials. Why? It is because the extraterrestrial hypothesis is marketable. It sells copy. Just look at the number of books, magazines, movies and television programs devoted to this explanation. Look at your check-out counter in the supermarket.

The government itself is another answer. The word "government" from here on will basically mean the government of the United States of America but will sometimes include other governments, as specified. The government has used "flying saucers" to cover its own testing of secret aircraft. It uses the UFO-extraterrestrial ploy superbly. When a UFO is seen by civilians, a controlled procedure is enacted. This procedure plants or encourages witnesses who expound an extraterrestrial origin in a given sighting. The government may even go so far as to fund television programming and magazines devoted to this explanation. After all, a huge part of the C.I.A.'s budget goes into such covert conditioning of the American people. However, Americans are not the first to be fooled, as we shall see.

In most cases, any extraterrestrial hypothesis is acceptable to government manipulators, especially if it is so ridiculous that the witnesses end up discrediting themselves. The government is so successful at this that the entire topic of UFOs has become somewhat of a joke. This is done deliberately. Thus, serious people with "something to lose" are afraid to stake their reputations on a public announcement of their UFO experience, no matter how real it

may have been. At this point the government has achieved its purpose which is to discredit and suppress all serious inquiry into the UFO question.

Supposedly, UFO research has been left to large, well-financed UFO "research organizations". The largest of these is MUFON (Mutual UFO Network). This organization "trains" people to report sightings, then collects the data and organizes it using some sort of multi-variant analysis into something meaningful. Over the years MUFON has had the opportunity to collect and "organize" thousands of sightings into something meaningful.

In reality, the information is organized into gibberish. After a body of knowledge has been studied and organized, usually, certain facts or at least generalizations can be gleaned form this kind of work. In its fifty years of existence can anyone name one new fundamental fact that MUFON has provided us? They have provided us with nothing. Someone once said that MUFON is really a black hole into which information is attracted and does not have the power to escape on its own. We will return to MUFON and explain this reasoning at a later point.

If we are to seek any real explanation of the UFO phenomenon, we must make a clean break with the past. We must go back to the basics of simplicity and logic. One basic question is this: could we humans be capable of making the unidentified flying machines which have been seen in abundance in the sky since the Second World War? Until we answer that question in the negative, there is no reason to postulate an alien origin for UFOs.

One purpose of this book is to give an individual new to this subject an overview into the study of German flying discs. Never fear, this is not a disjointed spook-hunt, chasing sightings and abductions. There are real facts in this field. There are real people with real names and histories and there are real saucer designs.

Another purpose is to give the reader references, upon which statements in this book are based. Given these references, the reader may then research the topics of particular interest in more detail.

The research methodology is straightforward. We will listen to what is claimed about German saucers by Germans of those times or from other individuals who are in a position to know something about this topic. We then attempt to verify it using an independent historical source. Corroboration from other independent sources, especially from witnesses, is also acceptable and important. Photographs are important but nowadays pictures can be manufactured on a computer. Well-documented pictures which

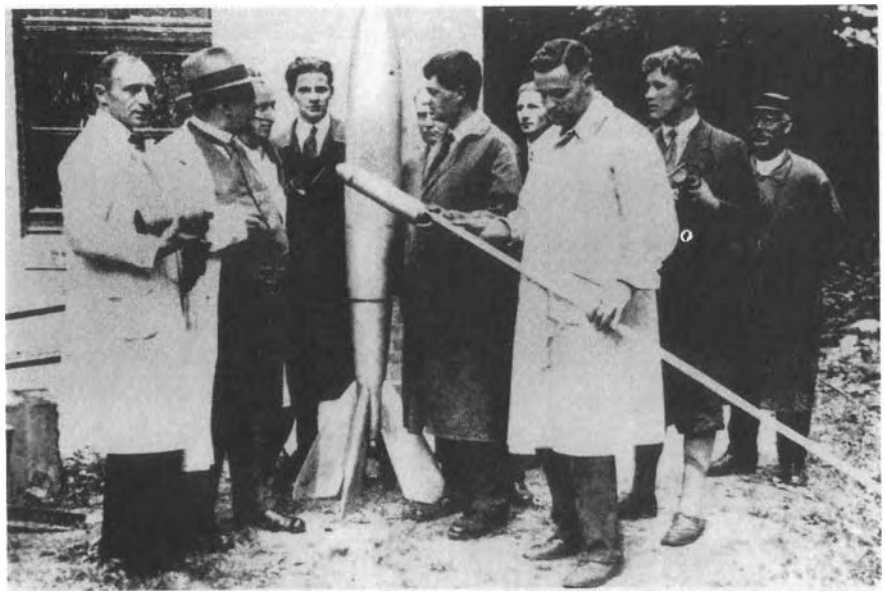
appeared before the modern computer age are perhaps best. Also, pictures accompanied with negatives may be considered better documents than those without negatives.

Government documents can be great sources of confirmation. Unfortunately, governments cannot be trusted and have historically attempted to manipulate UFO research. Therefore, these sources are best not used to formulate ideas but to confirm ideas first developed through independent sources.

Politically, time is on our side. Since the Berlin Wall fell, more and more German researchers are going public with their findings. There is more freedom to research this subject now than at any time in the past sixty years. As each piece fits into the puzzle, a consensus of public acceptance acknowledging the reality of German flying discs grows. All we really have to do is find the pieces, confirm them and keep putting them together. The truth will emerge by itself and in the end nobody, no special interest of any sort, will be able to deny this basic truth.

The writer of this book is not an authority to be believed upon face-value alone. New assertions made in this book about German saucers will be accompanied with documentation. Assertions made by others will be accompanied with their references. This book will briefly touch upon most of the facts, ideas, writers and researchers in this field. With the sources given, the reader will be able to confirm the veracity of the position put forth independently.

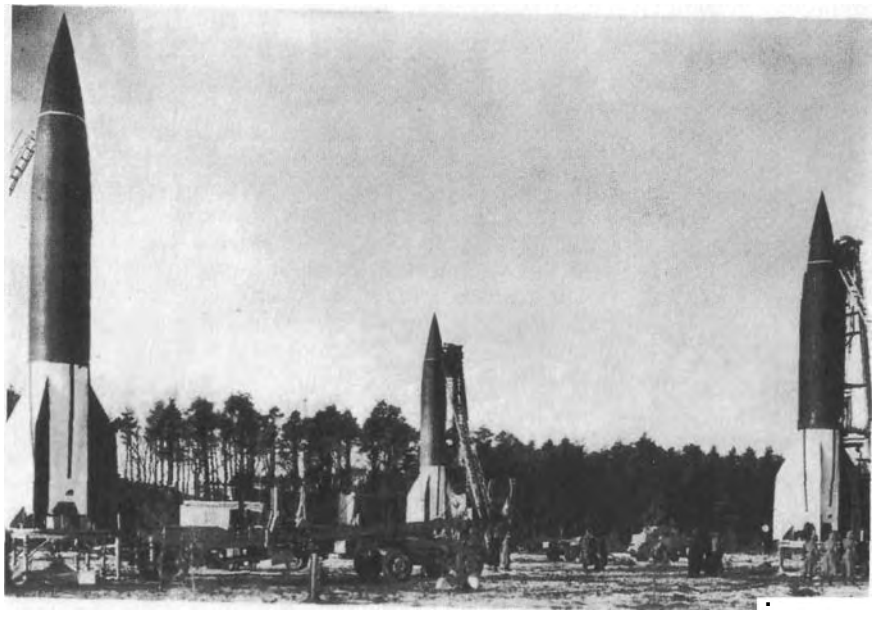
In an attempt to explain the field of German saucers to someone new to it some background is necessary. First, we will discuss the situation within wartime Germany. Then, there will follow a discussion concerning reliable sources in this field. An overview of German flying discs will follow. Finally, various trains of thought or schools or thought in this field will be presented in a discussion section along with some odds and ends which do not fit into any neat pattern. At that point, the post-war disposition of German saucer technology will be discussed before concluding with some thoughts on the topic.



A meeting of Germany's early rocket pioneers, including Rudolph Nebel at left, Hermann Oberth, to the right of the rocket, Klaus Riedel, holding the small rocket, and behind him the dapper young Wernher von Braun.



After the rise of Hitler, von Braun found himself with a new circle of acquaintances, as well as a new research facility at Peenemunde.



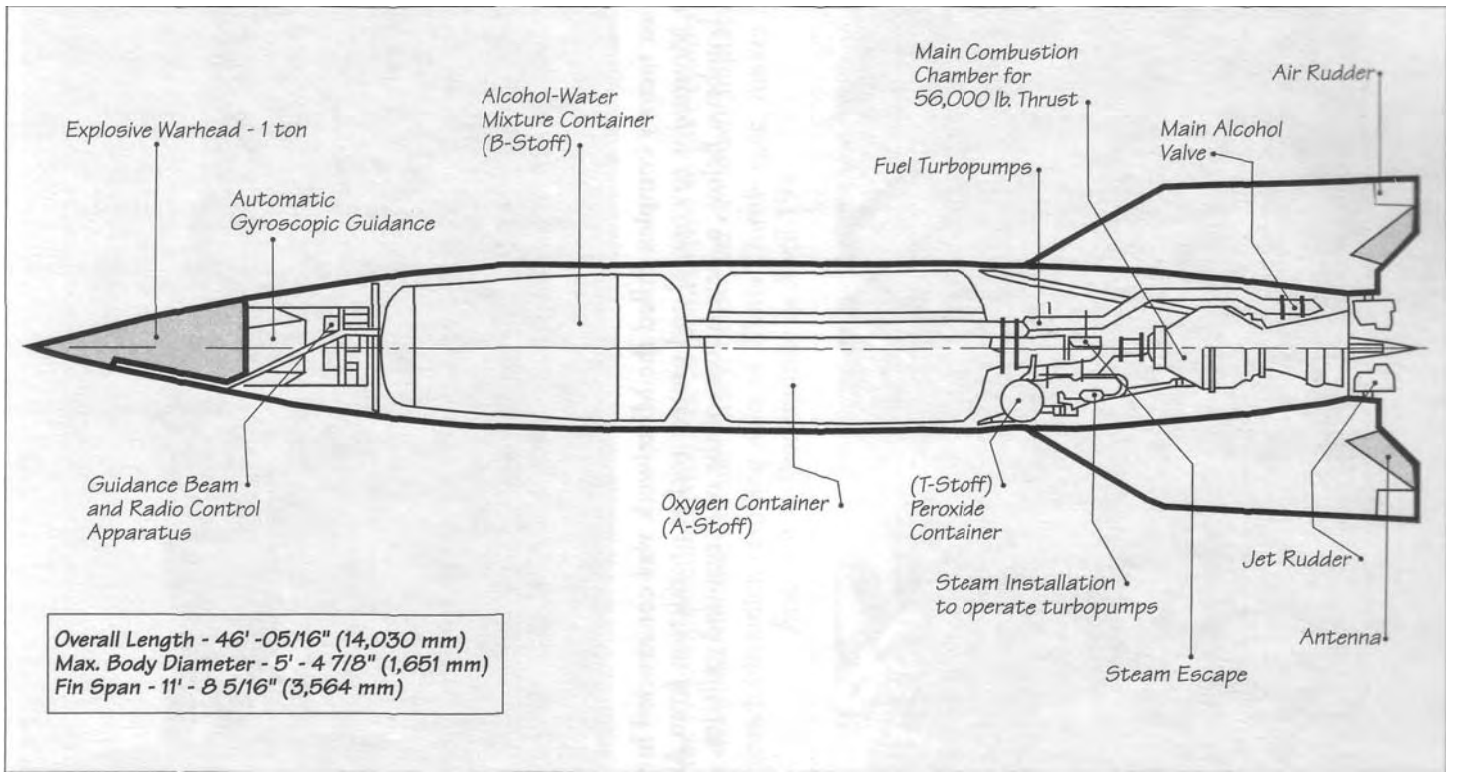
As the A-4 neared completion, the SS maneuvered to take control of the weapon from the German Army. Below, an obviously impressed Heinrich Himmler, standing next to Walter Dornberger, makes his first visit to Peenemiinde in April 1943.

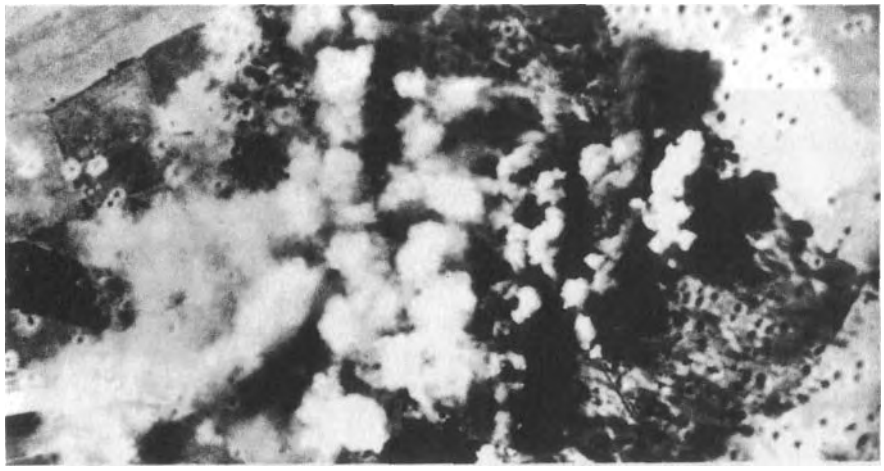




A vast factory complex called the Mittelwerk was constructed in the Harz Mountains to conceal and protect rocket production from Allied bombers. Below, a view of one of the underground galleries.




Explosive Warhead - 1 ton
Automatic Gyroscopic Guidance
Alcohol-Water Mixture Container (B-Stoff)
Main Combustion Chamber for 56,000 lb. Thrust
Air Rudder
Main Alcohol Valve
Fuel Turbopumps
Guidance Beam and Radio Control Apparatus
Oxygen Container (A-Stoff)
(T-Stoff) Peroxide Container
Jet Rudder
Steam Installation to operate turbopumps
Antenna
Steam Escape
Overall Length - 46' -05/16" (14,030 mm)
Max. Body Diameter - 5' - 4 7/8" (1,651 mm)
Fin Span - 11' - 8 5/16" (3,564 mm)



Allied intelligence was able to identify the "ski sites" originally designed to launch the V-1. While Operation Crossbow unleashed thousands of bombers against the sites, the Germans meanwhile switched to more flexible, and inconspicuous, launch methods.



The gigantic V-2 storage bunker at Wizernes, France after absorbing 14 Allied air attacks. Today the bunker is a museum run by the French government called La Coupole. It contains originals of the V-l and V-2 and also celebrates space travel.



Carefully considered German camouflage schemes were designed to conceal the weapons among trees.



CHAPTER ONE:

THE SITUATION WITHIN NAZI GERMANY

CHAPTER ONE

The Situation Within Nazi Germany

Thanks to the American media and what passes for history, most Americans have no idea of wartime conditions within Germany. The topics most germane to this discussion are the means of wartime industrial production and transportation within Germany.

After the Battle of Britain, Germany's air domination over Europe began to decline, sliding down a slippery slope which ultimately resulted in one major reason for its defeat. German means of industrial, arms, and energy production became increasing venerable to attack by Allied bombers. The munitions plants needed to produce the arms to maintain the war effort, such as tanks, airplanes and cannons were all targets of Allied air bombardment. Likewise, high priority targets included oil production and refining facilities which produced the fuel and lubricants needed to make the war effort possible.

One way Germany responded to air attacks was by moving munitions facilities and high-value industrial plants underground (1). Some of these facilities were vast, encompassing miles of underground tunnels. They housed both the industrial means of war production and the workers themselves. The facilities at Nordhausen in Thuringia are well known as the site of production for the V-l and V-2, but there were others. The newly discovered underground complexes of the Jonas Valley south of Nordhausen in Thuringia constitute another vast complex (2)(3). This facility was to serve as a center of government and most probably a research center for advanced weaponry. This is also true for the many underground complexes in what is now Poland. Notable among these is a facility called "Der Riese" (The Giant). Der Riese served as a uranium mine, uranium processing facility, and research and development facility for secret weapons (4). Underground facilities for weapons production were found throughout Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Underground production facilities were also set up to refine synthetic petroleum products from coal and to generate electricity.

In addition to underground facilities, camouflage was used to hide numerous smaller facilities. These many camouflaged and underground plants formed a web of sub-assembly producers. Each sub-assembly facility sent their product to a larger or a more centrally located facility for further work. From there it might be transported again for final assembly. As an example, type XXI U-boats were modular, being produced in pipe-like sections throughout Germany. They were transported by rail to sites near the North Sea and only finally assembled at water's edge. Likewise, some types of aircraft were only finally assembled near the runway.

Further confusing Allied air intelligence, the plants were constantly moving. Eventually everything of value was to be moved underground, to bomb-proof shelters. Facilities were kept on the move until space was available for this underground re-location. These tactics worked for the Germans. There were simply too many moving targets for the Allies to completely stop German war production.

Of course the weak link in this scheme was transportation. The railroad system was the only practical and most energy efficient method of moving all these sub-assemblies. Trucking material was done but in a petroleum-starved Third Reich, it was not possible to sustain a truck-based transportation system necessary to meet all the requirements of wartime Germany. Recognizing this, the Allies bombed railroad centers using the heavy, four-engine B-17 bombers.

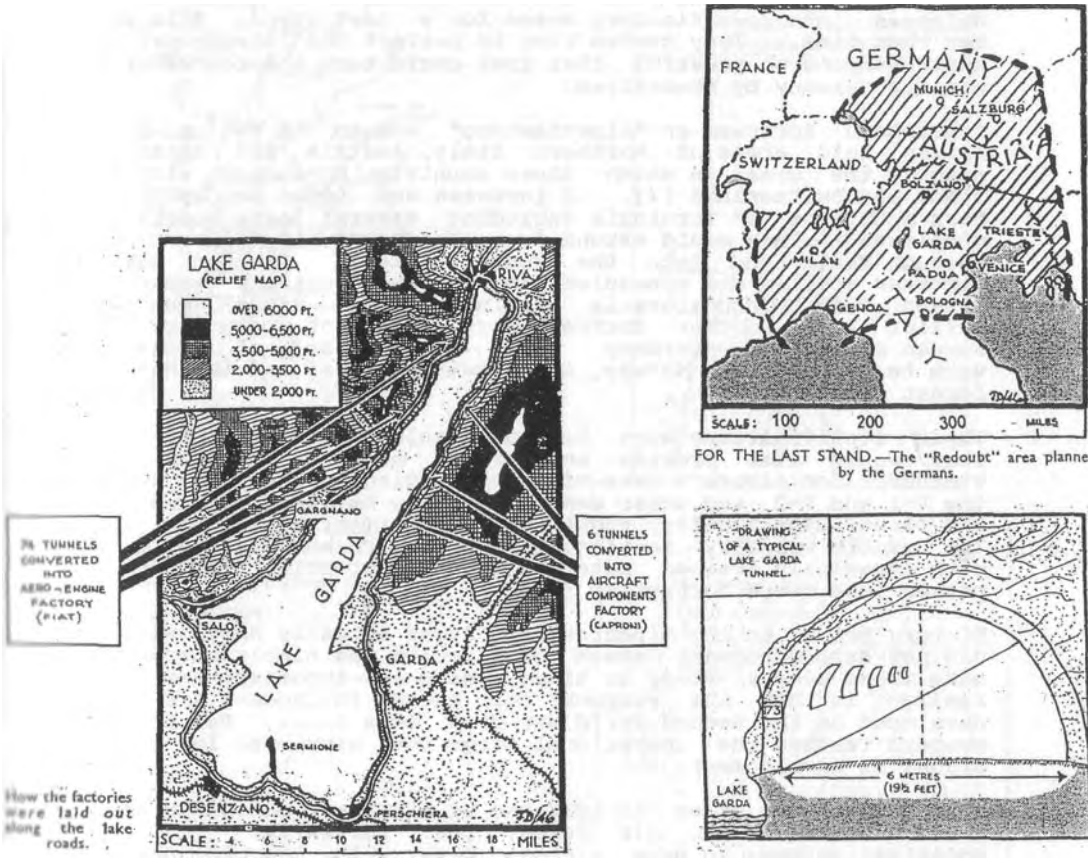
By mid-1943 the American P-51 Mustang was introduced into the field of play. This aircraft could be thought of as a Spitfire which could fly for eight hours. Its range allowed it to escort Allied bombers to their targets throughout the Reich. After escorting the bombers to their targets the P-51s were released to attack "targets of opportunity". A P-51 can fly close to the ground and attack individual trains, which they did. Perhaps you will recall the many wartime film clips showing these P-51s destroying German trains as they traveled. By mid-1944, it is a wonder that any trains within Germany could move at all. Some were forced to hide in mountain tunnels, as they did near the Jonas Valley, running at night or when there were no enemy aircraft reported.

As a result of these day and night air attacks, Germany found itself increasingly the victim of shortages of material and fuel, limiting its ability to make war.

Though Germany's air defence system was the best of any warring nation, it was clear that if Germany was to survive, improvement was imperative. Germany experimented with radically new types of air defense systems. Anti-aircraft rockets, guided both from the ground and by infra-red homing devices were invented. Vortex cannons, sun cannons, air-explosive turbulence bombs, rockets trailing long wire to ensnare enemy propellers, numerous electronic jamming devices, electronic devices designed to stop ignition-based engines, magnetically repulsed projectiles and long-range x-ray "death rays" were all under development as the conflict ended (5) (6). Among these exotic solutions were saucer-shaped interceptor aircraft.

The Germans already had jet and rocket interceptors as well as jet and rocket attack vehicles. German skies were full of these and other exotic aircraft so this new saucer shape was not considered as important then as we do today looking back upon it from a UFO perspective. To the German military and civilians alike these were just more new weapons.

The "Alpenfestung"



FOR THE LAST STAND.—The "Redoubt" area planned by the Germans.

From top to bottom, right to left are: The "Alpenfestung" which was the southernmost island of defense planned by the Germans; Diagram of the Fiat underground facility at Lake Garda in Northern Italy which worked under direction of the Germans; A cross section of the tunnel. It was in this facility where Renato Vesco worked during the Second World War.

As the conflict drew to its conclusion, military planners in Germany considered the idea of concentrating their ground and air defenses into specific fortresses for a last stand. This would buy them time. They needed time to perfect new "Siegerswaffen", super-weapons so powerful that they could turn the course of the war for Germany by themselves.

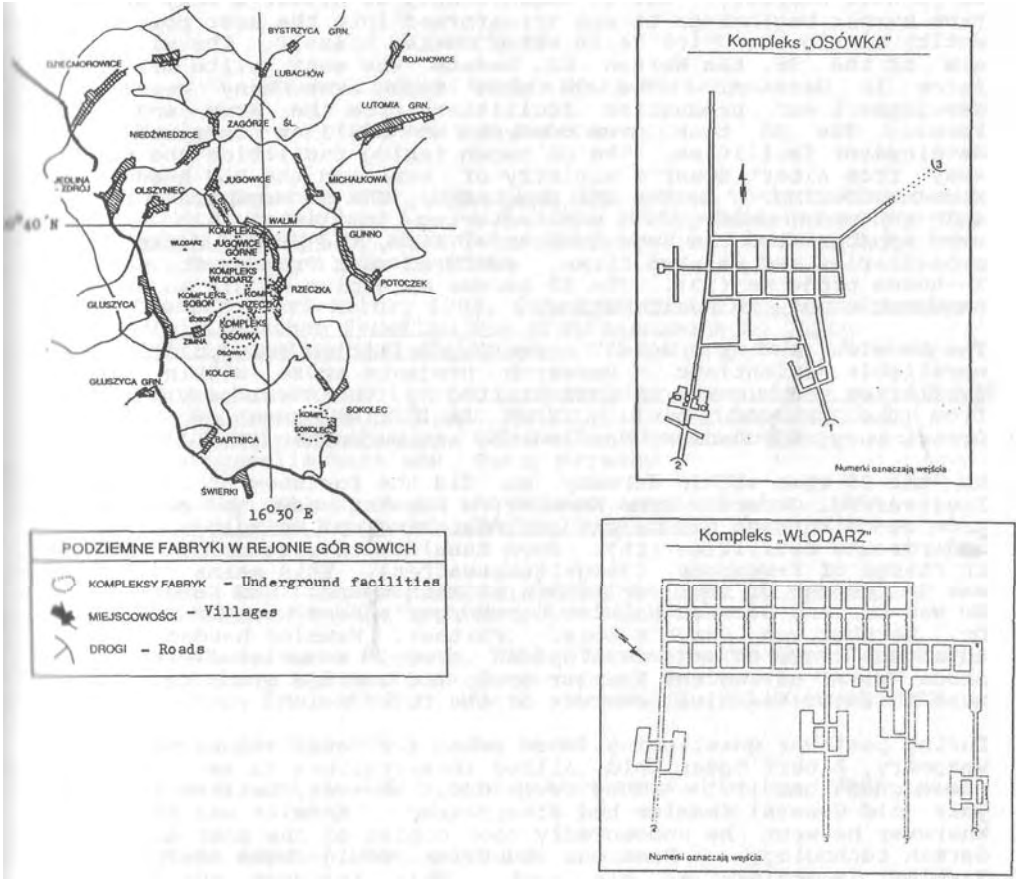
A mountain fortress or "Alpenfestung" was to be set up in the German held areas of Northern Italy, Austria and Germany in roughly the areas in which these countries converged with each other and Switzerland (7). A fortress was to be set up in the Harz Mountains of Thruingia including several large underground complexes. This would extend from Nordhausen in the north down through Kahla and into the Jonas Valley. Another similar fortress complex was scheduled for the Owl Mountains separating Poland from Czechoslovakia including "Der Riese" mentioned earlier (8). Another fortress was to be set up in the Black Forest of Southern Germany. Other minor islands of resistance were to be set up in Norway, the Bohemian forest and the Bavarian forest (9).

These fortifications were to house soldiers, mostly SS units. They would also provide underground hangers and bomb-proof overhangs for aircraft take-offs and landings. Missiles, such as the V-l and V-2, and other weapons were to be mass produced there and fired automatically, right off the automated assembly line. The exotic weaponry mentioned above was to be employed, along with especially trained mountain troops, defending the mountain passes into these fortresses (10).

History tells us the Alpenfestung never actually happened. It did not happen because German construction was simply not able to make these places ready in time. What is important for us to realize is that the weaponry for these fortresses was being developed as the Second World War drew to a close. Few of these weapons reached the operational stage but many were in various stages of development.

When Hitler took power in 1933 one of his first decisions was to rebuild the German Air Force, the Luftwaffe. This new organization was to make a clean break with the old and this reasoning was reflected in its research and development facilities, the RLM, which were the finest of any branch of the German military. Two brilliant research facilities were also in the possession of the Luftwaffe, the Lilenthalgesellschaft and the Academy of Air Research. Besides the Luftwaffe, there was the Army which did develop such things as the V-l cruise missile. There was the Speer Ministry of Arms which did research. In addition, a system of research and development facilities was set up headed by a research council, the "Reichsforschungrat". Their job was to coordinate the technical schools and universities, the military and governmental research groups, and the research and development facilities into a concerted effort (11).

The Underground Complex "Der Riese"



"Der Riese", ("The Giant" in English), is located in the "Gory Sowie" or Owl Mountains of modern-day Poland. It consisted of seven undergound complexes which concerned themselves with the mining, refining, research and development of uranium both for energy producing machines and weapons of war. The tunnels of the larger complexes are almost two miles in length. Courtesy of Robert Lesniakiewicz. Mr. Lesniakiewicz is a Polish engineer and a member of the research group responsible for opening, exploring and maping of "Der Riese".

Another fact that influences our story was the ascendance of the SS (Schutz Staffel). The SS began simply as Hitler's body guard. From humble beginnings it was transformed into the most powerful entity within the Third Reich after Hitler himself. The military arm of the SS, the Waffen SS, became the most elite military force in Germany. The SS also took over many research, development and production facilities from the Army and Air Force. The SS took over control of civilian research and development facilities. The SS began taking facilities and power away from Albert Speer's Ministry of Arms and the RLM headed by Hermann Goering. As the war progressed, the SS organized, built and ran many underground manufacturing facilities (12). They even appropriated the huge industrial firm, the Skoda Works, its subsidiaries and related firms, centered near Prague, for their in-house projects (13). The SS became an empire within an empire answerable only to Adolf Hitler.

The SS also set up special research facilities for politically unreliable scientists. Research projects arose within these facilities which were in part staffed by technical people drawn from the prisoner pool. Such facilities were set up at Oraneinburg, Nordhausen, Mechlenburg and Mathausen (14).

As the SS rose within Germany, so did the fortunes of Doctor of Engineering, General Hans Kammler. Kammler seems to come into prominence through his talent at designing and building massive underground facilities (15). Soon Kammler was placed, by Hitler, in charge of V-weapons (Vergeltungswaffen). This means Kammler was in charge of the facilities at Peenemuende and Nordhausen. He was Dr. and General Walhter Dornberger's boss who, in turn was Dr. Wernher von Braun's boss. Further, Kammler headed up an advanced research and development group, associated with the Skoda Works, called the Kammler Group (16). This group held the most advanced technical secrets of the Third Reich.

During post-war questioning, when asked for details concerning V-weaponry, Albert Speer told Allied interrogators to ask Kammler these questions (17). They never did, however, because the 42 year old General Kammler had disappeared. Kammler was no fool. Wherever he went he undoubtedly took copies of the most advanced German technology. Numerous countries would have dealt with Kammler, regardless of his past. This includes the U.S.A. Couple this with the fact that no search was ever made for General Kammler in spite of the fact that he extensively employed slave-labor in his projects.

Did Kammler do a secret deal with an Allied government, exchanging information for a new identity? Or did Kammler escape Allied clutches to some safe haven such as South America? It is known that the Nazis set up shop in large, secure tracts of land between Chile and Argentina. It is also known that UFOs were seen earlier in that region than in the USA after the war. Many post-war stories involve German scientists relocating in South American countries formerly friendly to the

Nazis and there building and flying German saucers.

CHAPTER ONE

The Situation Within Nazi Germany

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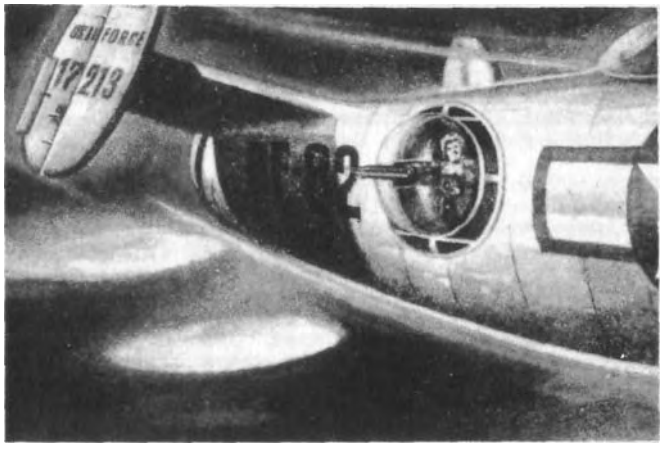
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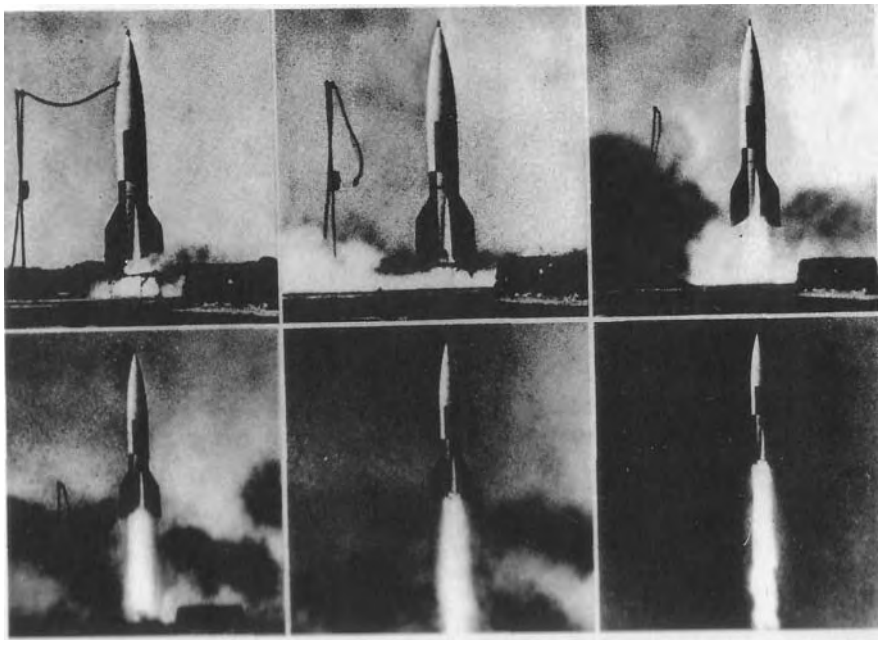


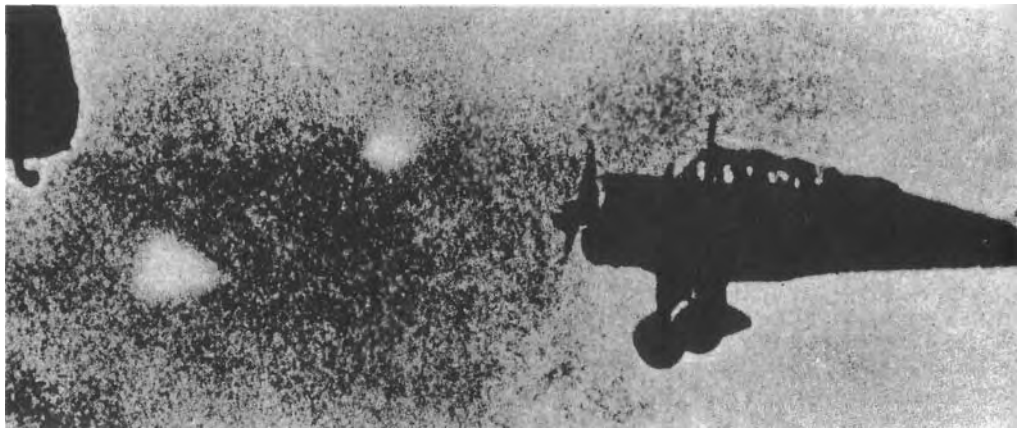
Some of the earliest forms of UFOs, reported during the 1940s, were the ball of light phenomena known as 'foo fighters,' as depicted here.

Walter Dornberger, Wernher von Braun (in cast) and other scientists after surrendering to the U.S. Seventh Army in May 1945.



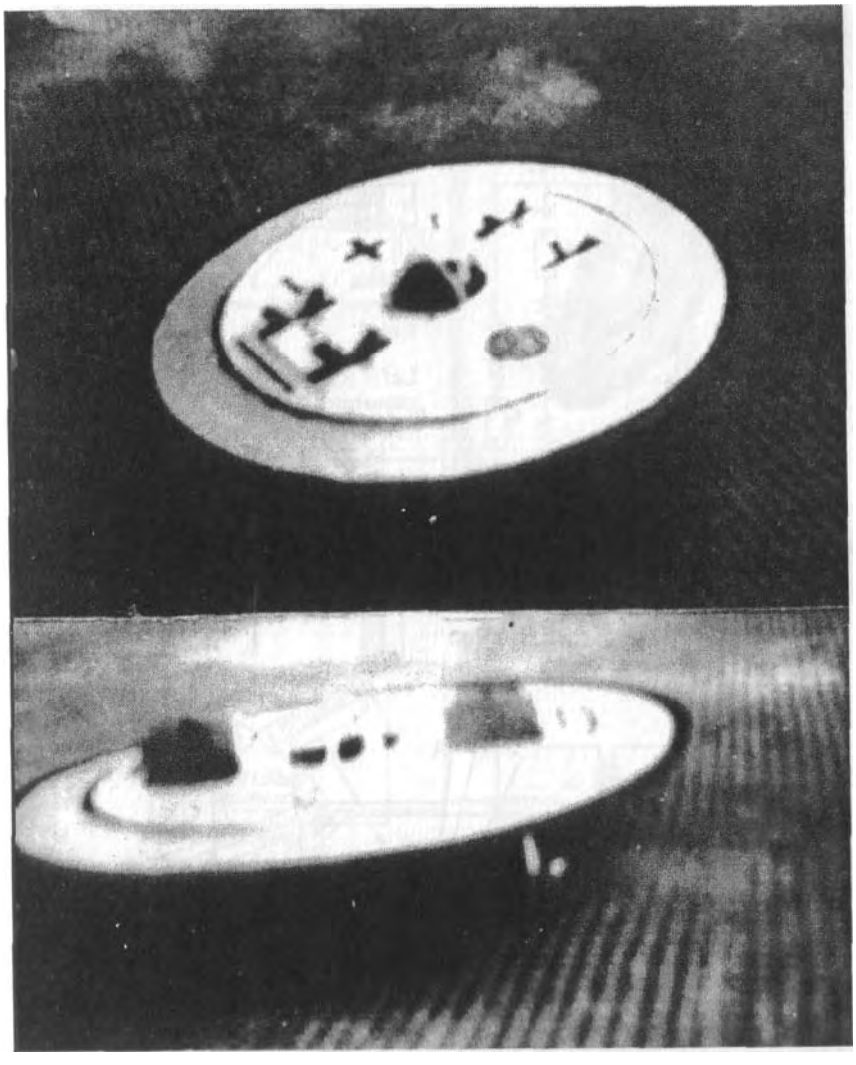
Below, in May 1946, the Americans fire off a captured V-2 at the White Sands proving ground in New Mexico.







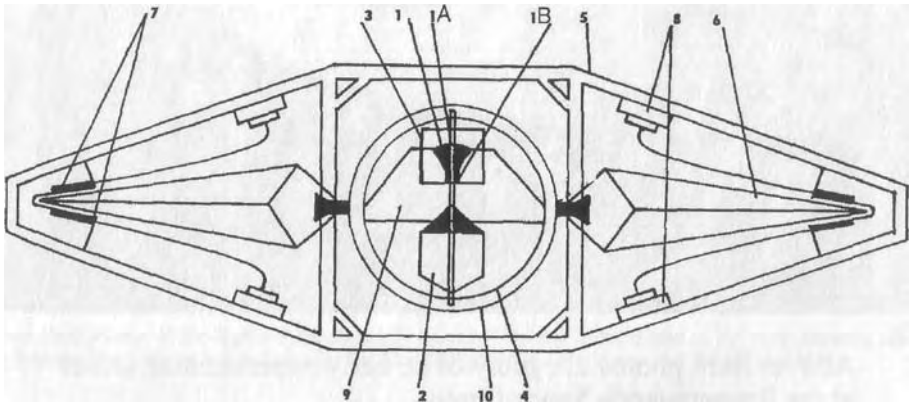
Above: Few photos of foo fighters are currently known. The top photo is one of the most famous, taken over Europe; the bottom was taken over the Sea of Japan between Japan and Korea in 1943.



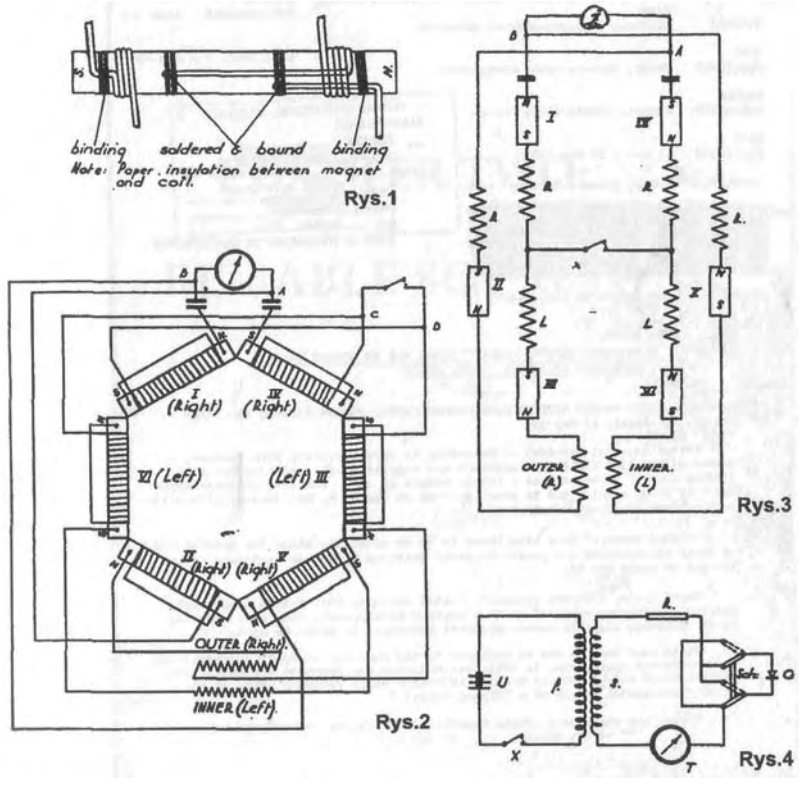
Above: Rare photos allegedly of an early experimental saucer at the Peenemuende Space Center.



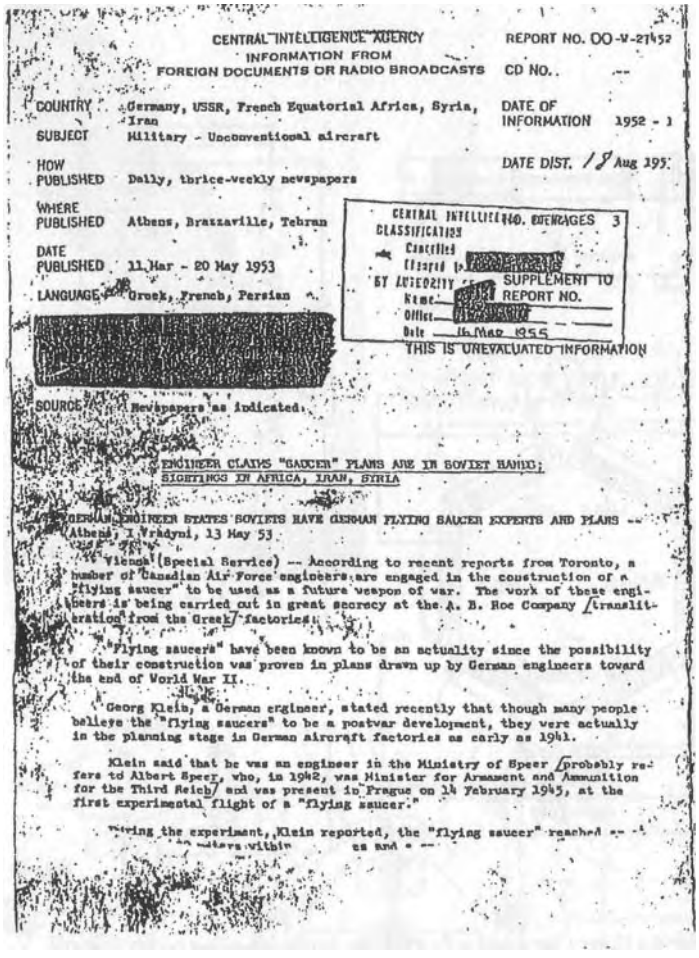
Left: Rare photo allegedly of an early experimental saucer at the Peenemuende Space Center in flight.



Above: Internal plans for a "Vril-1" saucer, according to Polish historian Igor Witkowski.



Patent for the Coler Converter, a free energy device designed by Hans Coler in 1937.



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION FROM
FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT NO. CO-V-27452
CD NO. ---

COUNTRY Germany, USSR, French Equatorial Africa, Syria, Iran
SUBJECT Military - Unconventional aircraft
DATE OF INFORMATION 1952 - 1
DATE DIST. 18 Aug 195[illegible]
HOW PUBLISHED Daily, thrice-weekly newspapers
WHERE PUBLISHED Athens, Brazzaville, Tehran
DATE PUBLISHED 11 Mar - 20 May 1953
LANGUAGE Greek, French, Persian
NO. OF PAGES 3

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
CLASSIFICATION
Classified
Cleared by [redacted]
BY AUTHORITY [redacted]
Name [redacted]
Office [redacted]
Date 16 Mar 1955
SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.
THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

ENGINEER CLAIMS "SAUCER" PLANS ARE IN SOVIET HANDS; SIGHTINGS IN AFRICA, IRAN, SYRIA

GERMAN ENGINEER STATES SOVIETS HAVE GERMAN FLYING SAUCER EXPERTS AND PLANS -- Athens, I Vradyni, 13 May 53

Vienna (Special Service) -- According to recent reports from Toronto, a number of Canadian Air Force engineers are engaged in the construction of a "flying saucer" to be used as a future weapon of war. The work of these engineers is being carried out in great secrecy at the A. B. Roe Company [translitteration from the Greek] factories.

"Flying saucers" have been known to be an actuality since the possibility of their construction was proven in plans drawn up by German engineers toward the end of World War II.

Georg Klein, a German engineer, stated recently that though many people believe the "flying saucers" to be a postwar development, they were actually in the planning stage in German aircraft factories as early as 1941.

Klein said that he was an engineer in the Ministry of Speer [probably refers to Albert Speer, who, in 1942, was Minister for Armament and Ammunition for the Third Reich] and was present in Prague on 14 February 1945, at the first experimental flight of a "flying saucer."

[illegible] the experiment, Klein reported, the "flying saucer" reached -- [illegible] meters within [illegible] es and a --

A C.I.A. document dated August 18, 1952 mentioning that the Germans were building "flying saucers" as early as 1941. From the German book Die Dunkle Seite Des Mondes (The Dark Side of the Moon) by Brad Harris (1996, Pandora Books, Germany).

CHAPTER TWO:

RELIABLE SOURCES

CHAPTER TWO

Reliable Sources

Much has recently been written concerning German flying discs. To the best of my knowledge, no single source has all the answers. To piece this puzzle together information from various sources must be used. Of course, some sources are better than others. Categories of sources, in a somewhat descending order of reliability are:

1. Those actually involved with these projects.

2. Witnesses of flying saucers who had prior knowledge that the sighting was of a German saucer as opposed to an unidentified flying object.

3. Those who at the time had good reason to know of German saucers.

4. Third-party intelligence sources which verify claims made by the higher categories above.

5. Researchers who have interviewed principals involved in German saucer research.

6. Studies or scientific papers published by individuals identified as participants in these projects.

Sources without names are not as good as sources with names. Information, data, or pictures without a "chain of evidence" linking them to the event are not as good as those with proper documentation.

After almost sixty years, nothing is going to be perfect. These categories are not meant to be absolute. Some sources fit into multiple categories. Some reports have value even though they are not rigorous simply because they were later corroborated by other sources.

When reading allegedly factual statements, the reader should always be looking for the source documentation for these statements. A writer's opinion or interpretation may be valuable but it should always be made clear which is who.

Examples of the first category are those who worked on German saucer projects:

Among these is Rudolf Schriever. Schriever was involved in a German saucers project which sometimes bears his name. As a source of information, he wrote an article on German saucers for the very respected Der Spiegel magazine (1).

Likewise, Joseph Andreas Epp was a self-admitted consultant for both the Schriever-Habermohl project at Prag and the Miethe project in Dresden and Breslau. Mr. Epp wrote to me personally (2) and has written several articles and a book about German saucers before he died in 1997 (3).

An example of a witness who had prior knowledge of German saucers would be Georg Klein. Klein was an engineer, an eyewitness to a saucer lift-off on February 14, 1945. He was also Special Commissioner in the Ministry of Arms Production who oversaw both the Schriever-Habermohl and Miethe-Belluzzo projects for Albert Speer. Mr. Klein has written some newspaper articles about these facts such as his article in Welt am Stonntag, titled "Erste "Flugscheibe" flog 1945 in Prag" (The First Flying Disc flew in Prag in 1945)(4) . Other newspaper references of Mr. Klein will be mentioned. He has also written under the pen-name of Georg Sautier.

Another example would be the unnamed eyewitness provided by researcher Horst Schuppmann and first reported in Karl-Heinz Zunneck's book Geheimtechnoloaien. Wunderwaffen Und Irdischen Facetten Des UFO-Phaenomens (Secret Technology, Wonder-weapons and the Terrestrial Facts of the UFO Phenomenon). In this report the informant relates a wartime experience in which he witnessed several small flying saucers in a hangar (5).

George Lusar is an example of a source falling under category three. Lusar worked for the German Patent Office during World War Two. He saw many secret patents as they came into his office. After the War he wrote a book and some articles concerning this technology which was taken by the Allies (6).

Likewise, Italian engineer Renato Vesco worked with Germans while at a secret division of Fiat housed in an underground facility on Lake Garda, right in the middle of the proposed Alpenfestung. After the war, Vesco also researched British Intelligence data. This data was volumnous. Of course, Vesco knew what to look for based upon what he had learned while working in a secret Axis underground facility. Vesco is an example of category three and the next one, category four.

Category four involves intelligence information obtained from governmental sources. This information mostly comes from the very entities who are trying to suppress this information. It should always be suspect. It should be used only to verify information obtained from higher sources (categories 1 through 3) or from governmental sources of another government. For instance, information concerning flying objects which Renato Vesco called "Fireballs" was verified using information obtained from the U.S. government under laws forcing it to divulge some types of information (Freedom Of Information Act) (7).

Category five would include, for instance, Callum Coats whom spent three years with mathematician and physicist, Walter

Schauberger, son of Viktor Schauberger. Mr. Coats consequently learned a great deal of information concerning the ideas of Viktor Schauberger. Mr. Coats is a scientist and architect. Coats wrote Living Energies about the ideas of Schauberger and his saucer models (8).

In the same category we find Michael X. Barton, who, through a translator, Carl F. Mayer, received information from an informant in German, Hermann Klaas, who claimed to have actually been involved with some of the German saucer projects. Klaas' peripheral knowledge (category three) also seems to have extended into other aspects of secret German research and technology. Barton wrote one of the earliest books on this topic, The German Saucer Story in 1968 (9).

One unique source is Wilhelm Landig. Landig wrote three novels dealing with the Second World War. Following the title of each novel, Landig tells the reader that this is a "novel based on realities". The reader is given to understand that the technology described was based on hard fact. Landig's works contain more than cold facts, however. Landig deals with a large variety of topics in his books. Sometimes facts or opinions are stated or "stories behind the story" are told. He writes, unashamedly, from the National Socialist perspective. Landig was obviously a Nazi and an intellectual insider. His history always remained unclear, at least to this writer, until his recent death. Because of his unclear background and the fact that he wrote in novel form, there has been a reluctance to ascribe full creditability to the statements he makes regarding the technology of the Third Reich.

This all changed in 1999 as a result of research done by Margret Chatwin with an organization called "Informations diesnst gegen Rechtsextremismus" (Information service against the extreme right) (10). Coming in from this perspective, they, certainly, would not be accused of aggrandizing Landig's career. Some details of Landig's biography are now filled in. In that article we learn that Landig, an Austrian, took part in the unsuccessful Vienna Putsch of 1934. Thereafter, he fled to Germany and was inducted into the SD, the SS and the Waffen SS. There he rose to the rank of "Oberschafuehrer". Eventually, Landig was detailed to
oversee government security concerns and given a position in the Reichs Security Department. Landig, in this position, was assigned to cover the security for the development of "UFOs" (11). It turns out that Landig was not only a source but a great source concerning the development of German saucers.

Returning to unnamed sources, they should never be given the weight as named sources are given. Many times writers use unnamed sources to advance a radically new and fantastic hypothesis in the UFO world. This type of source may sound convincing, given the "secret" nature of the message, but they should only be accepted if they yield new information which can be verified independently. This goes double for unnamed

government sources. Government has a history of manipulation of information concerning UFOs and UFO origin theories. One of the most famous was the Majestic 12 or MJ 12 affair which was based on unnamed government sources. This house of card finally fell apart but the real issue before us is why this house of cards, the MJ-12 affair, was ever allowed so much attention in the first place.

Government information should, therefore, never be used as the primary basis for a UFO hypothesis. It should only be used to verify a hypothesis developed, ideally, from multiple, independent sources. Concerning German saucers,this means that information or ideas from German sources might be checked using U.S. or British governmental archives, but not the reverse. Similar assertions given by official records of two different countries is notable. If both United States and British or German governmental sources agree upon something, then something might be said of the assertion. Of course there are those that say this only points to a conspiracy between the two governments to conceal a deeper truth. This may be true in some cases. These are all really judgment calls which the reader will have to make for himself, in the end.

Regarding individual sources cited, an effort will be made to describe the type of evidence each cited reference uses when that information is available.

CHAPTER TWO

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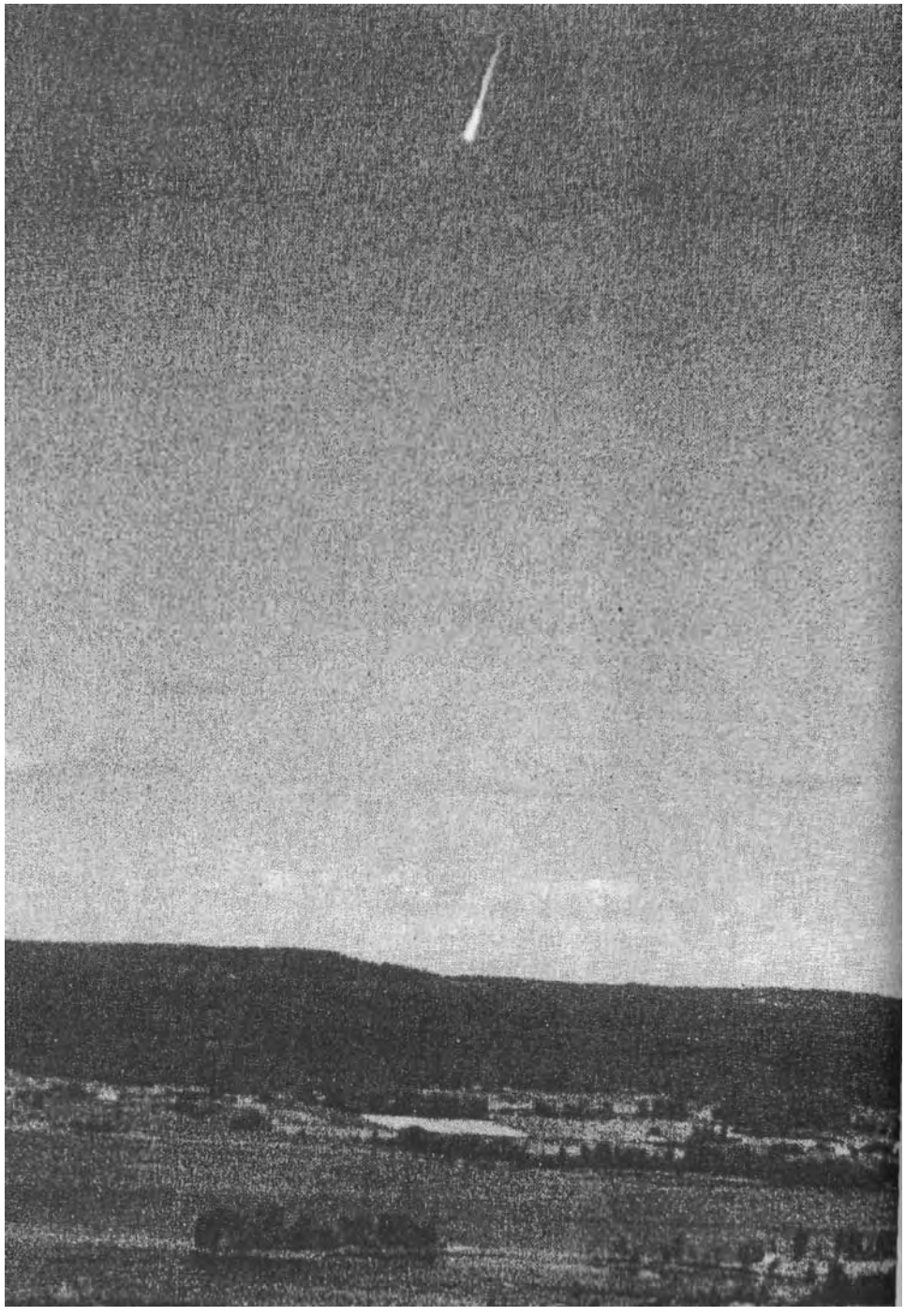
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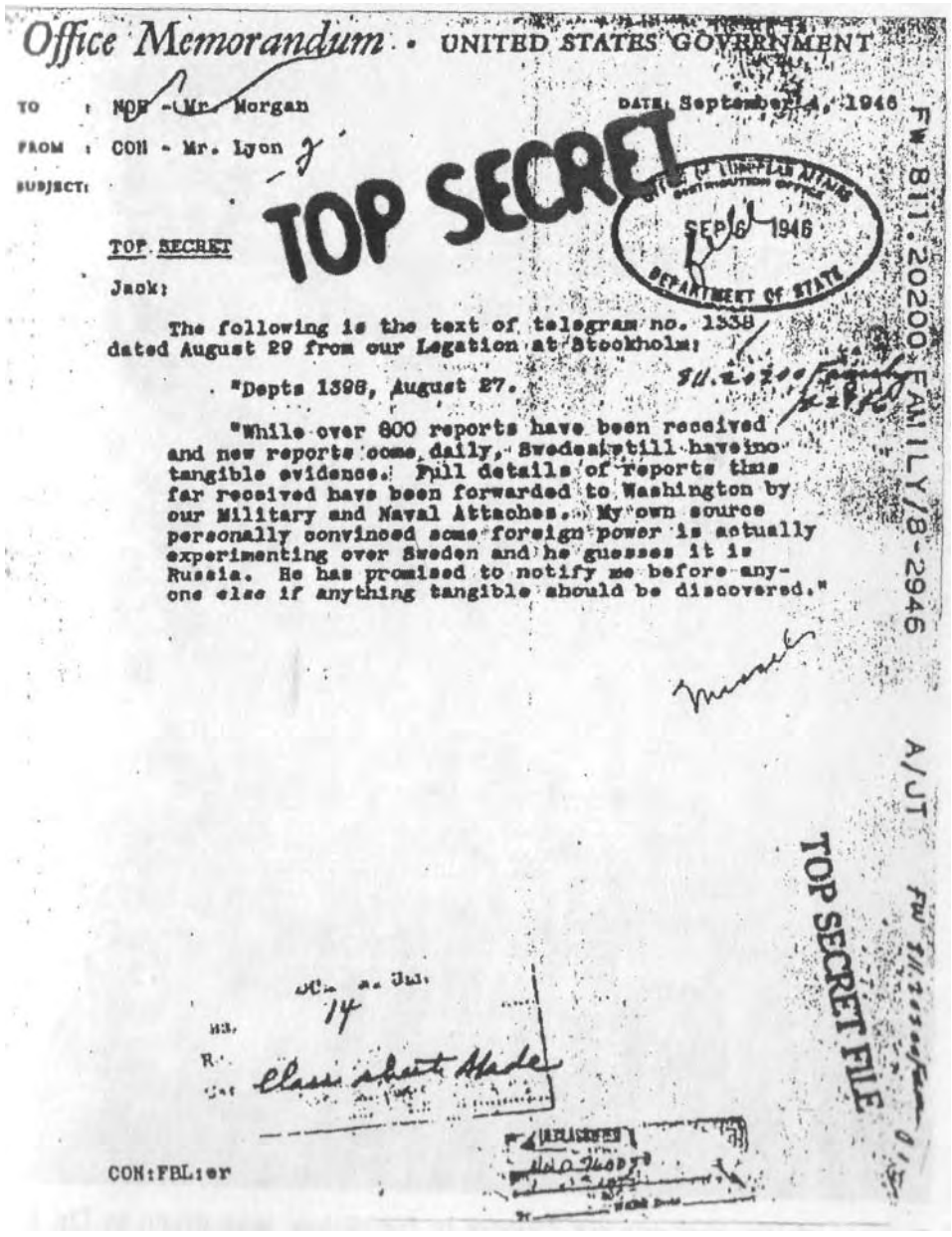
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11. ibid





Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : NOR - Mr. Morgan

DATE: September 4, 1946

FROM : CON - Mr. Lyon

SUBJECT:

TOP SECRET

SEP 6 1946

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TOP SECRET

Jack:

The following is the text of telegram no. 1338 dated August 29 from our Legation at Stockholm:

"Depts 1398, August 27.

"While over 800 reports have been received and new reports come daily, Swedes still have no tangible evidence. Full details of reports thus far received have been forwarded to Washington by our Military and Naval Attaches. My own source personally convinced some foreign power is actually experimenting over Sweden and he guesses it is Russia. He has promised to notify me before anyone else if anything tangible should be discovered."

FW 811.20200 FAMILY/8-2946

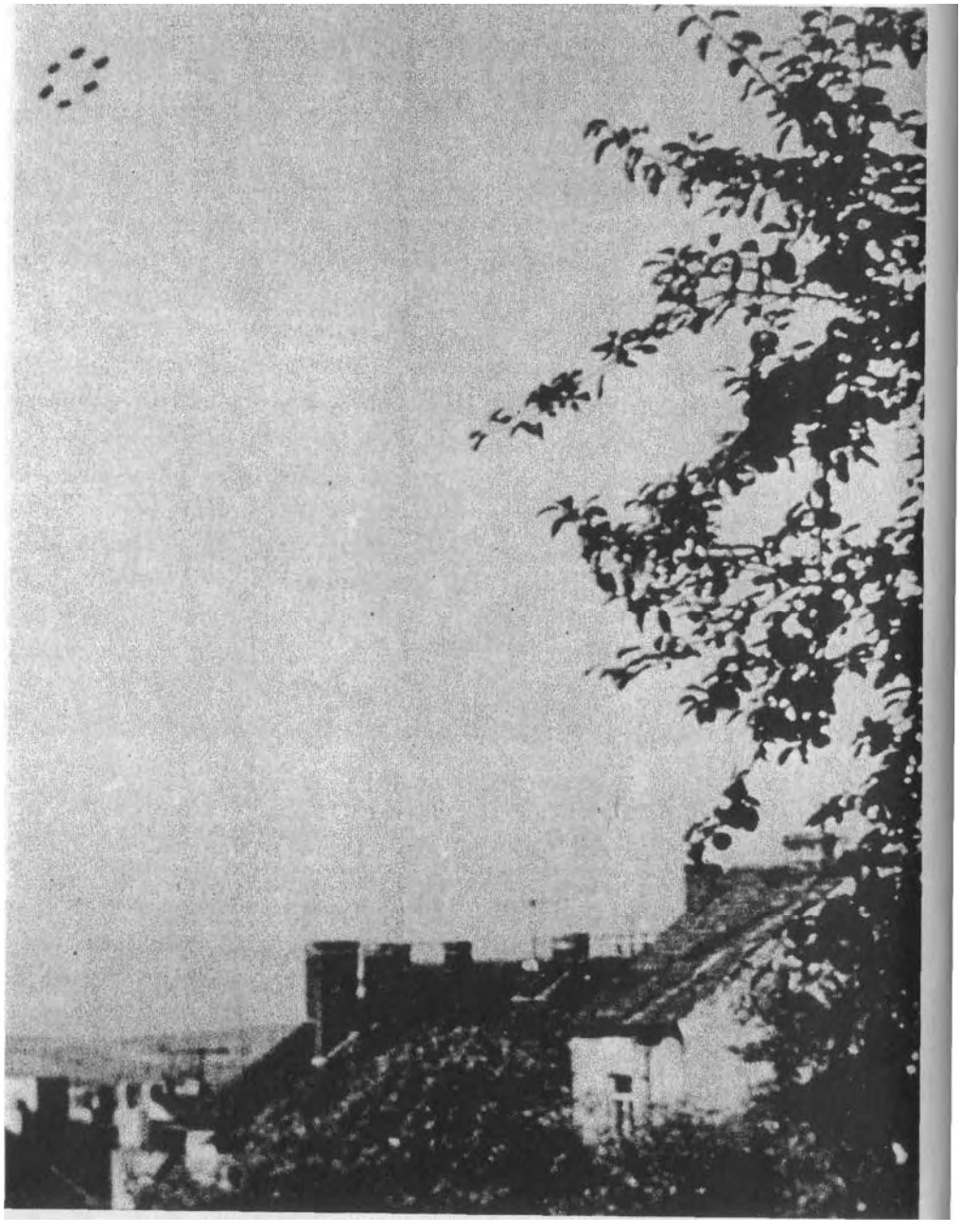
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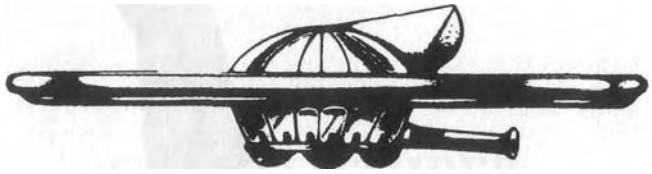
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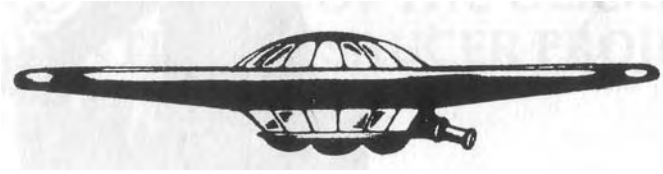
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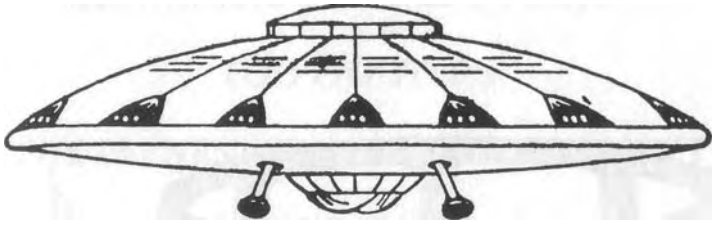
A September, 1946 Top Secret Memorandum on Ghost Rockets.



The above photo, showing six saucers in formation, was given to Dr. J. Allen Hynek in the early 1950s by the director of the Ondrejov Observatory in Czechoslovakia. No details of the sighting are available, but the photo is thought to have been taken near Prague, perhaps during WWII.

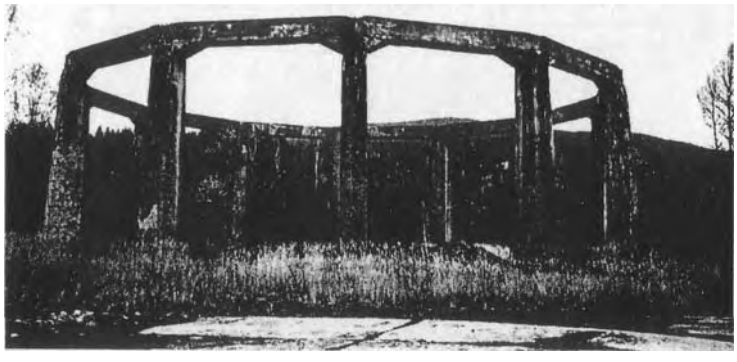






Above: Drawings of the Project Saucer craft designed in 1941 by Rudolf Schriever, a Luftwaffe aeronautical engineer, and his three colleagues, Habermohl, Miethe and Bellonzo. The first prototype was flown in June 1942 and larger versions were apparently designed and manufactured at the BMW factory near Prague, Czech Republic.





Above: The circular "Mucholapka" building in Poland. According to Polish Military Historian Igor Witkowski it was used for testing saucer-type craft.

CHAPTER THREE:

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GERMAN CONVENTIONAL SAUCER PROJECTS

THE SCHREIVER-HABERMOHL PROJECT(S)

THE MIETHE-BELLUZZO PROJECT

FOO FIGHTERS

THE PEENEMUENDE SAUCER PROJECT

CHAPTER SUMMARY

CHAPTER THREE

An Overview of the German Conventional Saucer Projects

In this section we will progress from saucer projects with are absolutely factual and of which detail is known and proceed to projects which are less known.

Several types of flying craft we would call flying saucers were built by the Germans during the Second World War. The exact number is still open for debate but it certainly must vary from between three to seven or possibly eight different types. These different types do not mean experimental models or variants of which there were many. What is meant here is that there were very different lines of flying machines being built in wartime Germany at different places by different groups of people. Since more than one saucer-type may have been produced by a single group, we will review this data group by group. We will progress from saucer projects which are factually better known and which deal in conventional propulsion methods and then move to lesser known projects which deal in more exotic propulsion methods which are less well documented and so more controversial.

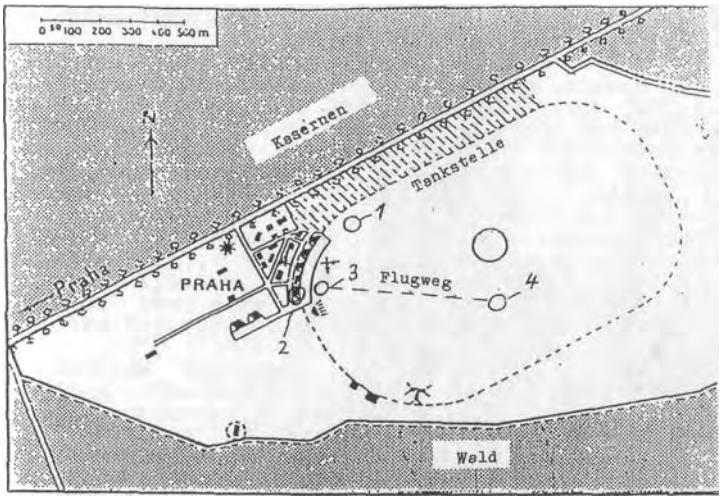
The Schriever-Habermohl Project(s)

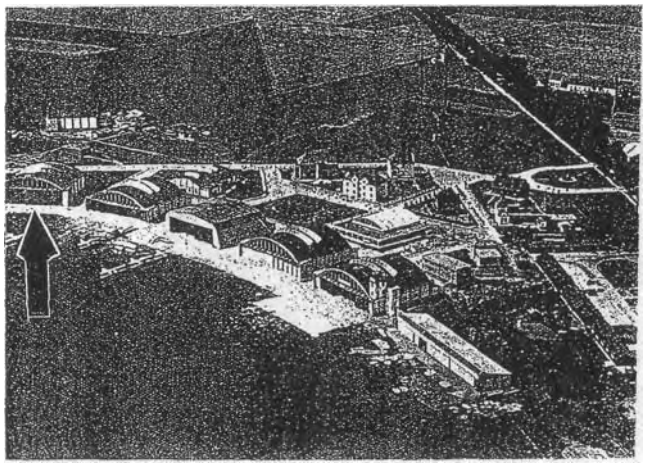
The best known of these projects is usually referred to as the Schriever-Habermohl project although it is by no means clear that these were the individuals in charge of the project. Rudolf Schriever was an engineer and test pilot. Less is known about Otto Habermohl but certainly he was an engineer. This project was centered in Prag, at the Prag-Gbell airport (l)(2). Actual construction work began somewhere between 1941 and 1943 (3)(4). This was originally a Luftwaffe project which received technical assistance from the Skoda Works at Prag and at a Skoda division at Letov (5) and perhaps elsewhere (6). Other firms participating in the project according to Epp were the Junkers firm at Oscheben and Bemburg, the Wilhelm Gustloff firm at Weimar and the Kieler Leichtbau at Neubrandenburg (7). This project started as a project of the Luftwaffe, sponsored by second-in-command, Ernst Udet. It then fell under the control of Speer's Armament Ministry at which time it was administered by engineer Georg Klein. Finally, probably sometime in 1944, this project came under the control of the SS, specifically under the purview of General Hans Kammler (8).

According to his own words, Georg Klein saw this device fly on February 14, 1945 (9). This may have been the first official flight, but it was not the first flight made by this device. According to one witness, a saucer flight occurred as early as August or September of 1943 at this facility. The eyewitness was in flight-training at the Prag-Gbell facility when he saw a short test flight of such a device. He states that the saucer was 5 to 6 meters in diameter (about 15 to 18 feet in diameter) and about as tall as a man, with an outer border of 30-40 centimeters. It was "aluminum" in color and rested on four thin, long legs. The flight distance observed was about 300 meters at low level of one meter in altitude. The witness was 200 meters from the event and one of many students there at the time (10).

Joseph Andreas Epp, an engineer who served as a consultant to both the Schriever-Habermohl and the Miethe-Belluzzo projects, states that fifteen prototypes were built in all (11) (12). The final device associated with Schriever-Habermohl is described by engineer Rudolf Lusar who worked in the German Patent Office, as a central cockpit surrounded by rotating adjustable wing-vanes forming a circle. The vanes were held together by a band at the outer edge of the wheel-like device. The pitch of the vanes could be adjusted so that during take off more lift was generated by increasing their angle from a more horizontal setting. In level flight the angle would be adjusted to a smaller angle. This is similar to the way helicopter rotors operate. The wing-vanes were to be set in rotation by small rockets placed around the rim like a pinwheel. Once rotational speed was sufficient, lift-off was achieved. After the craft had risen to some height the horizontal jets or rockets were ignited and the small rockets shut off (13). After this the wing-blades would be allowed to

The Airport at Prag-Gbell

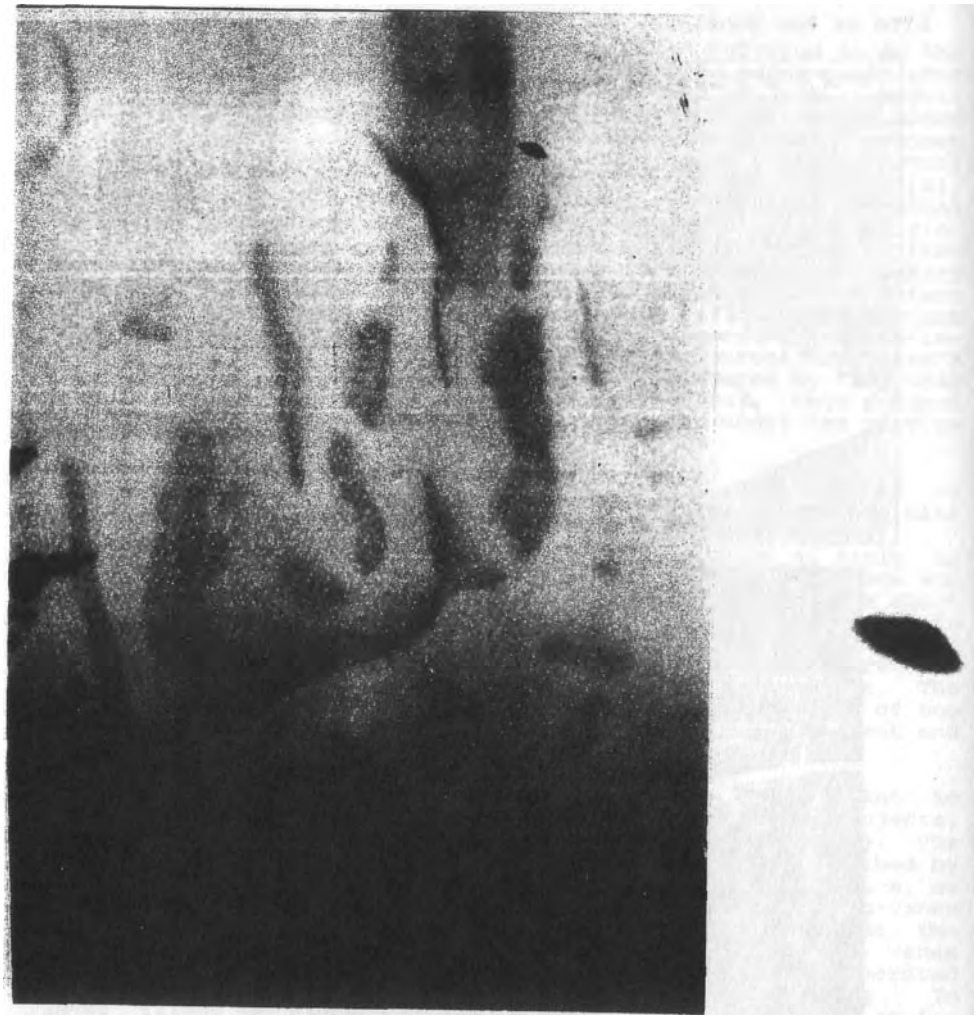




Site of the Schriever and Habermohl Flying Saucer Projects

In the top diagram the hanger which was the site of the research is marked as number 2. The same hanger is indicated in the picture below with an arrow.

The Habermohl Saucer In Flight



To the left is the closest shot of the two taken by Joseph Andreas Epp as he drove to the Prag airport in 1944. To the right is a blow up (400 times) of that same saucer. Epp remembers a date of November, 1944 but the foliage on the trees argues for a date earlier in the year.

rotate freely as the saucer moved forward as in an auto-gyrocopter. In all probability, the wing-blades speed, and so their lifting value, could also be increased by directing the adjustable horizontal jets slightly upwards to engage the blades, thus spinning them faster at the digression of the pilot.

Rapid horizontal flight was possible with these jet or rocket engines. Probable candidates were the Junkers Jumo 004 jet engines such as were used on the famous German jet fighter, the Messerschmitt 262. A possible substitute would have been the somewhat less powerful BMW 003 engines. The rocket engine would have been the Walter HWK109 which powered the Messerschmitt 163 rocket interceptor (14). If all had been plentiful, the Junkers Jumo 004 probably would have been the first choice. Epp reports Jumo 211/b engines were used (15). Klaas reports the Argus pulse jet (Schmidt-duct), used on the V-l, was also considered (16). All of these types of engines were difficult to obtain at the time because they were needed for high priority fighters and bombers, the V-l and the rocket interceptor aircraft.

Joseph Andreas Epp reports in his book Die Realitaet der Flugscheiben (The Reality of the Flying Discs) that an official test flight occurred in February of 1945. Epp managed to take two still pictures of the saucer in flight which appear in his book and are reproduced here. There is some confusion about the date of these pictures. In the video film "UFOs Secrets of the 3rd Reich", Epp states these pictures were taken in the Fall of 1944. In his book the date is given as the official date of February 14, 1945. In personal correspondence to me of December, 30, 1991, he indicated the date of the pictures as August, 1944. In that correspondence he further revealed that the official flight had been February 14, 1945 but an earlier lift-off had taken place in August of 1944. The pictures show a small disc-like object in the distance at some altitude posed above a landscape. The saucer is at too great a distance and altitude to show any mechanical detail. As Klaus-Peter Rothkugel points out, the foliage on the trees indicates the August date as being the most accurate.

Very high performance flight characteristics are attributed to this design. Georg Klein says it climbed to 12,400 meters (over 37,000 feet) in three minutes (17) and attaining a speed around that of the sound barrier (18). Epp says that it achieved a speed of Mach 1 (about 1200 kilometers per hour or about 750 miles per hour) (19). From his discussion, it appears that Epp is describing the unofficial lift-off in August, 1944 at this point. He goes on to say that on the next night, the sound barrier was broken in manned flight but that the pilot was frightened by the vibrations encountered at that time (20). On the official test flight, Epp reports a top speed of 2200 kilometers per hour (21). Lusar reports a top speed of 2000 kilometers per hour (22). Many other writers cite the same or similar top speed. There is no doubt of two facts. The first is that these are supersonic speeds which are being discussed.

Second, it is a manned flight which is under discussion.

But at least one writer has discounted such high performance (23). It is argued that the large frontal area of one of the possible designs in question makes Mach 2 flight impossible. The argument seems to be that given the possible power plants the atmospheric resistance caused by this frontal area would slow the craft to a point below the figures stated earlier.

Some new information has come to light regarding the propulsion system which supports the original assessment. Although actual construction had not started, wind-tunnel and design studies confirmed the feasibility of building a research aircraft which was designated Project 8-346. This aircraft was not a saucer but a modern looking swept-back wing design. According this post-war Allied intelligence report, the Germans designed the 8-346 to fly in the range of 2000 kilometers per hour to Mach 2. (24). Interestingly enough, it was to use two Walther HWK109 rocket engines. This is one of the engine configurations under consideration for the Schriever-Habermohl saucer project.

As an aside, it should be noted that there are those who will resist at any attempt to impugn the official breaking of the sound barrier by Chuck Yeager in 1947 in the Bell X-l rocket aircraft. They had better brace themselves. This record has also been challenged from another direction. This challenge was reported in February, 2001, by the Associated Press, Berlin. It seems that a certain Hans Guido Mutke claims he pushed his Messerschmitt jet fighter, the Me-262, through the sound barrier in 1945. This occurred during an emergency dive to help another German flyer during air combat. At that time he experienced vibrations and shaking of the aircraft. According to the report, a Hamburg Professor is working on a computer simulation in order to check the validity of this claim.

Returning to the topic at hand, Schriever continued to work on the project until April 15, 1945. About this time Prag was threatened by the Soviet Army. The Czech technicians working on this project were reported to have gone amuck, looting the facility as the Russians approached. The saucer prototype(s) at Prag-Gbell were pushed out onto the tarmac and burnt. Habermohl disappeared and presumably ended up in the hands of the Soviets. Schriever, according to his own statements, packed the saucer plans in the trunk of his BMW and with his family drove into Southern Germany. After cessation of hostilities Schriever worked his way north to his parents house in Bremerhaven-Lehe. There Schriever set up an inventor-workshop. On August 4, 1948 there was a break in to the workshop in which Schriever's plans and saucer model were stolen (25). Schriever was approached by agents of "foreign powers" concerning his knowledge of German saucers. He declined their offers, preferring rather menial work driving a truck for the U.S. Army (25).

Schriever is reported to have died shortly thereafter in 1953.

There is a report, however, that his death was reported prematurely and that he was identified by a witness who knew him in Bavaria in 1964 or 1965 (26). The publisher of this book, Thomas Mehner, was so kind as to send me a copy of the statement by a Bavarian woman who knew Schriever and made this claim (27). This means that there is a possibility that Schriever did do post-war work on flying saucers.

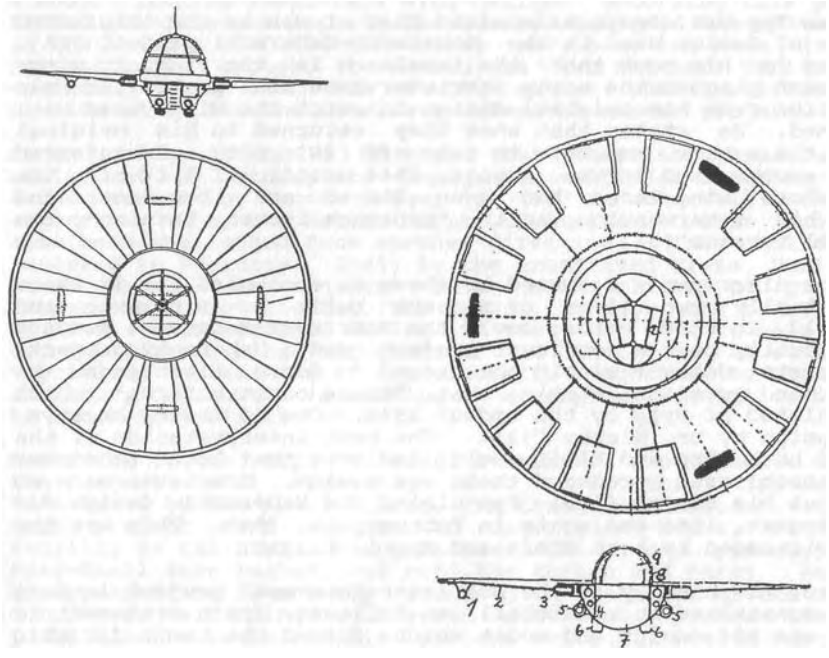
Interestingly enough, Schriever never claimed that his saucer ever flew at all! If this true, Schriever's saucer was still in the pre-flight stage at the time of the Russian advance and its ultimate destruction on the Prag-Gbell tarmac. This is in direct contradiction to the sources cited above and the photographic evidence. How can this seeming inconsistency be explained?

J. Andeas Epp has always maintained that it was he who originated the type of design used in the Schriever-Habermohl project (28). He states in his book that the imbalance in the ring of wing-vanes which plagued the early Schriever-Habermohl prototypes was a deviation from his original design in which the wing-vanes were lengthened. He states that when they returned to his original design, the saucer was able to take off (29) (30). He referred to the saucer used in the August, 1944 unofficial lift-off, the saucer whose wing-vanes had been altered and then corrected through his intervention, as the "Habermohlischen Version", the Habermohl version (31).

Could the discrepancy referred to above be accounted for if there were actually two lines of saucers built by Schriever and Habermohl? In other words, could the Schriever-Habermohl project have actually been a Schriever project and a Habermohl project, two separate designs within the team? Georg Klein seems to answer this question, stating that "three constructions" which were finished at Prag by the end of 1944. One of these, he says, was a design by Dr. Miethe (32). The best interpretation of the words of both Epp and Klein would indicate that both Schriever and Habermohl each produced their own design. Schriever made no claim that his design flew. Epp claims the Habermohl design did fly in August, 1944 and again in February 14, 1945. This was the saucer witnessed by both Klein and Epp in flight.

Therefore, the history of the Schriever-Habermohl project in Prag can be summarized in a nutshell as follows: Epp's statement is that it was his design and model which formed the basis for this project. This model was given to General Erst Udet which was then forwarded to Dr. Walter Dornberger at Peenemuende. Dr. Dornberger tested and recommended the design (33) which was confirmed by Dornberger to Epp after the war (34). A facility was set up in Prag for further development and the Schriever-Habermohl team was assigned to work on it there. At first this project was under the auspices of Hermann Goering and the Luftwaffe (35). Sometime later the Speer Ministry took over the running of this project with chief engineer Georg Klein in charge (36). Finally, the project was usurped by the SS in 1944, along

A Comparison of the Schriever and Habermohl Designs



On the left is the Schriever design while on the right is the Habermohl design. Please note the differing dimensions of the vane blades. This difference caused instability in the Schriever design. Drawings adapted from the work of Klaus-Peter Rothkugel.

with other saucer projects, and fell under the purview of Dr. Hans Kammler (37). Schriever altered the length of the wing-vanes from their original design. This alteration caused the instability. Schriever was still trying to work out this problem in his version of the saucer as the Russians overran Prag. Haberrmohl, according to Epp, went back to his original specifications, with two or three successful flights for his version.

While speaking of flight success, two more pieces of important evidence exists which were supplied by Andreas Epp. One comes in the form of a statement by a German test pilot, Otto Lange, given years after the war to Andreas Epp. In that statement, signed by Lange, Epp is credited with the idea behind the invention of the flying saucer and states that none other than Dr. Walter Dornberger had a hand in its development. He also makes the astonishing claim that he, personally, test flew this flying saucer for 500 kilometers in the course of testing (38) (39).

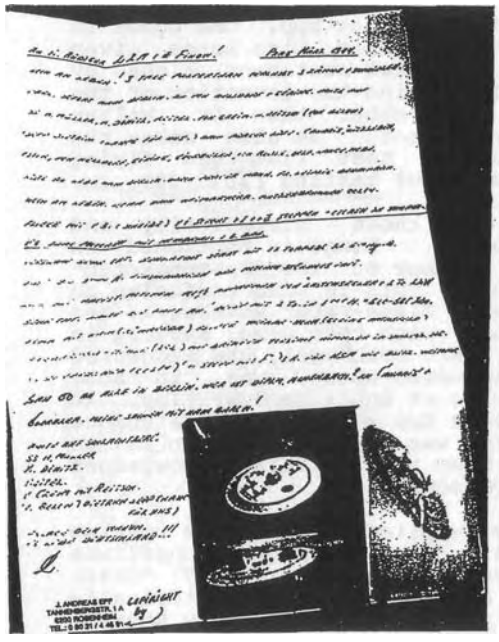
otto Lange is a person who is known historically and independently of any connection to Epp. Lange is mentioned in U.S. intelligence documents as a member of the "Rustungsstab" (Armament Staff), for aircraft (40). This is some confusion on this issue since a German researcher, Klaus-Peter Rothkugel, has f ound evidence for three individuals with this name serving in the German military at this time. Mr. Rothkugel, has suggested that the statement by Lange, discussed above, was, in fact, written by Epp based on known examples of Epp's hand writing. It was signed by another hand, so perhaps Epp and Lange had a chance meeting in 1965 wherein the letter was drafted by Epp in an effort to further document his, at that time, little-acknowledged involvement in the German saucer projects.

The second piece of evidence, also supplied by Epp, is a wartime Letter from Prag, dated March, 1944. It speaks to the conditions behind German lines with its opening greeting, simply "Still Alive!". It follows in a cryptic style describing historically well known political and military people who apparently knew or had something to do with the saucer project at Prag. The letter also describes some early prototype saucer models and their shortcomings. Interestingly enough figures on thrust are given (40) (41).

Three pictures appear at the bottom of the letter. One definitely shows a saucer in flight. There is no mention of these pictures in the text of the letter. Because they are not referenced and from their placement on the face of the letter it is possible that these pictures may have been a later addition to that letter. There are some other reasons why these pictures may not have been connected to the Schriever-Habermohl project or the Miethe-Belluzzo project. We shall return to these pictures at a later time.

An interesting fact elucidated by Epp is that the senior experts

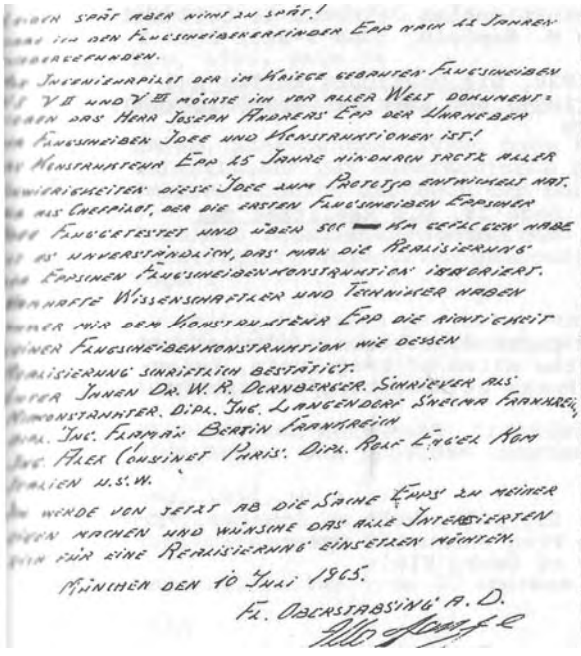
Cryptic And Enigmatic Letter Describes Flying Disc Development



An K. Rödiger LZA. III Finow Prag. März 1944

Noch am Leben. 3 Tage Pulverturm (*shelter in Prag*)Verlusst 3 Zähne - Se
Karl. Sofort nach Berlin. Zu von Melldorf + Göring: Achte auf SS A. Ma
Dönitz. Keitel. von Greim, H. Reitsch (von Below) (Sepp Dietrich Chance f
Nach Prager Liste. Canaris. Witzleben, Oster, von Melldorf, Göring, Gierde
Moltke. Delp. Lange. Nebe. Liste an Nebe *(Leader of Criminal Inves*
Department, as I know) nach Berlin. Durch Prager Mann. Fr
benachrichtigen. Noch am Leben. Komm nach Weimar NORA. Mutzen
00214.
Fliege mit V3 (Scheibe). V1(*rank?*) sofort V 1 und V II stoppen. M
schwach. V5 ???? Motoren mit Hochdruck (?). 3. BAA.
Versuche sehr gut. Senkrecht Start mit 9 x Torpedo 2 x 500 HO?.B. Fast h
M(*eter*). Einschwenken der Motoren störungsfrei. Auch mit Asbest Motore
Aufnehmen von Lastensegler + 2 To.(*t*) LKW. Sehr gut. Halte die Luft an!
2 To. in 6000 M. = 860-880 Km *(km per hour)*. Komm mit Nacht (Sö
Fliege Weimar-NORA (Göring Ratsfeld). Barbarossa-Höhle (282)
Vorsicht, Himmler im Schloß. ?????????Stoppmist!. B.R. für WSA wie Blitz.
SAW o-o an alle in Berlin. Wer ist Diplm. Achenbach? Zu Canaris + G
Meine Sachen mit nach Baron!.
Achte auf Schlachtberg.
SS. H. Müller
K. Dönitz
Keitel
v. Creim mit Reitsch
v. Below (Dietrich Sepp Chance für uns)
??? Dein Wusnch.
Es lebe Deutschland!!!

On the left is the original letter sent to the author by Andreas Epp. On the right is a typed version done by Kadmon. Notes in English are directed to the author. The letter starts without any formal or Informal greeting, stating only "Still alive". Flying disc research "sehr gut" with vertical take-off at speeds of 860-880 per hour (525-550 milesper hour).



Unfortunately late, but not too late!
After 21 years, I have once more found the flying disc inventor, Epp.

As an engineer-pilot who in wartime-built flying discs V-I, VII and VII, I would like to document before the whole world that Mr. Joseph Andreas Epp was the originator of the idea and designs of the flying discs! The designer Epp developed this idea to prototype for 25 years inspire of hinderance and difficulties. To me, as chief pilot, who flight tested the first flying discs of Epp's idea, and have flown for over 500 kilometers, it is incomprehensible that the realization of Epps flying disc designs have been ignored. Well known scientists and technicians have confirmed to me in writing the correctness of designer Epps flying discs designs.

Among these, Dr. W.R. Dornberger, Schriever as co-designer, certified engineer Langendorf, Sinecnia, France, certified engineer Flanian Bertin, France, engineer Alex Consinet, Paris, certified Rolf Engel, Rome, Italy and so forth.

From now on I will take Epps cause and make it my own and wish that all those who are interested be permitted a realization.

Munich, July 10, 1965

Flight Chief Headquarters Engineer, Retired

Otto Lange

Translator's note: the "V" designation in VI, VII, VII do not mean "Vergeltung" or vengeance but more likely "Versuchs", test, or "Varante", variant. Epp states that 15 designs were known to him to have been built.

Original and author's translation of letter signed by Lange acknowledging Epp's role in flying disc history

and advisors for both the Schriever-Habermohl project and the next project to be discussed, the Miethe-Belluzzo project, were exactly the same individuals (43).

The Schriever-Habermohl Project(s)

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27. This written statement, translated from Bavarian dialect to High German was provided courtesy of publisher Thomas Mehner

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The Miethe-Belluzzo Project

This saucer project may have been an outgrowth of flying wing research. It was begun in 1942, and was under the on-site nuthority of Dr. Richard Miethe, sometimes called Dr. Heinrich Richard Miethe. Not much is known about Dr. Miethe before the war. After the war Dr. Miethe is rumored to have worked on the Anglo-American saucer project at the firm of Avro Aircraft Limited of Canada. Such is stated Klein (1)/ Epp (2), Barton (3), Lusar (4), as well as a myriad of other sources. We will return to the Avro projects later.

Working with Dr. Miethe was an Italian engineer, Professor Guiseppe Belluzzo. Belluzzo was the Deputy, Senator and Minister of National Economy under Mussolini. He had written several books on technical matters including Steam Turbines in 1926 and calculations and Installations of Modern Turbine Hydrolics in 1922 (names are English translations of Italian titles). Belluzzo was considered to be an expert in steam turbines. Dr. Belluzzo was not a junior scientist and he was not Dr. Miethe's assistant. He was a senior scientist whose expertise was somehow invaluable on the saucer devices or planned further developments of them.

After the war Belluzzo seems to have led a quiet life in Italy until his death on 5/22/52. Unlike Miethe, however, Belluzzo went on record about German flying discs after the war. He is quoted on the subject in The Mirror, a major Los Angeles newspaper in 1950. This may be the first mention of the subject in the American press. In his obituary in the New York Times his work on the German saucer program is mentioned. (Please refer to copies of these articles).

This team worked in facilities in, Dresden, Breslau and Letow/Prag according to Epp (5). Both this project and the Schriever and Habermohl projects were directed by the same experts and advisors (6). From Epp's discussion, it is clear that Dr. Walter Dornberger first evaluated and recommended his saucer model for further development (7). Miethe is described by Epp in translation as a "known V-weapons designer"(8). The association of both projects to Peenemuende is clear. Both were sanctioned and set up by officials there, probably by Dr. Walter Dornberger himself. Miethe and Belluzzo worked primarily in Dresden and Breslau but for a brief time they may have actually joined forces with Schriever and Habermohl in Prag, as evidenced by Klein's statement that three saucer models were destroyed on the Prag tarmac (9). One saucer, which Klein he describes as Miethe's was among these. Klein acknowledges that Peenemuende, and its nearby test facility at Stettin, retained and developed the Miethe design as an unmanned vehicle (10)(11).

Epp tells us that the Miethe-Belluzzo project was organized under exactly the same authority as the Schriever-Habermohl project and



Flying Discs 'Old Story,' Says Italian

ROME, March 24 (AP)—An Italian scientist said today that types of flying discs were designed and studied in Germany and Italy as early as 1942.

Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini, he added, were interested in the instruments, and the idea was developed concurrently both in Italy and Germany.

Flying discs or saucers have been reported sighted recently in many parts of the world. There has been no scientific confirmation of the existence of such things, nor any universally accepted explanation of what their purpose might be.

The Italian scientist, Giuseppe Belluzzo, noted Italian authority on projectiles and cannons and builder in 1905 of the first steam turbine in Italy, made his declarations in Rome's independent Giornale d'Italia.

Frequent Reports

"There is nothing supernatural or Martian about flying discs," he said, "but they are simply rational application of recent technique."

Prof. Belluzzo expressed the opinion "some great power is launching discs to study them."

Reports of flying discs in Italian skies have been frequent. The latest report came last night from Northern Turin, where several persons said they saw a saucer speeding across the moonlit sky leaving a fiery trail.

GIUSEPPE BELLUZZO, SCIENTIST, ECONOMIST

ROME, May 22 (AP)—Giuseppe Belluzzo, Italian scientist and former Cabinet Minister, died here today at the age of 76.

An authority on projectiles and cannons, he reportedly drew up plans for a flying disc which were shown to Adolf Hitler.

Professor Belluzzo, a former Deputy, Senator and Minister of National Economy under Mussolini, said in a newspaper article in March, 1950, "there is nothing supernatural or Martian about flying discs. They are simply rational application of recent technique." He expressed a belief then that "some great power now is launching discs to study them."

In 1905, he built the first steam turbine in Italy.

As Minister of National Economy, Professor Belluzzo told the Italian Chamber in 1927 that Italian industrialists should adopt American industrial organization as their aim. He admitted, however, that Italy could not hope to reach the "rhythm of production and wages existing in America."

He said that Italian manufacturers should reduce the cost of production through technical improvement rather than lowered wages.

In the same year, he noted the tendency of farm youth to migrate toward urban areas and characterized this before the Senate as "pernicious, pathological, anti-social and uneconomic." Senator Belluzzo urged that youths be judged fit or unfit for city life, and that life on farms be made more attractive by grants for agriculture and free education.

On the left, a column from The Mirror, dated March 24, 1950. This is one of the earliest English references to German flying discs. On the right is Dr. Belluzzo's obituary, dated May 22, 1952 from the New York Times which again mentions German flying discs.

he further identifies the very same industrial firms which supported Schriever-Habermohl as supporting this project (12). In reality, both should be viewed as one project with different aspects.

The designs envisioned by Dr. Miethe and Professor Belluzzo were quite different from those of Schriever and Habermohl. Designs of this project consisted of a discus-shaped craft whose outer periphery did not rotate. Two designs have positively been nttributed to Miethe and Belluzzo although three designs exist as part of their legacy.

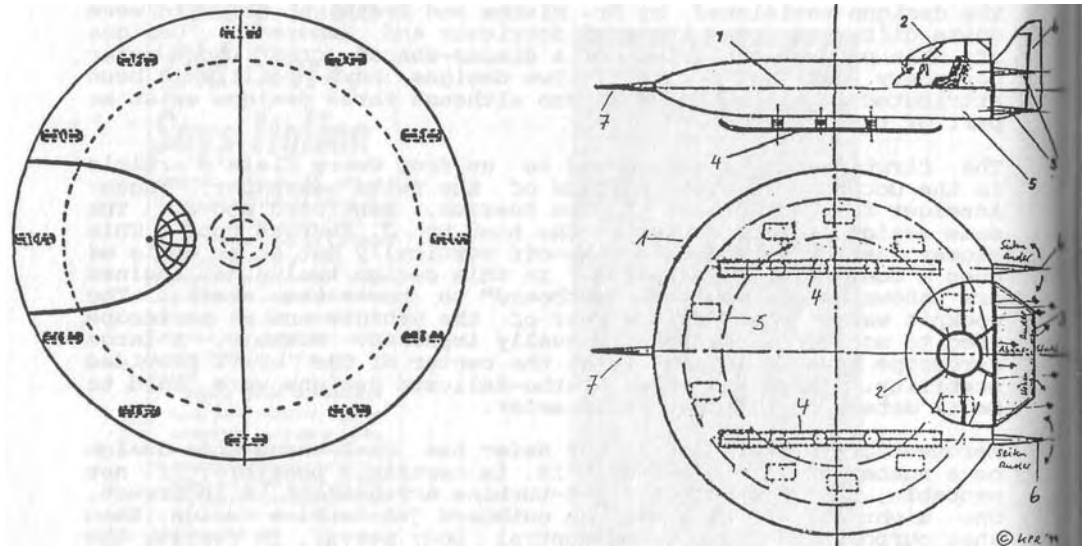
The first design is made known to us from Georg Klein's article in the October 16, 1954 edition of the Swiss newspaper, Tages-Anzeiger fuer Stadt und Kanton Zuerich, mentioned above. The same design is reproduced in the book by J. Andreas Epp. This saucer was not intended to take-off vertically but at an angle as does a conventional airplane. In this design twelve jet engines are shown to be mounted "outboard" to power the craft. The cockpit was mounted at the rear of the vehicle and a periscope used to monitor directions visually impaired. Notably, a large gyroscope mounted internally at the center of the craft provided stability. This and other Miethe-Belluzzo designs were said to be 42 meters or 138 feet in diameter.

Aeronautical writer Hans Justus Meier has challenged this design on a number of grounds (13). It is certainly possible, if not probable, that the outboard jet-turbine arrangement is incorrect, one might ask, if this was an outboard jet-turbine design, then what purpose did the bloated central body serve? In reality the twelve jets may simply have been jet nozzles of one engine. Certainly the large central body had a function, it must have housed the engine.

But how could the authenticity of this design come under question when Georg Klein is vouching for it in his article? The answer may be that Klein never saw this design himself and he simply is relying on the descriptions of those that did. If one reads the works of Klein carefully, he never claims to have seen this model in flight. As a matter of fact, he never claims to have actually seen this design at all. We will return to the flaws with Klein's description momentarily.

The second Miethe design seems to have originated with a 1975 German magazine article (14). This version shows a cockpit above nnd below the center of the craft. Four jet engines lying behind the cockpits are shown as the powerplants. No real detail is supplied in this article. This design is not ever discussed in the text which deals primarily with the Schriever-Habermohl Project. Some writers have speculated on this particular design, supplying detail (15). For now, however, no named source seems to be able to link this design with the Miethe-Belluzzo Project. Therefore, at least for the time being, we must put this design in suspense and focus on the first and next design in discussing

The Miethe-Belluzzo Disc--Design One



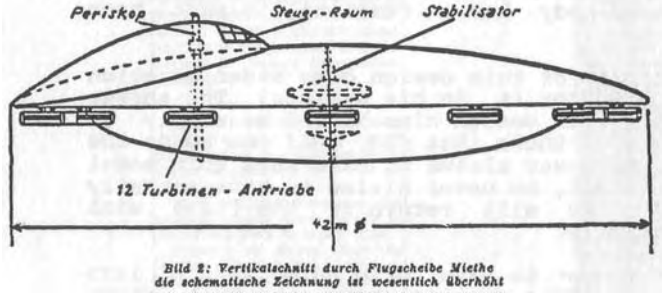
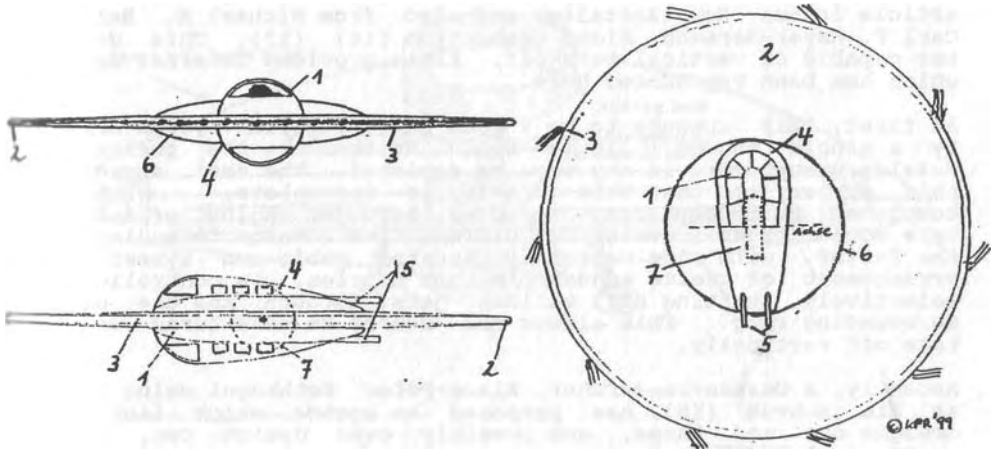
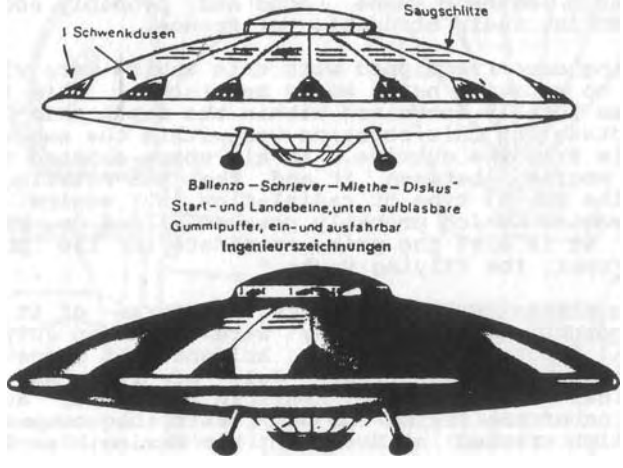


Bild 2: Vertikalschnitt durch Flugscheibe Miethe
die schematische Zeichnung ist wesentlich überhöht

On the left is a reconstruction by Georg Klein, 10/16/54, from the Swiss newswaper Tages-Anzeiger. Note the small "Stabisator" and the outboard jet engines. On the right is Klaus-Peter Rothkugel's more probable reconstruction incorporating fins, skids, and the inner-lying Rene Leduc engine.





On the top is Miethe-Belluzzo design two. Note rotating disc (2) and stabilizing wheel (7) acting as a gyroscope. (Courtesy of Klaus-Peter Rothkugel) It is the author's opinion that this design was never built. On the bottom is Miethe-Belluzzo design three, capable of vertical take-off.

the aforementioned saucer project.

The third design attributed to the Miethe-Belluzzo Project comes to us from and article by Jan Holberg in an August 20, 1966 article in Das Neue Zeitalter and also from Michael X. Barton-Carl F. Mayer-Hermann Klaas connection (16) (17). This design was capable of vertical take-off. Klaas provides internal detail which has been reproduced here.

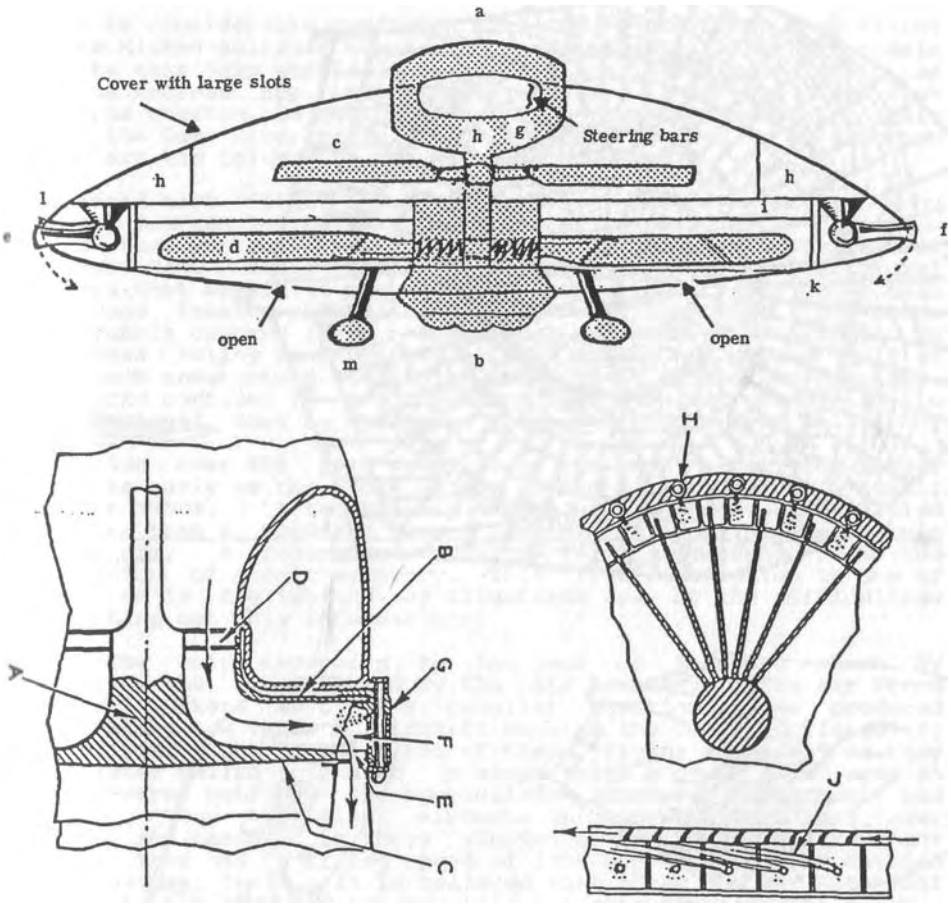
At first, this appears to be a push-pull propeller system driven by a single engine. It is not. Neither are the twelve jet nozzles unsupported in any way as depicted. The real answer to this mystery is that this drawing is incomplete. With the completed parts depicted, a radial turbojet engine of special type would appear. Design one differs from design three in that the latter, with its centrally located cabin and symmetrical arrangement of twelve adjustable jet nozzles, is controlled by selectively shutting off various jets through the use of a surrounding ring. This allows the saucer to make turns and to take off vertically.

Recently, a German researcher, Klaus-Peter Kothkugel using Vesco as his source (18), has proposed an engine which links the designs one and three, and possibly even design two, while supplying the missing pieces needed to make the engine depicted air-worthy and resolves other problems. This engine was invented by a French engineer, Rene Leduc and probably acquired by the Germans during their occupation of France.

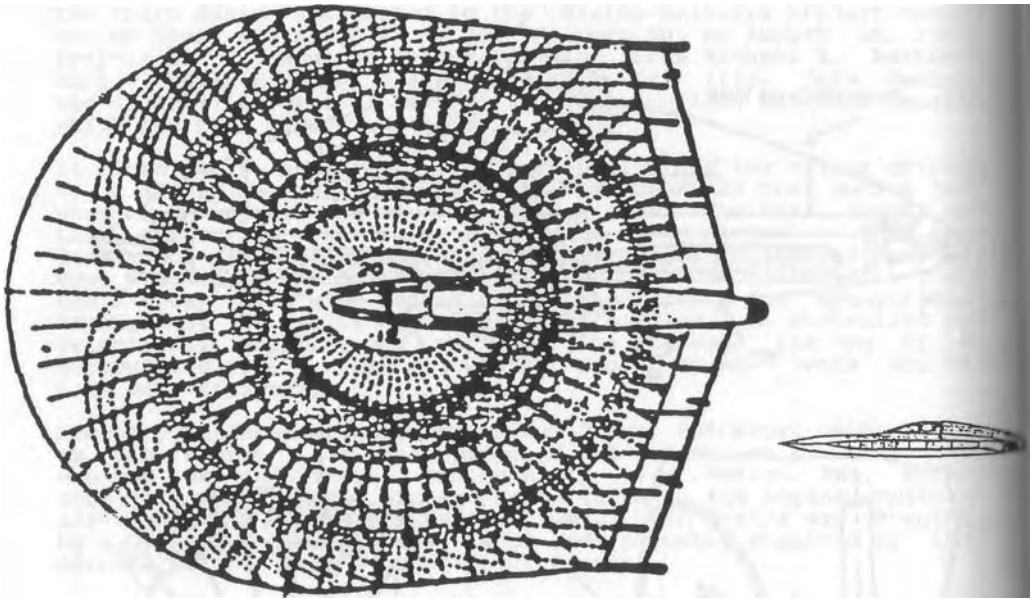
If a flying saucer equipped with this engine were viewed from the outside, no rotating parts would be visible. This is because the engine was totally contained within the metal skin of the saucer. It did rotate but this rotation was within the saucer itself and not viable from the outside. An air space existed all around the spinning engine, between it and the non-rotating outer skin. This engine was a type of radial-flow jet engine. It was this type of engine which probably powered all of Dr. Miethe's saucer designs. It is also the prime candidate for the post-war design of John Frost, the "Flying Manta."

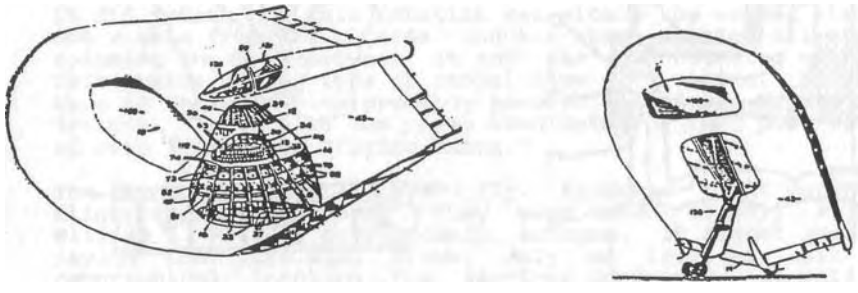
The Flying Manta actually did fly. Pictures of it during a test flight are unmistakable. They were taken on July 7, 1947 by William A. Rhodes over Phoenix, Arizona. It almost goes without saying that the time frame, July of 1947, as well as the geographical location, the American Southwest, as well as the description of the flying object itself, beg comparisons to the saucer which crashed at Rosewell, New Mexico, earlier that same month.

If one looks at what is known of Dr. Miethe's saucer design, the Leduc engine, and the Frost Manta, it must be acknowledged that a connection between these three not only explains apparent inconsistencies in the existing Miethe designs but also links them to the post-war American Southwest, the precise spot where



Top: Hermann Klaas' diagram of the workings of the Miethe-Belluzzo Disc. Note: intake screw (c) Carrying wing blade (d)affixed to a piston engine, jets nozzles (e) with no apparent engines. Close but not exactly right. Bottom: Leduc design. A-Rotor B-Front Bulk-head C-Rear Bulk-head D-Intake Vane E-Compressor Vane F-Combustion Chamber G-Bulk-head H-Fuel Injection Jets J-Fixed Flame Ring From I Velivoli Del Mistero I seareti technici dei dischi volanti by Renato Vesco





This is the mounting of the Leduc engine as illustrated by the later Avro diagram (Canada-USA). The outer hull is fixed. The inner rotating engine draws in the air from between it and the hull and exhausts through rear or sides as needed for steering. Compare this design to Miethe-Belluzzo designs, especially to the first design.

captured German World War Two technology was being tested and evaluated.

There is considerable confusion as to where the first test flight of the Miethe-Belluzzo saucer occurred. Epp tells us that models made by this team were flight tested since 1943. Georg Klein, as well as Andreas Epp, state that a test model of this craft took off from Stettin, in northern Germany, near Peenemuende, roughly where the Oder River meets the Baltic, and crashed in Spitsbergen which are the islands to the north of Norway.

A manned test flight in December, 1944 has been mentioned by Norbert Juergen-Ratthofer and Ralf Ettl in one of the films on which they worked. The pilot named was Joachim Roehlicke or perhaps Hans-Joachim Roehlicke (19). Klaus-Peter Rothkugel reports that Roehlicke was under the direction of none other than Dr. Hans Kammler himself and was stationed at the Gotha Wagonfabrik company (20). The Gotha Wagonfabrik company is in the Jonas Valley in Thuringia. This valley was packed full of high-tech underground facilities which included nuclear research. Roehlicke confided to his daughter after the war, according to Mr. Rothkugel, that he "had seen the earth from above" (21).

Confusion over the test details of the Miethe-Belluzzo saucer start as early as the whole German flying disc controversy itself in the 1950s. In the English translation of his book, titled Brighter than a Thousand Suns A Personal History Of The Atomic Scientists. a footnote appeared which deviated from the discussion of atomic weaponry. This 1958 description is one of the first in English and may illustrate some of the difficulties in sorting out this information:

" *The only exception to the lack of interest shown by authority was constituted by the Air Ministry. The Air Force research workers were in a peculiar position. The produced interesting new types of aircraft such as the Delta (triangular) and "flying discs." The first of these "flying saucers," as they were later called—circular in shape, with a diameter of some 45 yards—were built by the specialists Schriever, Habermohl and Miethe. They were first airborne on February 14, 1945, over Prague and reached in three minutes a height of nearly eight miles. They had a flying speed of 1250 m.p.h. which was doubled in subsequent tests. It is believed that after the war Habermohl fell into the hands of the Russians. Miethe developed at a later date similar "flying saucers" at A. V. Roe and Company for the United States." (22).

One big difference between the Miethe-Belluzzo design and the Schriever-Habermohl designs is that the former craft was alleged to have, or be designed to have, a longer flight range. This point is reinforced by the Spitzbergen flight mentioned above. Klein states that the Germans considered long range, remote controlled attack from Germany to New York using this craft.

Miethe-Belluzzo Saucer In Flight





Top picture is of a September 6, 1952 article in the Italian newspaper "Tempo". This article deals with the work of Dr. Miethe and features a photograph of his saucer allegedly dated April 17, 1944, taken over the Baltic. Bottom is an enlargement of the photograph. It seems to be a Miethe-Belluzzo type 1 but could also be a type 3. Courtesy of Klaus-Peter Rothkugel.

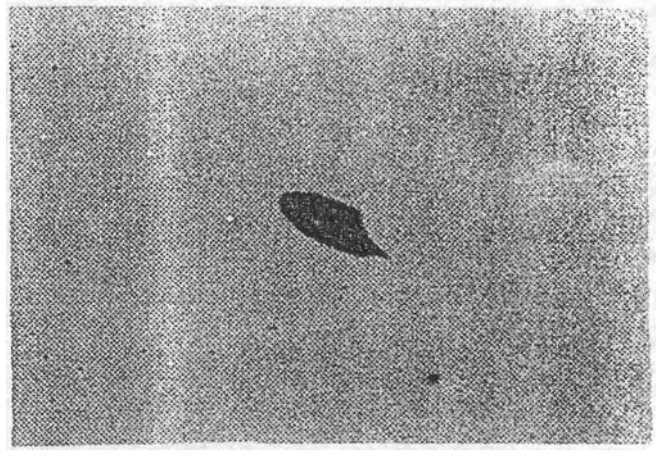
As stated earlier, both projects were under the same authority. Experts and advisors included, according to Epp, among others, head-designer Kalkert of the Gotha Waggonfabrik, head-designer Guenther of Heinkel, engineer Wulf of Arado, engineer Otto Lange of the RLM, and engineer Alexander Lippish of Messerschmitt. Pilots were Holm, Irmler, Kaiser and Lange. The test pilot was Rudolf Schriever.

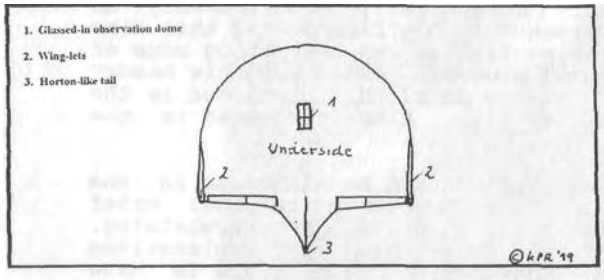
There does exist two alleged still pictures of the Miethe craft in flight. One is reproduced here. It may be the first design. A picture claiming to be of what is called here the third design can be found in W. Mattern's book, UFO's Unbekanntes Flugobiekt? Letzte Geheimwaffe Des Dritten Reiches? (23). Efforts have been made to acquire the picture for this book but the inquiry went unanswered by the book's publisher.

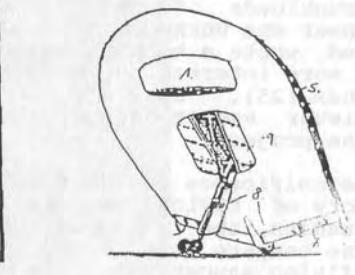
Politically, in 1944, Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, replaced Albert Speer's appointee, Georg Klein, with Dr. Hans Kammler as overseer of this combined saucer project (24). This is a little confusing, however, since Kammler retained Klein as his employee, Perhaps a more practical way to look at this is that Kammler, Himmler's employee, replaced Speer while Klein did what he always did. The result was that the SS took direct and absolute control over these projects from this point until the end of the war.

Prior to this happening, news of these designs or application itself was made to the German Patent Office. All German wartime patents were carried off as booty by the Allies. This amounted to truckloads of information. Fortunately, Rudolf Lusar, an engineer who worked in the German Patent Office during this time period, wrote a book in the 1950s listing and describing some of the more interesting patents and processes based upon his memory of them (25). They are surprisingly detailed. Included is the Schriever saucer design with detail. Also discussed is the Miethe project.

The significance of these two teams can not be minimized in the history of flying saucers or UFOs. Already in this brief discussion, the evidence, taken as a whole, is overwhelming. Please compare this to any and all extraterrestrial explanations of flying saucers. Here we have Germans who claim to have invented the idea of the flying saucer. We have Germans who claim to have designed flying saucers. We have Germans who claim to have built flying saucers. We have Germans who claim to have flown flying saucers. We have Germans who claim to be witnesses to flying saucers known beforehand to be of German construction. We have German construction details. And finally, we have a man who took pictures of a known German flying saucer in flight. The facts speak for themselves. During the Second World War the Germans built devices we would all call today "flying saucers". No other UFO explanation can even approach this in terms of level of proof.







Top: a picture from the July 9, 1947 edition of the Arizona Republic taken by William A. Rhodes as it flew over his home in Phoenix. Lower Left: a drawing of the craft by Klaus-Peter Rothkugel. Lower Right: one view of the Avro Frost-Manta design, predating the Silver Bug Project. Was this a captured Miethe-Belluzzo-Leduc saucer?

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Foo Fighters

"Foo fighter" is a name given to a small, round flying object which followed Allied bombers over Germany during the latter phases of the air war. There are also some reports of foo fighters in the Pacific theater of the war. Sometimes they would appear singularly but more often in groups, sometimes flying in formation. By day they appeared to be small metallic globes. By night they glowed with various colors. These object attempted to approach Allied bombers closely which scared the bomber crews who assumed they were hostile and might explode. Upon taking evasive maneuvers they found the foo fighters would keep pace with them in some instances. Besides the name foo fighter this device is sometimes called "Feuerball", its German name or its English translation, fireball. More about names later.

For those readers who have not been exposed to foo fighters before, following is an American flight account found in Intercept UFO by Renato Vesco:

"At 0600 (on December 22) near Hagenau, at 10,000 feet altitude, two very bright lights climbed toward us from the ground. The leveled off and stayed on the tail of our plane. They were huge bright orange lights. They stayed there for two minutes. On my tail all the time. They were under perfect control (by operators of the ground). They turned away from us, and the fire seemed to go out".

Vesco goes on to say:

"The rest of the report was censored. Apparently it went on to mention the plan's radar and its sudden malfunctioning" (1).

Flying saucer books of the 1950s usually mentioned foo fighters and recounted the sightings of Allied servicemen. Later, due to the extraterrestrial hysteria, publications tended to omit descriptions of foo fighters, preferring to begin the tale of flying saucers with Kenneth Arnold in 1947.

In modern times, if they are mentioned at all by mainstream UFO magazines or books, an attempt is sometimes made to confuse the issue of the origin of foo fighters in one of three ways. First, they say or imply that both sides in World War Two thought foo fighters were a weapon belonging to the opposite side. They may cite as a source some German pilot obviously "out of the loop" who claims the Germans did not know their origin. Second, they attempt to advance the idea that foo fighters are still unknown and a mystery or possibly a naturally occurring phenomenon. Third, they advance an extraterrestrial origin.

It is difficult to imagine a vast bad faith plot, extending over years, which attempts to discredit or confuse the issue of foo fighters. Perhaps the authors of these UFO magazines and books

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, Dec. 13 (Reuter)—The Germans have produced a "secret" weapon in keeping with the Christmas season.

The new device, apparently an air defense weapon, resembles the huge glass balls that adorn Christmas trees.

There was no information available as to what holds them up like stars in the sky, what is in them, or what their purpose is supposed to be.

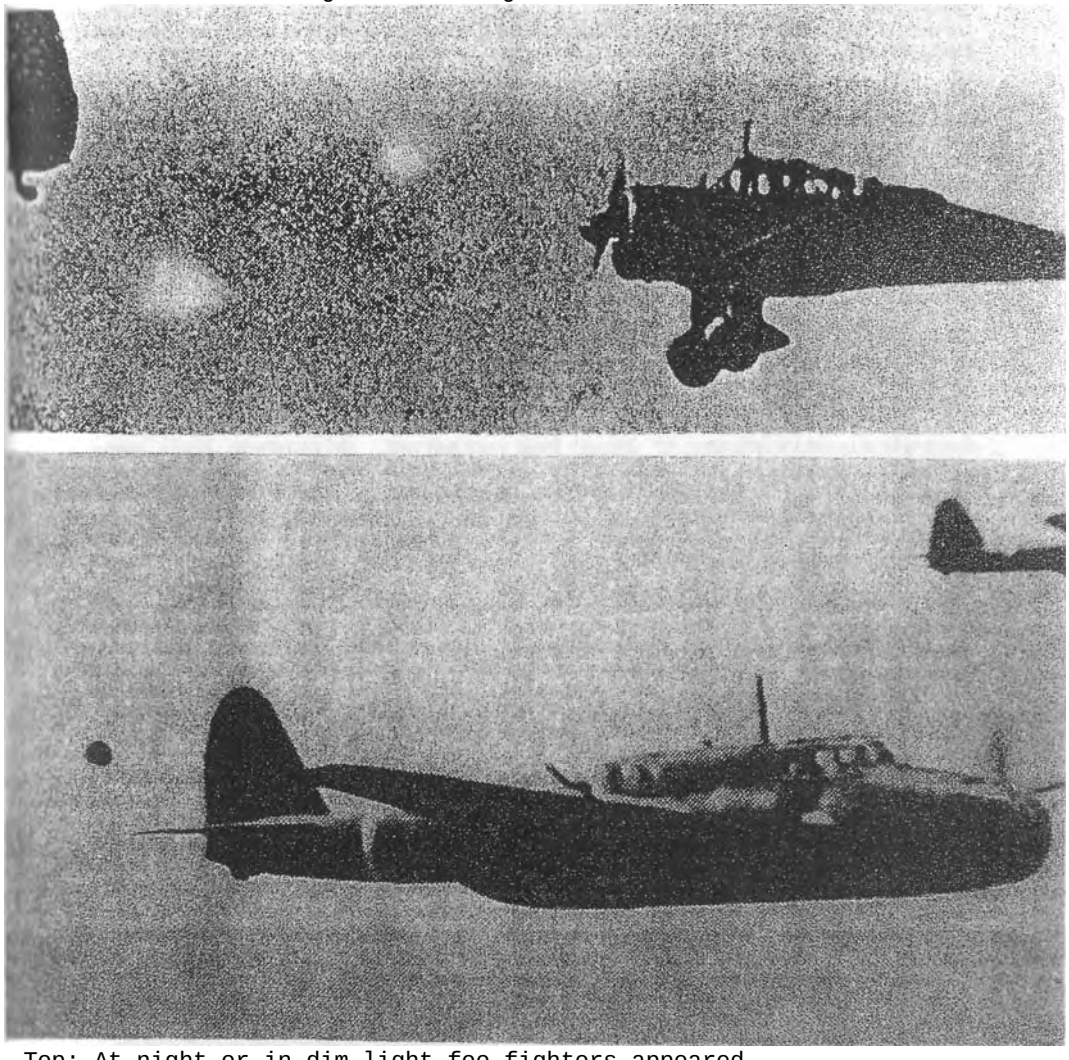
Floating Mystery Ball Is New Nazi Air Weapon

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, Allied Expeditionary Force, Dec. 13—A new German weapon has made its appearance on the western air front, it was disclosed today.

Airmen of the American Air Force report that they are encountering silver colored spheres in the air over German territory. The spheres are encountered either singly or in clusters. Sometimes they are semi-translucent.

Top: A Reuters report from December 13, 1944
Bottom: The New York Times, December 14, 1944

Foo Fighters In Flight



Top: At night or in dim light foo fighters appeared luminescent. Bottom: In strong light foo fighters appeared as silvery balls. This picture was taken over the Pacific in 1943. There are many stories speaking of small, round flying balls sent to Japan by the Germans via submarine.

are truly without a clue and simply perpetuating old and bad information as a convenient explanation. In any event, it is now clear they utterly failed to do their homework on foo fighters before writing about them.

The U.S. military, too, has always denied knowledge of foo fighters. Numerous Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) requests have been filed, for instance, by this writer as well as other researchers asking for information on foo fighters. A "no record" response always followed. All U.S. governmental agencies queried claimed that they had never heard of foo fighters. This happened in spite of the fact that all known alternate names for foo fighters were submitted as well as a detailed description of the device itself. This was the situation until the late 1990s.

Vesco is by far the best source concerning the foo fighter which he calls "Feuerball". He describes it as a radio controlled missile, built at an aeronautical establishment at Wiener Neustadt (Austria) with assistance of the Flugfunk Forschungsanstalt (Radio-Flight Research Installation) of Oberpfaffenhoffen. The project was under the control of an SS technical division. It was armored, circular in shape, resembling the shell of a tortoise. The device was powered by special flat, circular a turbojet engine. After being guided to the proximity of the target from the ground, an automatic infra-red tracking device took over control. The circular spinning turbojet exhaust created a visual effect of a bright, fiery ball in the nighttime sky. Within the craft itself a klystron tube pulsated at the frequency of Allied radar making it almost invisible to those remote eyes. A thin sheet of aluminum encircled the device immediately under the layer of protective armor but was electrically insulated from the armor. Once a bullet pierced the armor and the thin aluminum sheet, a circuit was formed which had the effect of triggering the Feuerball to climb out of danger at full speed (2).

Once within range, special chemical additives were added to the fuel mixture which caused the air in the vicinity of the device to become ionized. This meant that electricity could be conducted directly through the air itself (3). Any ignition-based engine coming into range of the ionized region would become useless, misfiring, stalling and eventually crashing.

Vesco goes on to say that with the advance of the Soviets into Austria the production facilities for the Feuerball were moved to a number of underground plants in the Black Forest run by the Zeppelin Works (4).

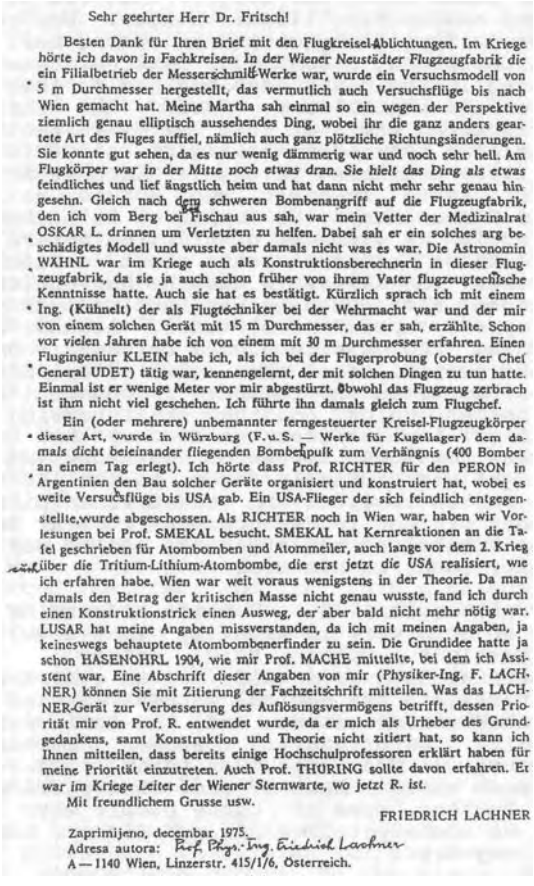
Recently an Austrian researcher, Kadmon, who specializes in uncovering the esoteric, sent to me a copy of a letter describing details of the foo fighter from the German perspective. This letter is reproduced here for those who read German language. It is a letter from physicist Friedrich Lachner to Professor, Dr. Alois Fritsch. The letter tells Dr. Fritsch that in an aircraft

plant which was a branch of Messerschmitt at Weiner-Neustadt, Austria, a test model of a flying craft was built with a diameter of five meters which presumably made a test flight to Vienna. "His Martha", his wife, saw the outline of an exactly elliptical flying object in the twilight which appeared to her to be operating by some other means of flight that was normally the case because of its sudden directional changes. Her reaction was
that it was an enemy flying object and it scared her. After the bomber attack on the plant, a doctor, "Oskar L." saw a model of this frightful thing in the plant also and had no idea of what it was. The astronomer Waehnl was, during the war, employed calculating construction costs at this aircraft facility where she had earlier in life learned something of aircraft technology from her father. She confirmed it also. Lachner briefly spoke with an engineer named Kuehnelt who worked as in flight technology for the German Army. He explained to Lachner that he saw such a device with a diameter of fifteen meters. Lachner says that he had known for some years about a machine with a thirty meter diameter. He also says that he had gotten to know a flight engineer named Klein when he was active near the flight testing of the supreme chief General Udet. Lachner claims that "Klein had something to do with these things". One or more unmanned and remote controlled of this sort of spinning-top-like flying objects are mentioned by Lachner in connection with the massive Allied bomber raids on the ball-bearing plant at Wuerzburg. Finally, Lachner goes on to say that a Professor Richter built these devices for Peron in Argentina. A long distance test-flight was actually flown to the United States. There the device was intercepted and an American pilot was shot down. The remainder of the letter concerns nuclear developments in Austria and the USA before and after the Second World War and misunderstandings by Lusar in his book.

This letter was written in 1975. Details concerning Klein and the larger flying objects were in print by that time. There are important confirmations within this letter. These are revelations concerning Lachner's wife as an eyewitness to the object in twilight flight, the medical witness who saw the object within the plant at Wiener-Neustadt, and the confirmation of the astronomer, Waehnl. Unfortunately, Kadmon advises that Dr. Waehnl is now deceased. The important point is that these are real people with real names. Most of whom were alive at the time of this letter. Further, some of these people were scientists with a reputation at stake yet they did not disavow the substance of this letter in any way.

In the closing months of the last millennium witnessed a breakthrough regarding foo fighters. The break came by accident and from the government of the United States. Remember, Freedom Of Information Act requests regarding foo fighters had been filed with many branches of the U.S. military and intelligence services as well as with their repository, the National Archives. Even though all known alternative names were included, as well as a detailed description of the device in question was provided, a

Austrian Atomic Scientist Professor Friedrich Lachner's Letter



Sehr geehrter Herr Dr. Fritsch!

Besten Dank für Ihren Brief mit den Flugkreisel-Ablichtungen. Im Kriege hörte ich davon in Fachkreisen. In der Wiener Neustädter Flugzeugfabrik die ein Filialbetrieb der Messerschmitt-Werke war, wurde ein Versuchsmodell von 5 m Durchmesser hergestellt, das vermutlich auch Versuchsflüge bis nach Wien gemacht hat. Meine Martha sah einmal so ein wegen der Perspektive ziemlich genau elliptisch aussehendes Ding, wobei ihr die ganz anders geartete Art des Fluges auffiel, nämlich auch ganz plötzliche Richtungsänderungen. Sie konnte gut sehen, da es nur wenig dämmerig war und noch sehr hell. Am Flugkörper war in der Mitte noch etwas dran. Sie hielt das Ding als etwas feindliches und lief ängstlich heim und hat dann nicht mehr sehr genau hingesehn. Gleich nach dem schweren Bombenangriff auf die Flugzeugfabrik, den ich vom Berg bei Tischau aus sah, war mein Vetter der Medizinalrat OSKAR L. drinnen um Verletzten zu helfen. Dabei sah er ein solches arg beschädigtes Modell und wusste aber damals nicht was es war. Die Astronomin WÄHNL war im Kriege auch als Konstruktionsberechnerin in dieser Flugzeugfabrik, da sie ja auch schon früher von ihrem Vater flugzeugtechnische Kenntnisse hatte. Auch sie hat es bestätigt. Kürzlich sprach ich mit einem Ing. (Kühnelt) der als Flugtechniker bei der Wehrmacht war und der mir von einem solchen Gerät mit 15 m Durchmesser, das er sah, erzählte. Schon vor vielen Jahren habe ich von einem mit 30 m Durchmesser erfahren. Einen Flugingenieur KLEIN habe ich, als ich bei der Flugerprobung (oberster Chef General UDET) tätig war, kennengelernt, der mit solchen Dingen zu tun hatte. Einmal ist er wenige Meter vor mir abgestürzt. Obwohl das Flugzeug zerbrach ist ihm nicht viel geschehen. Ich führte ihn damals gleich zum Flugchef.

Ein (oder mehrere) unbemannter ferngesteuerter Kreisel-Flugzeugkörper dieser Art, wurde in Würzburg (F.u.S. — Werke für Kugellager) dem damals dicht beieinander fliegenden Bomberpulk zum Verhängnis (400 Bomber an einem Tag erlegt). Ich hörte dass Prof. RICHTER für den PERON in Argentinien den Bau solcher Geräte organisiert und konstruiert hat, wobei es weite Versuchsflüge bis USA gab. Ein USA-Flieger der sich feindlich entgegenstellte, wurde abgeschossen. Als RICHTER noch in Wien war, haben wir Vorlesungen bei Prof. SMEKAL besucht. SMEKAL hat Kernreaktionen an die Tafel geschrieben für Atombomben und Atommeiler, auch lange vor dem 2. Krieg über die Tritium-Lithium-Atombombe, die erst jetzt die USA realisiert, wie ich erfahren habe. Wien war weit voraus wenigstens in der Theorie. Da man damals den Betrag der kritischen Masse nicht genau wusste, fand ich durch einen Konstruktionstrick einen Ausweg, der aber bald nicht mehr nötig war. LUSAR hat meine Angaben missverstanden, da ich mit meinen Angaben, ja keineswegs behauptete Atombombenerfinder zu sein. Die Grundidee hatte ja schon HASENOHRL 1904, wie mir Prof. MACHE mitteilte, bei dem ich Assistent war. Eine Abschrift dieser Angaben von mir (Physiker-Ing. F. LACHNER) können Sie mit Zitierung der Fachzeitschrift mitteilen. Was das LACHNER-Gerät zur Verbesserung des Auflösungsvermögens betrifft, dessen Priorität mir von Prof. R. entwendet wurde, da er mich als Urheber des Grundgedankens, samt Konstruktion und Theorie nicht zitiert hat, so kann ich Ihnen mitteilen, dass bereits einige Hochschulprofessoren erklärt haben für meine Priorität einzutreten. Auch Prof. THURING sollte davon erfahren. Er war im Kriege Leiter der Wiener Sternwarte, wo jetzt R. ist.

Mit freundlichem Grusse usw.

FRIEDRICH LACHNER

Zaprimijeno, decembar 1975.
Adresa autora: Prof. Phys.-Ing. Friedrich Lachner
A — 1140 Wien, Linzerstr. 415/1/6, Österreich.

Professor Lachner describes a sighting of a foo fighter by none other than his wife, Martha. Lachner mentions that he heard that Professor Richter built these devices for Juan Peron in Argentina. This, incidently, is the same Professor Richter involved in an ill-fated attempt to produce fusion generators for Peron.

"no record" response was uniformly generated by all facets of government.

A German researcher, Friedrich Georg, recognized a valuable entry in a microfilm roll, titled a 1944 U.S. Strategic Air Forces In Europe summary titled An Evaluation Of German Capabilities In 1945, which, somehow, had eluded the censors (5). In that summary report German devices called by American Intelligence "Phoo Bombs" are discussed. Sources for this summary were reports of pilots and testimony of prisoners of war. Phoo bombs were described as "radio-controlled, jet-propelled, still-nosed, short-range, high performance ramming weapons for use against bombing formations". Speed was estimated at 525 miles per hour.

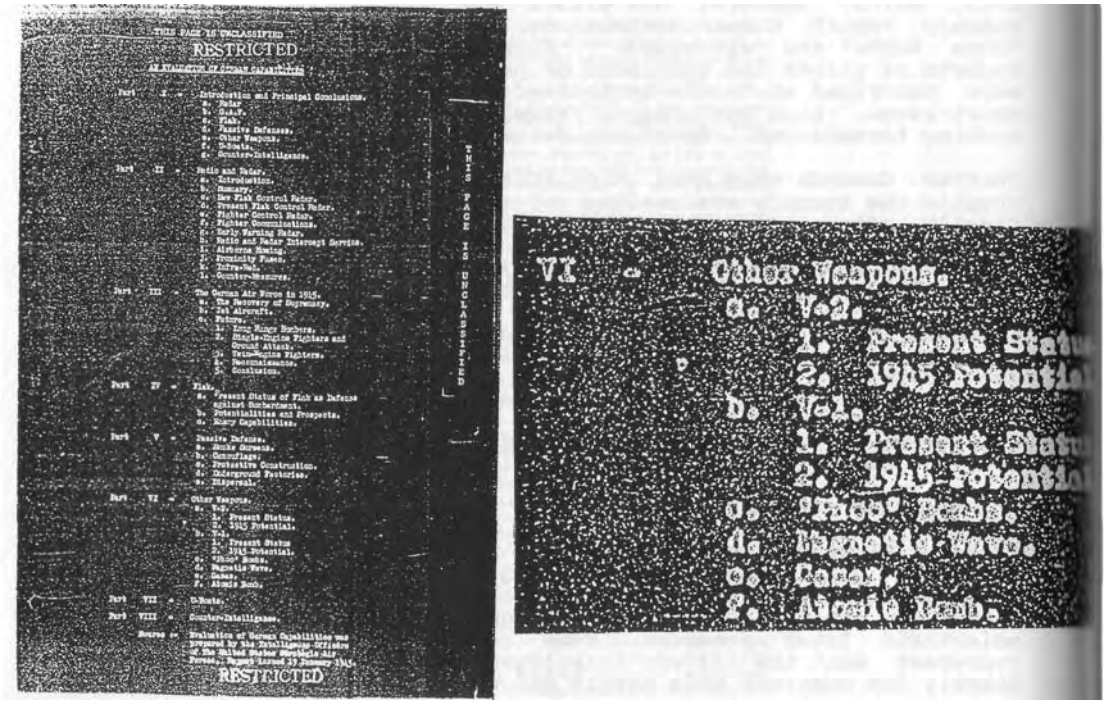
Further demands were made using FOIA as to the raw data used to compile the summary evaluation. Of course, denials followed, but finally, after an Appeal, the government indicated that more information did exist concerning Phoo Bombs. Most of this was a repeat or re-statement of the summary document. One document was hand-written and may have served as the basic text of the report.

It seems the U.S. Air Force was never aware of a threat to aircraft engines coming from over ionization of the air around these devices. Likewise, the claim by Vesco that they possessed klyston tubes which pulsed at the same freguency of Allied radar and so jammed radar on board was not recognized. Vesco cites the aircraft radio research institute at Oberpfaffenhofen (F.F.O.) as having invented such devices (6).

The Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee report on this facility. Report 156, states that work there involved several types of klystron tubes and that one of this facilities principal functions was inventing technology to jam Allied radar, unfortunately all the secret material held at this facility was burned in the face of the advancing Allies. Individual scientists later produces some copies of documents which represent what the Allied intelligence strike teams took away. Exactly how complete this sample was we will never know (7).

Other very exotic research did go on at the F.F.O. installation which might be mentioned. They not only did work on klystron tubes but on magnetrons also. They did work on generation of millimeter range radio wave through the use of crystal vibrations. They also experimented with silicon and germanium "crystals" (8). These two substances figure prominently in the making of what we call today semiconductors which form the basis of the transistor. Invention of the transistor is credited to William Shockley, for which he won the Nobel Prize, about two years after the Second World War.

This bit of research explodes an argument made by the late Col. Philip j. Corso in his book The Day After Roswell that transistors were, at least in part, based upon alien technology (9). The only guestions which remain are: exactly how far the


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Part I - Introduction and Principal Conclusions.
a. Radar
b. G.A.F.
c. Flak.
d. Passive Defenses.
e. Other Weapons.
f. U-Boats.
g. Counter-Intelligence.

Part II - Radio and Radar.
a. Introduction.
b. Summary.
c. New Flak Control Radar.
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Part VI - Other Weapons.
a. V-2.
1. Present Status.
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1. Present Status
2. 1945 Potential.
c. 'Phoo' Bombs.
d. Magnetic Wave.
e. Cobra.
f. Atomic Bomb.

Part VII - U-Boats.

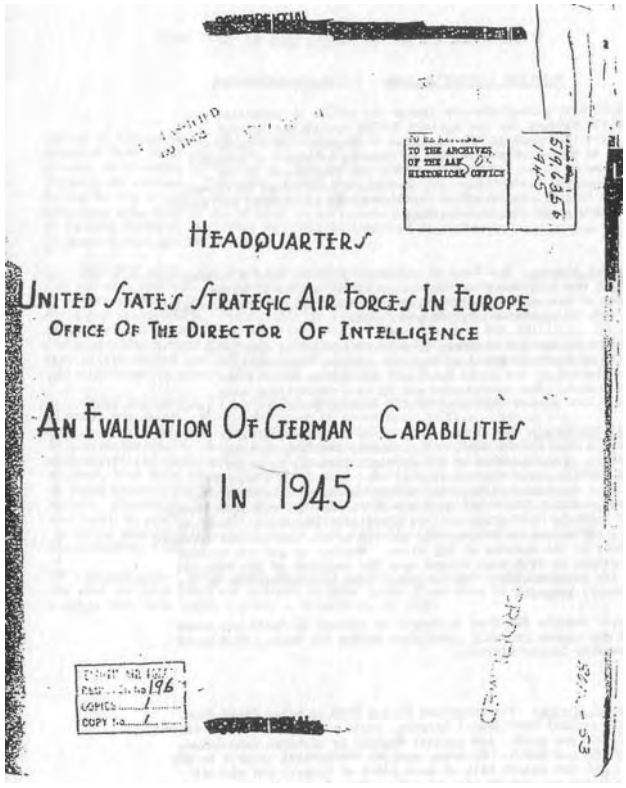
Part VIII - Counter-Intelligence.

Source of Evaluation of German Capabilities was prepared by the Intelligence Officers of the United States Strategic Air Forces. Signed 27 January 1945.

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VI - Other Weapons.
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f. Atomic Bomb.

U.S. government's own documents prove they knew of the German origin of foo fighters. This table of contents of a "Intelligence Digest" document, with a February, 1945 date, addresses German military capacities. It lists "Phoo Bombs" as a weapon in the German arsenal (see VI- Other Weapons) Taken from microfilm negative image.



HEADQUARTERS

UNITED STATES STRATEGIC AIR FORCES IN EUROPE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE

AN EVALUATION OF GERMAN CAPABILITIES IN 1945

This document, fascinating in its own right, serves as a translation. "Foo fighters are "Phoo Bombs" in the government's parlance. No more "no record" name-games from the government.

A UFO Rosetta Stone

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PART SIX - OTHER WEAPONS

1. In the following paragrpahs are listed the actual or potential weapons which the Germans may use against USSTAF operations in 1945. For the most part they include the so-called V weapons. No consideration is given to those for which there is lacking evidence of possible use for some time to come. Both V-1 and V-2 are considered in the analysis because, even though they are, in effect, long-range artillery, they do possess the ability to affect our operations by hitting airfields, and supplies enroute and in concentrations.

2. V-2:

a. Present status. The V-2, or rocket projectile, with a warhead of approximately one ton, and a current range of 225 miles; is being fired at London at the rate of 180/250 per month, and against Continental ports at the rate of approximately 300 per month.

Against London its accuracy is currently rated at 3.2/1,000 per square mile at the main point of impact. Against Continental ports it is estimated at the least 6.1/1,000 per square mile at the main point of impact. The best record was 75 in a twenty-four hour period within a four square mile area of the Antwerp Docks.

b. 1945 Potential: The German plan calls for an increase in monthly production from 600 to 1200. It is known, however, that any increase would be at the expense of the aircraft industry in radio equipment and certain essential components. An increase in accuracy would depend upon increased firings and increased use of already proved radio equipment, without which the majority of firings are conducted today. It is thought unlikely that range will be materially increased. Accuracy begins to fall off somewhere between 165 and 190 miles, and becomes increasingly inaccurate to the maximum of 225 miles. Whether or not V-2 becomes an increased menace in 1945 must depend upon the position of the aircraft industry and its requirements. Its potential lies in stabilization of the expanding aircraft program.

Larger rockets (68 feet in length as against 45 feet) are known to exist, and may appear in small quantities during the year. They would have a considerably larger warhead.

3. V-1:

a. Present Status: The so-called Flying Bomb is being fired from launching ramps against Continental targets, ports and supply concentrations, at the rate of 600 per month, and against England by airborne launchings, at the rate of 250 per month. Accuracy against Continental targets is now between 11.0/1,000 per square mile at main point of impact, and against England at 3.3/1,000 per square mile at main point of impact.

b. 1945 Potential: Here again, the German plan calls for an expansion in production, but, as in the case of V-2, this expansion must be at the expense of other vital industries. Authoritative estimates state that airborne launchings against England may reach 450 per month, and that a very substantial increase of launchings on the Continent will take place. On the other hand, the number of He-111s available for airborne launchings is distinctly limited, and the demands of other industries are such that the expended production may not be carried out as planned.

4. "FOO" BOMBS: Occasionally reports by pilots and the testimony of prisoners of war and escapees describe this weapon as a radio-controlled, jet-propelled, still-nosed, short-range, high performance ramming weapon, for use against bombing formations. Its speed is estimated at 525 mph

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A UFO Rosetta Stone

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and it is estimated to have an endurance of 25 minutes. These bombs are launched from local airfields, and are radio-controlled, either from the ground, or possibly by aircraft. The few incidents reported by pilots indicate no success. They have passed over formations, andperformed various antics in the vicinity of formations. It is believed that in order to be effective some 100/200 would have to be launched against a formation, and it is also believed that they will not be produced in sufficient quantities to prove a real menace in 1945.

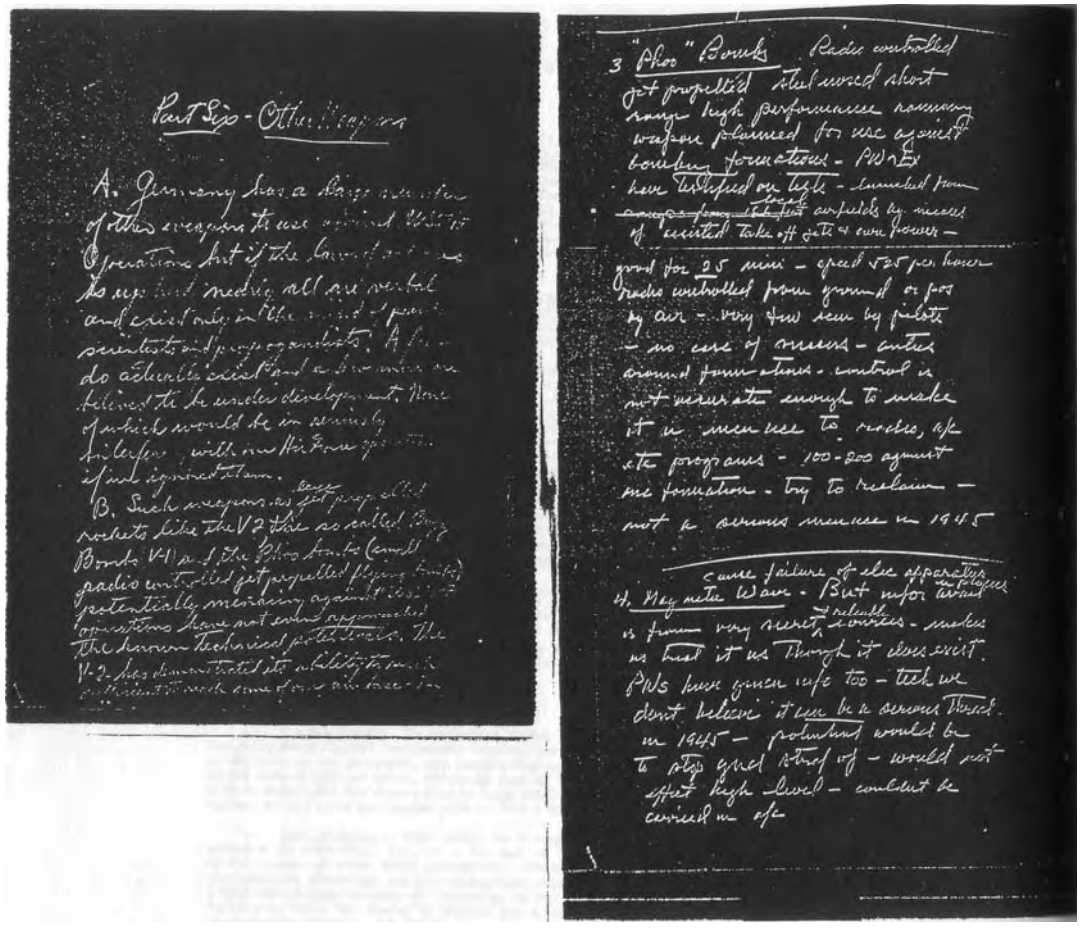
5. MAGNETIC WAVE: The best information available is from very secret and reliable sources, and forces the conclusion that this weapon exists as a possibility. It is designed to cause failure of various electrical apparatus in aircraft. Technically it does not appear to be a possible serious threat in 1945. At most it would be effective at a few locations for preventing ground strafing. Evidence to date indicates that it could have little effect against high level attack, since the apparatus would be too cumbersome to permit its use in aircraft.

6. GASES APPLICABLE TO AIRCRAFT: Two types of gases applicable to aircraft are known. One is designed to cause pre-ignition, blowing the heads off cylinders; and the other is designed to break down the viscosity of lubricating oils. Under laboratory conditions, free from operational considerations, these gases are a distinct possibility. It is doubtful, however, that with proper fighter escorts a sufficient concentration of either of these gases could be thrown against our formations to have any serious effect. Similarly, it is doubted whether sufficient anti-aircraft guns are available to produce an effective concentration, and it is probably that any possible concentration would be no more effective than a similar amount of well-directed flak.

7. ATOMIC BOMB: Close check of every report, and close surveillance of the area in which tests are alleged to have taken place lead to the conclusion that such bombs are not a likelihood in 1945.

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Phoo Bombs—An Intelligence Officer's Hand Written Notes



Part Six - Other Weapons

A. Germany has a large number of other weapons to use against Allied Operations but if the Germans have the weapons and means all are verbal and exist only in the minds of propagandists and propagandists. A few do actually exist and a few more are believed to be under development. None of which would be in service by Hallowe'en with new Air Force operations against them.

B. Such weapons as jet propelled rockets like the V-2 the so called Buzz Bombs V-1 and the Phoo bombs (small radio controlled jet propelled flying bombs) potentially menacing against Allied operations have not entered appreciably the known Technical picture of the war. The V-2 has demonstrated its ability to reach a continental target such as London but has

3 "Phoo" Bombs. Radio controlled jet propelled steel missiles about range high performance necessary weapon planned for use against bombing formations - PW's have testified on this - launched from ~~ground~~ ~~take off~~ catapults by means of assisted take off jets & own power -

good for 25 min - speed 325 per hour - radio controlled from ground or pos by air - very few seen by pilots - no use of numbers - enter around formations - control is not accurate enough to make it of much use to rockets, a/c etc programs - 100-200 against one formation - try to reclaim - not a serious menace in 1945

H. Magnetic Wave - But info ~~came~~ failure of elec apparatus is from very secret ~~and reliable~~ sources - makes us trust it as though it does exist. PWs have given info too - tech we don't believe it can be a serious threat in 1945 - probably would be to stop great bomber stream - would not affect high level - combat be carried on as

Obtained in a freedom Of Information Act asking for more information after learning the government's code word for foo fighters ("Phoo Bombs").

Germans progressed in their work on semiconductors and should the scientists at the F.F.O. have been given credit for this discovery, the transistor, instead of Shockley? This example also illustrates exactly how far the military will go, or at least individuals in the military, to perpetuate the notion of high-technology derived from aliens. It also illustrates the willingness of large establishment publishing firms to assist in the propagation of these ideas.

Returning to the subject of foo fighters and the governments suppression of this information, it seems the government feels it has the right to deny FOIA reguests, no matter how detailed the description may be, unless the requestor uses exactly the same name as the government uses. Was the name "foo fighters" as opposed to "Phoo Bombs" just not close enough to trigger a response under the law or was this just another example of the government's bad faith regarding FOIA? Probably it was the latter. Friedrich Georg's research work which produced the first document naming Phoo Bombs acted like a Rosetta Stone in that it was a translation of their terms into ours. This applied not only for foo fighters but for the other topics mentioned below which the government had previously denied.

With these documents as proof of American knowledge of foo fighters, the understanding with regard to foo fighters is quite different than the confusion generated heretofore. The fact is that Vesco has been vindicated. The fact is that foo fighters were German-built flying weapons of war. The fact is that they were the very first modern UFOs. And finally, the fact is the government of the United States has known this all along and kept these facts from us for almost sixty years.

It should be noted that the documents which are in my possession are all documents written during the Second World War. No mention is made of Phoo Bombs in any post-war documents I have seen. Examples or at least plans of these flying devices must have been recovered. It seems there are still secrets hidden away in government files. To keep these secrets the government is willing to violate its own Freedom Of Information Act laws.

It should be noted that the document uncovered by Mr. Georg describes several weapons systems previously not disclosed by the U.S. government. This includes German rockets larger than the V-2. The government document states:

"68 feet in length as against 45 feet"

The forty-five foot figure signifies the V-2, while the sixty-eight foot rocket is completely unknown.

In this same document is a description of a gas-weapon first described by Vesco and designed to down enemy aircraft (10). Actually, there are two such gas weapons. The first gas is designed to cause engine destruction through pre-ignition as

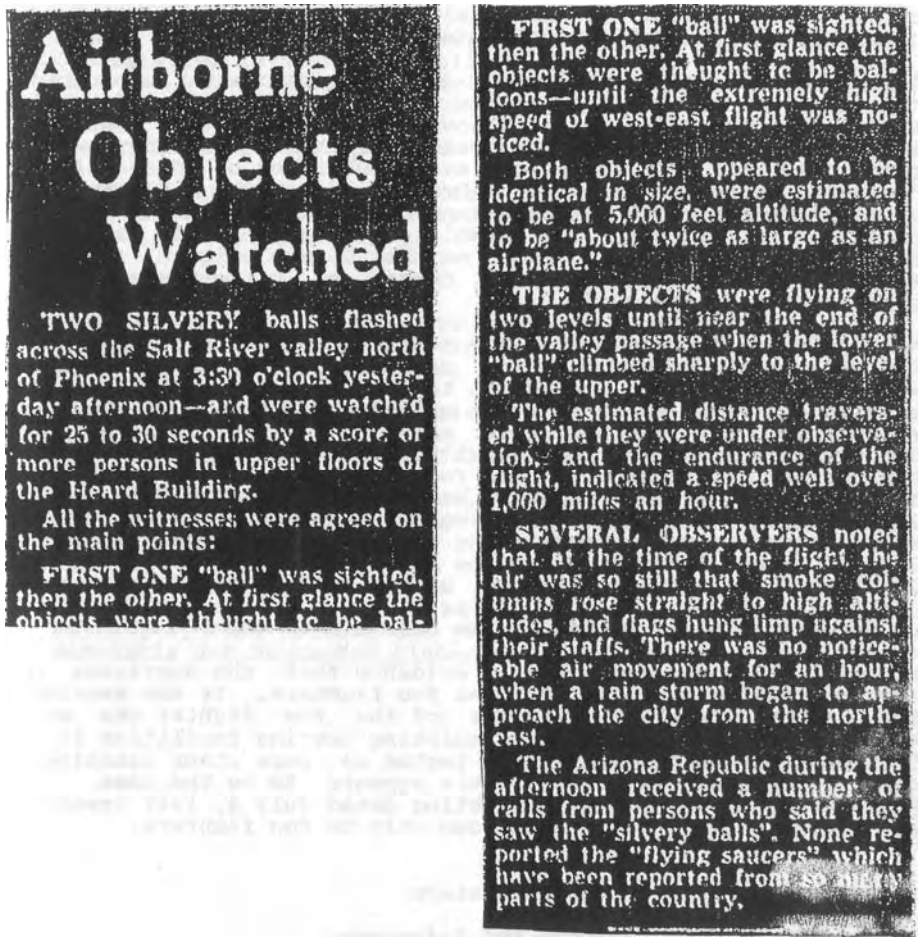
described by Vesco. The second gas is designed to cause engine seizure through the breakdown of the viscosity of the engine's lubricating oil. This is another vindication of Vesco. Therefore, when Vesco states that this very weapon was successfully used against Allied aircraft in a second-generation saucer, the Kugelblitz, perhaps he should be taken seriously (11).

Finally, this document describes something the Americans call the "Magnetic Wave" but which the Germans always described as "Motorstoppmittel", meaning literally, "means to stop motors". Motorstoppmittel and other German death rays were also the subject of repeated FOIA requests which were all denied. It was only with the code-word "Magnetic Wave" that the dam of information was finally broken concerning this device and other German ray-weapons. Not only did the Germans use ionization of the atmosphere to halt ignition based engines but they also experimented with x-ray weapons and an even more exotic method, possibly involving use of the laser (12).

Vesco places construction of the foo fighter at the Austrian site of Wiener-Neustadt (13). Indeed, the testimony supplied by Kadmon does indicate an Austrian home for the foo fighter. The most likely site for foo fighter development was the Rax Works. The Rax Works were an outgrowth of the combinations and growth of several firms, the Wiener-Neustaedter Flugzeugwerke GmbH, the Flugzeugbau der Hitenberger Patronenfabrik, the Flughafenbetriebsgesellschaft Wiener-Neustadt
and the Wiener Neustaedter Lokomotiv-Fabrik which was acquired by Henschel after the unification of Austria and Germany (14).

All the sources cited place foo fighter production in Austria. It is often repeated that this was a purely SS project, built at Wiener-Neustadt, with the help of the F.F.O. It is possible that these craft had an independent origin, outside the scope and sphere of Peenemuende. At about this same time, early 1943, Professor Alexander Lippisch broke away from Messerschmitt to head the Vienna based Luftfahrtforschungsanstalt-Wien (LFW). This was a first-class facility and Professor Lippisch is a figure central to the understanding of German flying discs. Vesco links the foo fighter, his "Feuerball" with a further-developed manned saucer, the "Kugelblitz". It is possible that both these craft had an independent origin, that is outside the purview of officials at Peenemuende under the direction of Dr. Lippisch at the LFW. In this case their link to Peenemuende would have become stronger as the war progressed and on a higher order, that of the SS through Dr. Hans Kammler and the Kammler Group based near Prag. It is also possible that the research and controlling authority of the German disc program moved from Peenemuende to Wiener-Neustadt as researcher Klaus-Peter Rothkugel suggests.

Questions arise with the acknowledgement of "Phoo Bombs" by the government. The first is what is the agenda of those seeking to



Airborne Objects Watched

TWO SILVERY balls flashed across the Salt River valley north of Phoenix at 3:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon—and were watched for 25 to 30 seconds by a score or more persons in upper floors of the Heard Building.

All the witnesses were agreed on the main points:

FIRST ONE "ball" was sighted, then the other. At first glance the objects were thought to be balloons—until the extremely high speed of west-east flight was noticed.

Both objects appeared to be identical in size, were estimated to be at 5,000 feet altitude, and to be "about twice as large as an airplane."

THE OBJECTS were flying on two levels until near the end of the valley passage when the lower "ball" climbed sharply to the level of the upper.

The estimated distance traversed while they were under observation, and the endurance of the flight, indicated a speed well over 1,000 miles an hour.

SEVERAL OBSERVERS noted that at the time of the flight the air was so still that smoke columns rose straight to high altitudes, and flags hung limp against their staffs. There was no noticeable air movement for an hour, when a rain storm began to approach the city from the northeast.

The Arizona Republic during the afternoon received a number of calls from persons who said they saw the "silvery balls". None reported the "flying saucers" which have been reported from so many parts of the country.

From "The Arizona Republic", July 8, 1947

deny this fact both in and out of government? Are these just extraterrestrial "true believers" gone amuck? There is no doubt that the government has known the truth about foo fighters and German saucers in general for almost sixty years, yet they have never been willing to publicly acknowledge these facts. Why is this? What issues of national security could possibly be compromised with such a disclosure over a half-century later?

Is this denial of foo fighters just of government inspiration? The sad truth is that the private "information" or disinformation sector is also guilty in of a cover-up. Why do they contribute to the denial of the German origin of this technology? What major New York publisher has ever published on German flying discs as opposed to the libraries of books pushing the extraterrestrial UFO hypothesis—a hypothesis totally lacking in proof? Let me pose the specific question: would Simon and Schuster ever publish a book on the German origins of flying saucers as they did for Col. Corso and his extraterrestrial hypothesis? If not why?

Another question arises from the confirmation of foo fighters by the government. This question concerns the veracity of Renato Vesco who originally placed the topic before us in his Italian edition as early as 1968. The question is this: If Vesco is right about foo fighters, what about the other claims he made about German saucers? Specifically, these are claims made about the further development of the foo fighter technology resulting in a manned saucer project he called "Kugelblitz" (ball-lightning). As well as claiming the Kugelblitz actually flew, Vesco gave us some tantalizing details of the development of German saucer technology by the Anglo-Americans after the war. In view of Vesco's track record, we can not simply dismiss these claims as has been done in the past. Vesco's assertions should be borne in mind as further facts become evident.

Finally, there is some small evidence that the Americans did acquire working examples of these foo fighters. If the Americans had captured complete examples of the foo fighter one would expect they would be taken to existing testing facilities in the Southwestern United States and tested as were other examples of captured German technology. This appears to be the case. The Arizona Republic reports a sighting dated July 8, 1947 involving two flying silvery balls which can only be foo fighters.

Foo Fighters

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9. Corso, Phillip J., Col., 1997, page 161, The Day After Roswell. Pocket Books, a division of Simon & Schuster Inc., 1230 Avenue of the Americans, New York, NY. 10020

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12. German Research Project, 1999, "German Death Rays Part Two: The German And American Governmental Evidence", P.O. Box 7, Gorman, CA. 93243-0007 USA

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The Peenemuende Saucer Project

A report comes to us from Russian immigrant Paul Stonehill concerning the experience of a Russian POW in Northern Germany. The report was first published some time ago in UFO Magazine, volume 10, number 2 in 1995, but this witness describes a story so different from other German saucer reports that it is worth emphasis at this point. The witness is unnamed but the source of the original report is known to Paul Stonehill and he vouches for its authenticity. The unnamed witness is called mister "X".

Mister X was taken prisoner by the Germans in the Ukraine in 1941, early in the German offensive. From there he was housed in a concentration camp where he contracted typhus. X improved and even managed to escape but was re-captured and taken to Auschwitz concentration camp. There, he worked as a medical orderly before a typhus relapse made this work impossible. X was scheduled for a one-way trip to the crematorium but was saved from this fate by a woman German medical doctor who cured him of the typhus. Not only did she do this but, for some reason not made clear in the article, she supplied him with false identity papers stating that X was a mechanical engineer.

In August of 1943 X was moved to KZ (concentration camp) A4 at Trassenhedel in the vicinity of Peenemuende to work on project Hochdruckpumpe's removal from that area. Hochdruckpumpe, or high pressure pump in English, was a long distance cannon with fired in sequential states as the projectile moved by each charge and along an very long barrel. From here X was reassigned to work at Peenemuende itself.

In September of 1943, X and some other prisoners were engaged in demolition of a reinforced cement wall. At lunch time the other prisoners were driven away from this site but for some reason, possibly a dislocated foot, X was left behind.

After the others had gone, four workers appeared from a hangar and rolled out a strange looking craft onto the concrete landing strip nearby. It was round, had a teardrop-shaped cockpit in the center and was rolled out on small inflatable wheels, like an "upside down wash basin". After a signal was given, this silvery metal craft began making a hissing sound and took off, hovering at an altitude of about five meters directly over the landing strip. As it hovered, the device rocked back and forth. Then the edges began to blur. Suddenly the flying craft's edges seem to blur as it jumped up sharply and gained altitude in a snakelike trajectory. X concludes that because rocking was still exhibited, the craft was advancing erratically.

A gust of wind blew in from the Baltic. The flying craft was turned upside down and began to loose altitude. Mr. X was enveloped by hot air and the smell of ethyl alcohol as he heard the craft grinding into the earth. Without thinking, X ran for

the craft in an effort to assist the downed pilot. The pilot's body was hanging out of the broken cockpit and the craft was engulfed in blue flames of fire. X glimpsed the still hissing jet engine before everything was swallowed in flames.

What can be gleaned from this account? Mr. X certainly saw a German flying disc. But the "smell of ethyl alcohol" and the "blue fames of fire" set this engine apart from any so far described. German jet engines ran on jet fuel, a light oil something similar to kerosene. The Walter rocket engines ran of very exotic hypergolic fuels which burst into flames automatically once they made contact with each other. Ethyl alcohol is the alcohol of fermentation as, for instance, potatoes are fermented and distilled into vodka. Ethyl alcohol is not the best substance for aircraft fuel since it is low calories by weight and volume in comparison with the other fuels mentioned. The advantage of alcohol for the shortage plagued Germans was that it was available. Ethyl alcohol and liquid oxygen were exactly the fuels which powered the V-2 rocket developed at nearby Peenemuende.

Given this report, we have a reason to consider Peenemuende as a German site which produced flying discs. But before proceeding with our inquiry as before we must take a step back from our strictly detailed survey of German flying saucers in order to get better perspective of this overall body of information.

To this point any reader somewhat familiar with German flying discs might find the level of detail and proof enlightening but might feel that the basic story is known and has already been told. These readers will be pleasantly surprised by this chapter of our story. Not only is new evidence presented here but a new interpretation of existing evidence sheds a whole new light upon the study of German flying discs.

This new evidence and this new way of looking at things are primarily the result of the input of German aeronautical investigator Klaus-Peter Rothkugel. Within the last year or so he has proposed to me and to another investigator, Heiner Gehring, ideas which were previously overlooked. Mr. Rothkugel has investigated and documented his ideas to both of us and has convinced us of their merit. In turn, both Mr. Gehring and myself have spent some time and effort in advancing this research ourselves and sharing the results. These researchers have published their findings in Germany and have allowed me to make use of these ideas here.

The careful reader will note that mention has already been made of Mr. Rothkugel and his contributions. In this section some of the ideas which he first put forth will be examined as will hie emphasis on the overall organization and understanding of the material.

It was Vesco who first gave us an explanation of foo fighters.

Vesco relied upon his own understanding of the subject which was gained during the war and documented them with facts gleaned from his research into British intelligence files. His explanation has been largely vindicated both by reports of sightings within Austria and through United States military documents obtained independently through the Freedom Of Information Act. Why then should not the other explanations given us by Vesco be worthy of further inquiry? While discussing German saucer development, Vesco described German research designed to overcome the drag limitations imposed upon aircraft by boundary layer effects.

Boundary layer effects refer to the flow of air across the wing of an aircraft in flight. The air forms sheets of air moving across the wing, the slowest moving sheet being closest to the wing. At high speeds these slower moving layers collide with oncoming air molecules of the atmosphere causing areas of turbulence with translate into atmospheric drag as a practical matter. Elimination of the boundary layer would mean that the aircraft could fly faster or expend less energy to fly at any given speed (1)(2).

Swept wings, a German innovation, represent an aircraft designer's response toward lessening the effects of drag on high speed aircraft wings. It was found that air passing over the wings at an angle retarded boundary layer formation. Therefore, turbulence was less apt to form. The swept back-wings of the Me-163 rocket interceptor may have been the result of this research. An advanced model of the Me-262 jet fighter was to incorporate fully swept-back wings. But German aircraft designers of those times wanted to go further. They wanted to eliminate the boundary layer completely.

They proposed to do this with suction wings (3). The literature on German efforts toward elimination of the boundary layer using suction wings is voluminous, as Vesco has pointed out. Beginning in the early 1940s German designers cut slots into experimental aircraft and auxiliary engines were employed to suck in the boundary layer through the wing itself and redirect this air into the fuselage and out the rear of the aircraft.(4). This proved to be more complicated than first anticipated. It was found that the area of turbulence, eddy currents caused by the boundary layer, moved across the wing from front to back as air speed increased. A slot at one position on the wing might work at one speed but not another. This meant that many, many slots covering the expanse of the wing would be needed to totally defeat this boundary layer problem. This proved impractical for a number of reasons.

One reason this was so was that multiple engines had to be used. The first engine had to provide power for flight as in any airplane. The second engine, mounted in the fuselage, was necessary to draw in air through the slotted wings and exhaust it towards the rear. Interestingly enough, it was found that the boundary layer could be eliminated by "sucking it in" or by

"blowing it off" using a strong flow of air to disrupt it (5).

Full scale suction wing aircraft were built for purposes of testing this concept. These were the Junkers "Absaugeflugzeug" (suction aircraft) AF-l and the Fieseler "Absaugestorch" (suction-stork) AF-2.

Concurrent with these experiments, work was being done into the feasibility of circular wings. This work also began in the 1930s with the basic ideas being credited to Professor Ludwig Prandtl. Early scientific papers on circular winged aircraft were written beginning in 1936 by Wilhelm Kinner (6) and in 1938 by M. Hansen (7). Both of these scientists worked at the Aerodynamic Research Facility at Goettingen. By 1941 Dr. Alexander Lippisch was also engaged in experimentation on circular wings at the Messerschmitt firm. His design, designated J1253, was tested at the wind-tunnel at Goettingen (8). Dr. Lippisch was visited by Dr Giuseppe Belluzzo while at Messerschmitt in Augsburg and Lippisch worked together with Dr. F. Ringlib on a "Drehfluegel" or "rotating wing" which was tested at Peenemuende (9). As with suction wings, a body of scientific literature from those times documents this early circular-wing experimentation.

The genius of the German designers was to combine the ideas of suction and circular wings into a single aircraft. Housing complete aircraft within its wing would eliminate the fuselage and so eliminate an unnecessary, drag-causing structure.

Prandtl and Lippisch were not comparably to Schiever and Habermohl. Prandtl and Lippisch are not even comparable to Dr. Richard Miethe. Pradtl and Lippisch were senior scientists who were well established in their worlds, either of whom would have been capable of heading a major project. In fact they did. In fact neither the Schriever-Habermohl or what we have called the Miethe-Bellonzo projects were major projects. This is another significance of what is being discussed here because what is being discussed here is a completely different organization and understanding of German flying discs than has been presented heretofore.

Remember that controlling authority for both the Schriever-Habermohl and the Miethe-Bellonzo projects came from officials in Peenemuende? J. Andreas Epp makes the point in his book that he originated the idea of the Schriever-Habermohl-type of flying disc and actually made a model of this flying craft. Setting aside for the moment the subject or originality, Epp sent his model to General Ernst Udet of the Luftwaffe whom he had met as a child. General Udet must have been impressed with this idea because he sent the plans and model to Peenemuende for evaluation. Peenemuende authorized the Schriever-Habermohl team to further develop the idea and as you might recall, Epp chided Schriever for straying from his original blade dimensions while crediting Habermohl for keeping them. The point is that Peenemuende set up Schriever and Habermohl to construct and

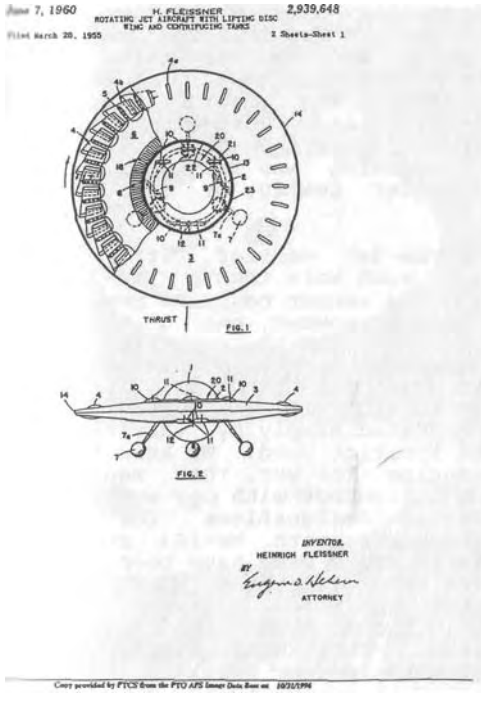
further develop this design as they set up Dr. Miethe to set up further develop the Leduc engine based design. The Germans even refer to the Schriever-Habermohl design as a "Flugkreisel" or flying top in English and the Miethe design as a "Flugdiskus". Our vernacular, "flying saucer" originally corresponded to the German folk-word "Flugschiebe" or flying disc. If the Flugkreisel, Flugdiscus and Flugschiebe are all different machines and we know who built the first two then who built the third, the Flugscheibe? The answer is that Peenemuende built the Flugscheibe. Officials at Peenemuende saved the best for themselves while controlling the other two.

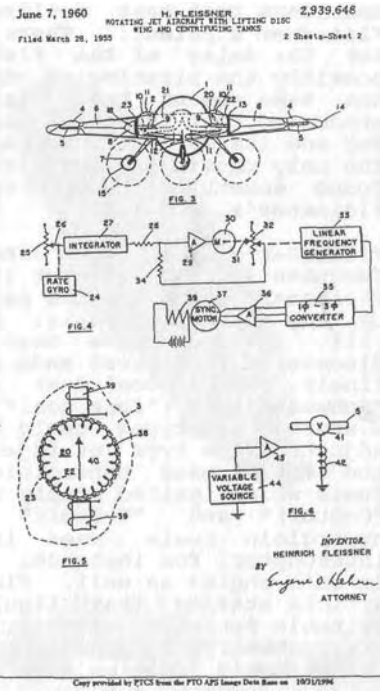
Let's look at some evidence. The May, 1980 issue of Neue Presse featured an article about the German fluidics engineer Heinrich Fleissner (10). Fleissner was an engineer, designer and advisor to what he calls a "Flugscheibe" project based at Peenemuende during the war. It is interesting to note that Fliessner's area of expertise, fluidics, is exactly the specialty involved in investigating problems with boundary layer flow. Fleissner reports that the saucer with which he was involved would have been capable of speeds up to 3,000 kilometers per hour within the earth's atmosphere and up to 10,000 kilometers outside the earth's atmosphere. He states that the brains of the developmental people were found in Peenemuende under the tightest of secrecy (11). We will return to this article again, at a later point, but what is of most interest to us here are three facts. First, that Fleissner worked at Peenemuende on a flying saucer project. Second, that a hint of this design has survived to this day. Third, the surviving design can be linked to photographic evidence of a German saucer, circa World War Two.

Almost ten years after the war, on March 28, 1955, Heinrich Fleissner filed a patent application with the United States Patent Office for a flying saucer (Patent Number 2,939,648). Fleissner's saucer was unlike Schriever's, Habermohl's, or Miethe's. The engine employed by Fleissner rotated around the cabin on the outside of the saucer disc itself. It was set in motion by starter rockets as with Schriever and Habermohl. The difference is that this engine was really a form of ram-jet engine. It featured slots running around the periphery of the saucer into which air was scooped. The slots continued obliquely right through the saucer disc so that jet thrust was aimed slightly downward and backward from the direction of rotation. Within the slots, fuel injectors and a timed ignition insured a proper power curve which was in accordance with the speed and direction of the saucer much like an automobile's fuel injection is timed to match the firing of the spark plugs. Steering was accomplished by directing the airflow using internal channels containing a rudder and flaps which ran alongside of the central cabin. The cabin itself was held stationary or turned in the desired direction of flight using a system of electromagnets and servo-motors coupled with a gyroscope (12).

It is interesting to note that while the patent was filed on

The Post-War Saucer Patent Of Heinrich Fleissner


June 7, 1960 H. FLEISSNER 2,939,648
ROTATING JET AIRCRAFT WITH LIFTING DISC WING AND CENTRIFUGING TANKS
Filed March 28, 1955 2 Sheets-Sheet 1
THRUST
FIG. 1
FIG. 2
INVENTOR. HEINRICH FLEISSNER
BY Eugene O. Kelleher
ATTORNEY
Copy provided by PTCS from the PTO APS Image Data Base on 10/31/1996


June 7, 1960 H. FLEISSNER 2,939,648
ROTATING JET AIRCRAFT WITH LIFTING DISC WING AND CENTRIFUGING TANKS
Filed March 28, 1955 2 Sheets-Sheet 2
FIG. 3
INTEGRATOR
RATE GYRO
LINEAR FREQUENCY GENERATOR
SYNC. MOTOR
1φ - 3φ CONVERTER
FIG. 4
FIG. 5
VARIABLE VOLTAGE SOURCE
FIG. 6
INVENTOR. HEINRICH FLEISSNER
BY Eugene O. Kelleher
ATTORNEY
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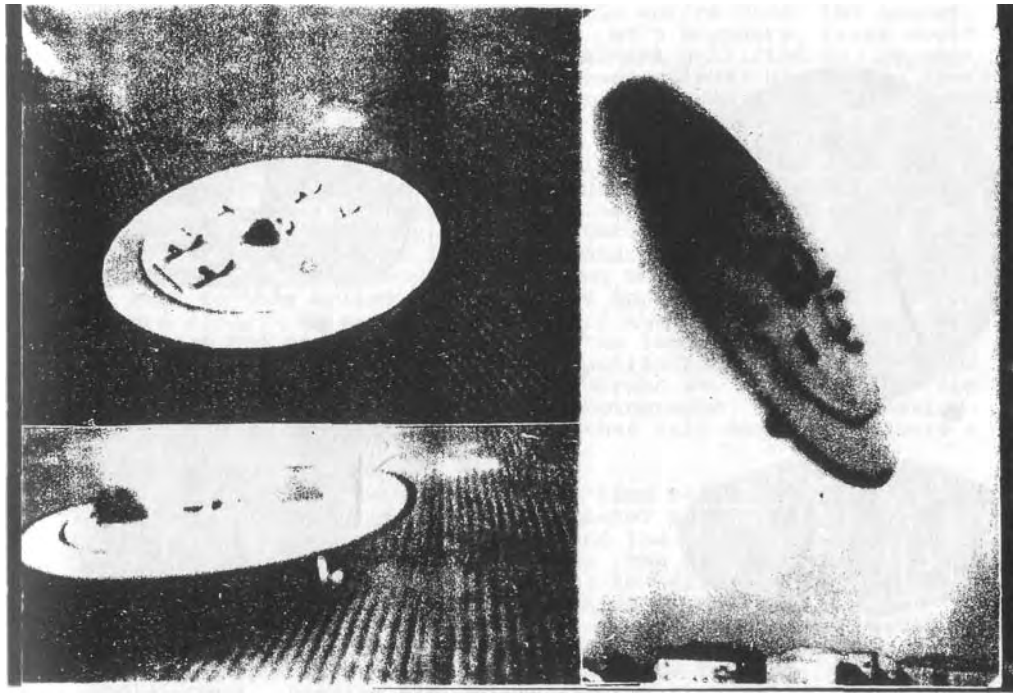
Fleissner was a technical advisor on the Peenemuende saucer project. An eye witness, known by Fleissner, told him this: "Shortly before the Capitulation, on April 24, 1945, a squadron of four flying discs took off-manned with two pilots whose names are unknown-under heavy artillery barrage from the German and Russian sides from the Berlin-Lichterfelde Airport to a still-today unknown destination." (Neue Press, 5/2/80, page 3)

March 28, 1955, it was not granted until June 7, 1960, over five years later! What could possibly have been the reason for the delay? The only possible reason concerns the American Silver Bug Project which was being developed at the same time. This was a project which was tasked with further development of the Miethe design or an outgrowth of it and simply referred to as a "radial jet engine". But we now know this Miethe project was not the equal of the Peenemuende project in terms of speed. The Americans must have realized this sometime after the filing of Fliessner's patent. There can be little doubt that the reason for the delay of the Fleissner patent was the evaluation and possibly the pirating of his design by the Americans. At about the same moment that Fieissner's patent was granted, it was announced that the joint Canadian-American saucer project, Silver Bug and its derivatives, had been abandoned by those governments. The only possible reason for this abandoning was that they had found something better and the better design, by far, was Fieissner's.

Fieissner's design was likened to a ram-jet earlier. It could function in this way but it was also much more than a ram-jet. Fleissner states in his patent that the saucer could be powered by any number of fuels: "liquid, dust, powder, gas or solid" (11). It could have used, for example, used the recently re-discovered fuel first made by Dr. Mario Zippermayr consisting of finely powered coal dust in a suspension of liquid air (13) or "Schwaramkohle" ("foam coal") and liquid air (14). Different fuel mixtures and types could be accommodated simply by varying or adjusting the type of injectors and ignition used. We know that the Germans used hypergloic fuels during the war, that meaning fuels which ignited simply by coming in contact with one another. "C-Stoff" and "T-Stoff" were German designations for the hypergloic fuels used in the Messerschmitt Me-163 rocket interceptor, for instance. These fuels could also have been used in this engine as well. Fleissner further elaborated in his 1980 article stating that liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen were suitable for this design (11). Liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen are rocket fuels of the highest order. This means Fieissner's saucer could function as a rocket with the proper fuel.

Shall we assess the implications? In its simplest form, Fieissner's saucer could have operated as a ram-jet on jet fuel. At its highest level, Fieissner's saucer could have operated outside the atmosphere on liquid hydrogen and oxygen. Or it could have done both. Fieissner's saucer could have taken off as a ram-jet, gained speed and aititude but at some point, reached a limit of diminishing returns. At this point, the saucer would have been able to slowly bleed liquid oxygen into the ram-jets for further performance enhancement. Further, it could slowly have replaced jet fuel with liquid hydrogen. This would be accompanied by a closing of the air intake apparatus. At this point there is no reason this saucer can not become a space ship, that is, able to operate beyond the fringes of the earth's atmosphere. Is this performance enough to impress the U.S. Air

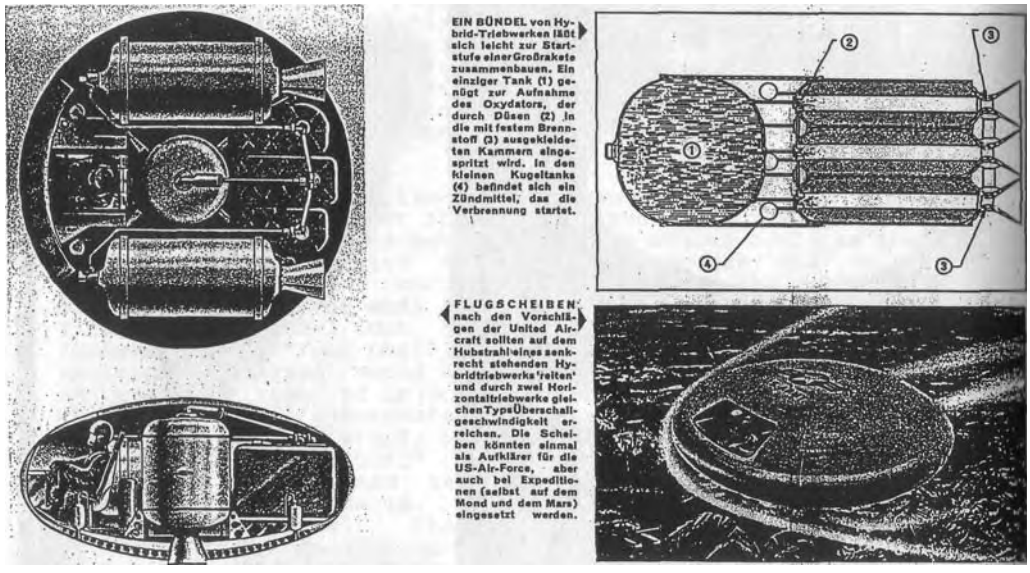
Detailed Picture Of A German Saucer



This is a blow-up of the picture attached to J. Andreas Epp's "Still Alive" letter from Prag, March, 1944. Note air intake ring and crest for steering on the roof of the cabin. Diameter is about six meters. Is this the saucer described in the Aftonbladet article? Possible location is Stettin near Peenemuende.

Thinking Outside The Box

Hybrid Liquid-Solid Propellant Rocket



Top Right: 1. Liquid Oxidizer 2. Injection Jets for Oxidizer 3. Combustion Chamber Constrictions 4. Ignition Mechanism Solid fuel shown running along sides of combustion chamber (dark color). "Schaumkohle" (porous compressed coal) are suitable as fuel as would a mixture of Aluminum power and polyurethan combined with liquid nitrogen tetroxide. Thrust controlled by amount of oxidizer injected. Hypergolic mixtures would require no ignition system. Alternately, oxydizers could be solid and fuel liquid. "Nichts ist unmoeglich" Nothing is impossible

Force and the civilian population of the late 1940s and early 1950's? The answer is certainly in the affirmative.

There are design elements in the Fleissner saucer which link it to the work of Prandtl and Lippisch. It should be noted that the slot air intakes mounted near the edge of the saucer would have sucked in the boundary layer before it got any real chance to form. Below, the jets would have blown off the boundary layer at a similar point. Further, because the entire wing, the saucer, is spinning, any further development of a boundary layer would have been moved at an angle and so almost nullified as happens with severely swept-back wings of a conventional high-speed jet aircraft. Therefore, at supersonic speeds, this saucer might not have even generated a sonic boom.

There is some proof that the Fleissner-type of saucer was actually built and flown at Peenemuende or a nearby test facility at Stettin. Fleissner's patent is likened to wartime reality by a photograph. Actually, it is three photographs. These photographs have appeared in a fragmentary, vintage Dutch article on German saucers and they are attached to a wartime letter from Prag sent to this writer by J. Andreas Epp and later published in Ahnstern (15). No specific mention of the photograph is made in the letter and so it could be that the late Mr. Epp included it as a general example rather than a specific reference. Epp never claimed the saucers in these photographs as his design. Epp himself claimed to have the only photographs of that device. There is reason to suspect, however, that this design does bare a relationship to the Fleissner design.

The pictures show a small saucer with some telling features. One point of correspondence with the Fleissner patent is that the air intake is located near the periphery of the saucer wing. This is seen as seen in the ring just inside the saucer's edge. The other is that the directional control is clearly viable in the rudder mounted on the top of the cockpit or central cabin. In the picture the control is external and not as sophisticated as the Fleissner patent but the idea behind both are the same. In the pictured saucer, turns would be made by turning the cabin as a whole, thus, turning the rudder just as the prehistoric flying reptile, the Pterodactyl, turned its flight direction using a rudder located on top of its head.

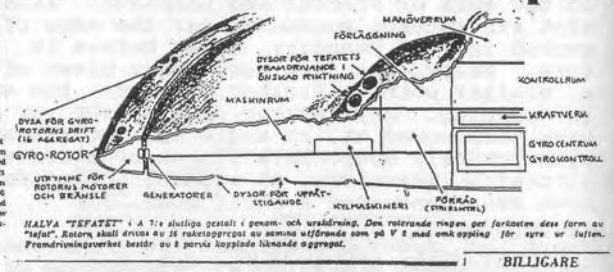
Further confirmation of a Peenemuende saucer project comes from a Stockholm evening newspaper, Aftonbladet, dated October 10, 1952. It reports that a flying saucer, a "space ship", was developed by the Germans during World War Two at Peenemuende by Dr. Wernher von Braun and his rocket team. A test-model of this craft lifted off in April of 1944. It was six meters in diameter. The ultimate craft to be built, was a space ship of 42 meters in diameter, capable of flying an astonishing three hundred kilometers in altitude! Not stated in the article but interesting to note is that this 300 kilometers represents a higher altitude than the first American earth orbiting satellite.

Flygande tefat var Hitlers A 7-vapen

Genom det material som finns i Sverige kan det fastställas, att det s. k. flygande tefatet är en tysk konstruktion. Det konstruerades i robotanläggningen i Peenemünde med början omkring 1936 under ledning av professor WERNER VON BRAUN. I serien "robotvapen", den s. k. A-serien, hade det beteckningen A 7. Den flygande bomben V 2 hade här beteckningen A 4.

I april 1944 var man färdig med provflygningen, med ett tefat på 6 meters diameter och provet blev lyckat. Sedan kom den ryska invasionen i vägen och man blev aldrig färdig med slutprodukten, ett rymdskepp med 42 meters diameter avsett för höjder upp till 300 km. Ryssarna äger liknandem om konstruktionen, men originalritningarna till A-serien samt 90 konstruktörer skadas till Amerika, och konstruktörerna "Med von Braun i spetsen arbetar sedan 1945 i White Sands i New Mexico och har säkerligen kommit långt med sina konstruktioner.

Se även art. på sid. 6.



HALVA "TEFATET" i A 7:s slutliga gestalt i genom- och uppsprängning. Den roterande ringen ger farkosten dess form av "tefat". Rotorn skall drivas av 16 raketaggregat av samma utförande som på V 2 med omkoppling för styrning ur luften. Framdrivningsverket består av 8 parvis kopplade liknande aggregat.

BILLIGARE

Tyska tefatsbyggare i USA sedan 1945

Siktar på atomkraftdrivet rymdskepp

Det flygande tefatets såväl som de andra tyska fantomvapnens konstruktör är i första hand professor Werner von Braun och hans bror, men många andra deltog också, bl. a. den av Aftonbladet för några dagar sedan omnämnde överingenjör Georg Klein. Bröderna von Braun började redan på 1920-talet, men från och med 1934 tog Hitler hand om saken och kort därpå började man anläggra Peenemündeverken, som var färdiga 1938 och där fantastiska saker skedde.

De hemliga vapnen blev till slut, A 1 till A 16. Det flygande tefatet var A 7, men det kallades länge bara rymdskepp eller något dylikt. Först efter kriget har det efter lättgjelser på bilden dåpts till tefat. A 13 skulle bli det förkortningsvis av alla typen, användbart vid bombardering av Amerikanska städer, men det blev aldrig färdigt utan på pappret.

Rymdskepp på 200 ton

Byrået med A 7, tefatet, var att kunna nå ut i den luftlösa rymden med en farkost, som kunde förflytta sig med enorm fart på höjder där jordens dragningskraft avtar och driva med reaktionsdrift. Men redan i utgångsläget kunde man få tillräckligt användning för mindre typer av farkosten.

Bränslekonstruktionen skulle ha en diameter av 42 meter och 24 en vikt av 200 ton, varav troligen hälften bränsle, dvs syre och alkohol. Reaktionsaggregatens mynningar, de s. k. dysorna, placerar runt om och på undersidan. De ändamålende skulle driva upp den, "farkosten" stabiliserar genom en 12 à 13 ton tung ring som roterar runt centralkroppen. Detta är en gyrostabiliseringsring och den är förutsätter allt nödvändig i luftlösa rymder, där den inställer farkosten vinkelrätt mot jordens dragningskraft.

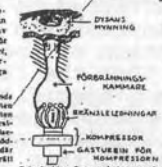
Rotorn är avsedd att rotera 3.000 varv i minuten. För förflyttning i sido- och höjdled på de stora höjderna skulle behövas mycket små reaktionskraftlar på grund av förhållandevis av luftmotstånd. Ändå skulle den i luftlösa rum uppnå en fart på 3 à 5 gånger ljudets. Rotorn skulle drivas av 16 raketaggregat av samma slag som V 2:n. Detta vapen var uppe på 120 km:s höjd.

Ideala drivmedlet

Detta är allmänt några data om A 7:an slutprodukt, som dock aldrig blev färdig i tysk uppläga. Det svåraste problemet att lösa även tekniskt var bränslefrågan. Det skulle åtgå oerhört mycket bränsle utöver farkosten som upp- och nedgående luftlösa rum. Även tyngdrutorn för bromsningen är en svår fråga. Det ideala drivmedlet för ett flygande tefat vore atomkraften, och förmodligen inriktar man sig i Amerika på att lösa detta problem.

Så länge hade alltså tyskarna kommit och ansåg sig ha löst problemen teoretiskt och laborativt möjligt. Sedan dess har de arbetat i Amerika i sju år ostörda av krig och med tillgång till nationens alla resurser. Man bör beräkna att det här är fråga om en parallell till stambesökens framställande, och för det ändamålets gjorda fantastiska ansträngningar.

Det är inte nödvändigt att inrikta sig på rymdskeppet, utan konstruktörerna kan mycket väl ställa på tefat för användning inom atmosfärens gränser och med mindre



Principiellt över raketaggregatet i A 7. Maximitryck i förbränningskammaren c:a 60 atmosfärer. Bränslen sker genom att gaser från en separat förbränningskammare tillföres gasturbinen, som sedan driver kompressorn för bränslets inspruta i förbränningskammaren.

Ingen inte ryska utan amerikanska. Nu åra obehindrat arbete i USA har troligen inte blivit alldeles fruktlöst.

Fakta hände i Sverige

De militära och tekniska fackmännen i de flesta länder är negativt nedervärdade om den sålunda kallade A 7-konstruktionen hade vid Tysklands sammanbrott. Även det svenska flygvapnet ställer sig avvisande, men redan 1945 meddelade det en teknikalitets rapport om hela A-serien från en svensk som visiterat i åtta tyska konstruktionsorganisationer.

Såväl flygvapnet som robotcentralen känner väl till saken och har givetvis kunnat identifiera "tefatet", när fakta om det på allenast blev dragits ifrån. Utgångspunkten för spekulationerna om tekniskt nuvarande ståndpunkt är just de tyska konstruktionerna av 1944 och 1945.

"astronomiskt" uppträdande av A 7:an slutmål.

Karaktäristiska iakttagelser

Alla länders krigsmaktsmän tager som mutton om tefatens hemligheter. Finns verkligen användbara konstruktioner av denna "förtrollerier"? Här kan allmänheten bara lita till iakttagelser. I Amerika har gjorts 1.800 iakttagelser som påstås vara flygande tefat. De flesta av dem har naturligtvis annan förklaring.

Men varför har dessa iakttagelser dykt upp endast efter kriget, och varför hållar man dem för "tefat", som är en mycket iakttagande beskrivning? Förmodligen har ej just det Ljusfenomen som man kan tänka — på de stora höjderna kan de vara nalbelysta medan det är mörkt på jordytan. Även dgras rörelser erfarge som stabiliseringsverkningar, och ljusstrimmorna efter dem är typiska. Men det jders naturligtvis ingenting till jordytan."

Om tefaten finns, så finns de i Amerika och Sovjet. De som anars vara iakttagna i Amerika är säker-

Möblerat rum önsk. hyra
av 2 typgrenfärlhingar. Helst inom tullarna. Svar till telefon 22 20 00.
Fabtor Ceder efterträgare.

Dyrbar ring var nagellack

En stulen ring, som föregivits vara mycket dyrbar, då den var besatt med diamanter och en exklusiv röd sten, har vid granskning på kriminalen visat sig vara *ett falsarium*. Den röda stenen bestod endast av — rött nagellack, som fyllts i den lilla infattningen!

Det var i somras, som en amerikanska på hotell Malmen blev bestulen på sina smycken och för detta har nu en ingerarbetare häktats. Han gav smyckena till en väninna. Vid ett tillfälle blev de saknade och riktade i allmänhet. Under tumultet revs den rikliga röda stenen på fingret ur sin infattning. Kvinnan, som tyckte det såg tomt ut, fyllde i rött nagellack som länger tyste och gällde för en dyrsten. Det har sitt.

16—17-års FLICKA
med intresse för allär erhåller anställning i AFTONBLADETS depeschkontor, Norrmalmstorg 1. Den som kan något språk, främst engelska, har företräde. Rutigt, anständigt arbete, trevliga kunder och bra arbetsförhållanden. Sök anställningen kl. 10—12 i dag.

Höghusen blir stridsäpple

Fastighetsnämnden synnar just nu med frågan om vem som skall bygga höghusen vid Sveavägen. Ärendet berörde i går, hvrälll därför står som fete kommer överens.

Det vea likaret vill att Byggnadsentreprenörernas fastighetsaktiebolag (»BEFA»), 165:b, Skånska cement eller Olle Engkvist skall få bygga dessa hus. Majoriteten håller på att staden, Byggnadsbolag Svenska bostäder skall få uppdraget. Den skiljepunkten förfaktar ordföranden i fastighetsnämnden, borgerrådet Gösta Wennström.

Mot det förslaget hävdas att staden vinner mest på att den fria konkurrensen bibehålles. För höghusen skulle staden bilda ett nytt bolag och detta i sin tur anlita Svenska bostäder som entreprenör. Sådan är situationen för dagen. Innan man beslutar vill fastighetsnämnden invänta fastighetsdirektör Jarl Bergs återkomst på lördagen från en konferens i Lissabon.

Pojkar tog checkhäfte

Två 13-åriga pojkar gjorde i går en kupp mot en affärsinnehavarinna vid Bolinders plan på Kungsholmen. De greps nu av polisen. De brukar köpa tuggummi i affären, i vilken de rände ut och in på onödestermiddagen. I ett obevakat ögonblick stal en av pojkarna in på kontoret bakom affären. Då innehavarinnan försökte stoppa dem, förvrann de springande med ett checkhäfte, en bankbok och en lotteisedel.

OSRAM vacuoblixt
TYP F9
OSRAM
Lampan med världsrykte

Swedish newspaper "Aftonbladet", dated 10/10/52, describes a German saucer built by Wernher von Braun at Peenemuende, six meters in diameter, which lifted off in April, 1944. The article states that high fuel consumption was the major problem, a problem which would be solved utilizing atomic power.

The construction drawings for this device are in the USA, according to the article, and the drawings are also known to the Russians. The chief difficulty with the saucer, according to the report, is the tremendous fuel requirements during its assent. This problem, it goes on to say, could be solved through the utilization of atomic energy.

Let us look at the picture of the three saucers again. In the lower left picture two dark objects can be seen resting on its top. Mr. Rothkugel suggests these may be bombs or fuel. Let us assume the latter, that they are fuel drums for refueling the saucer. In the USA metal drums of this type commonly contain petroleum products. They measure about three feet in height. Two are shown but six lengths could be stretched across this saucer with perhaps inches to spare. A meter is slightly over a yard. This saucer roughly corresponds in size to the description given in the Aftonbladet article. The picture on the right, minus the fuel drums and poised above some buildings, clearly shows that this saucer actually flew.

A whole technical history and organizational hierarchy can be pieced together from this picture, the Fliessner patent, and the Aftonbladet article. The Fleissner design minimizes the effects of boundary layer resistance reflecting the outcome of work starting with Ludwig Prandtl. It is a circular aircraft and a linear descendant of the circular aircraft designed by Dr. Prandtl and Dr. Alexander Lippisch. Fleissner states that he worked at Peenemuende. Peenemuende functioned as the head of all German saucer research. A fact of life at Peenemuende was that all German scientists deferred to Dr. Wernher von Braun who was an expert, the only expert, at everything. Dr. von Braun did have an organizational supervisor, Dr. Walter Dornberger, later to work for Bell Aircraft in the USA. Above Dr. Dornberger was Dr. Hans Kammler, the SS chief of all jet aircraft and vengeance weaponry. All these named men and organizations were part of the German saucer program, their public denials not withstanding.

One more loose end is tied up relating to the Fleissner design. This is the relationship of Dr. Giuseppe Belluzzo to the German saucer projects as a whole. Remember, Dr. Belluzzo was a senior scientist and engineer who specialized in materials and steam turbines. The Fleissner saucer design is normally thought of as a sort of ram-jet. But this ram-jet spun due to thrust imparted to it by its exhaust. This exhaust-supplied motion scooped in and compressed the incoming air before ignition. Low speed flight would have been impossible without this feature just as it is with any ram-jet. So another way to look at this engine is that it was a turbine-ram-jet no matter how incongruous this may sound at first. It should also be noted that in the rocket mode, when the saucer is burning only liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen, the products of this combustion are only heat and water. Another way to say heat and water is steam. To repeat, Dr. Giuseppe Belluzzo was a steam-turbine expert. As mentioned earlier, Mr. Rothkugel reports that Dr. Belluzzo visited and,

presumably consulted with. Dr. Alexander Lippisch at Augsberg. Dr. Belluzzo's involvement with the German saucer projects should not be assumed to be confined to the Miethe project.

Let's review the Peenemuende Project to this point. It is a wide ranging project with at least two spin-offs, the Schriever-Habermohl project and the Miethe project. The Schriever-Habermohl project(s) employ a whirling set of vane-blades and one or more rocket or jet engines in a kind of "spinning top" manner. It may have been capable of supersonic flight. The Miethe project differs in that it employs an internal spinning turbo-jet first invented by Rene Leduc. Depending of the saucer configuration, its thrust can be vented in any direction for steering purposes. It also may have been capable of supersonic flight.

This design was given further study and was probably developed after the war in the form of the John Frost "Manta". A design such as this may have been responsible for the sightings by Kenneth Arnold near Mt. Rainier in the State of Washington in June of 1947. It was probably responsible for the pictures taken by William Rhodes as seen and described in the July 9, 1947 edition of the newspaper, The Arizona Republic. This same design, described as a "Flying Shoe" may have figured in the Roswell crash. Ideas from this design may have been further developed by A.V. Roe, Limited company in Canada.

Besides retaining overall control of these two saucer projects, the officials at Peenemuende retained and developed their own saucer project. Using similarities between surviving pictures from the time and the patent filed by a former member of that project, Heinrich Fleissner, we can piece together something of its design. Its identifying characteristic is its engine which has been described earlier as a turbine-ram-jet. It could operate using a variety of fuels. It could function as a jet engine within the atmosphere or covert to a rocket engine using liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen. Its speed and altitude limits would have been much greater than either the Schriever-Habermohl or the Miethe saucers, yet its construction would have been less complex than the advanced designs of the radial-jet engines being developed in the Canada as part of the Silver Bug Program. Recognition of these facts, especially after the 1955 patent application by Fleissner, probably lead to the abandonment of the A.V. Roe, Limited project(s). A cover project, the "Avrocar" was released to the public, discredited by its own designers, and put away to be forgotten.

In discussing the Aftonbladet article we have jumped ahead of our story slightly in order to connect the three saucers pictures with the Fleissner saucer patent in a proper context. The Aftonbladet article has other implication which will be discussed. Now, however, we must once again return to basics in order to illustrate the next stage of saucer development envisioned by the German scientists.

Vesco makes mention of liquified air or liquid propellants or explosives numerous times in discussing flying saucers (16)(17)(18)(19)(20). Vesco refers to saucers powered using "liquid air". On page 135-136 of Intercept UFO he says:

"After the German surrender in May 1945, when the British examined the secret papers of the technical departments of certain factories hidden in the forested area of the Schwarzwald-another region earmarked as an "island" for a last-ditch stand-they discovered that some of the documents miraculously spared from the retreating S.S. units' destruction of papers concerned "the important experiments conducted with liquid air as a power supply for certain new types of turbine engines capable of producing tremendous power outputs. At first the discovery led them to believe that a new system for powering submarines was under study, but ancillary information about the construction of powerful apparatuses working on principle of electromagnetic waves that would make it possible to exercise radio control at great distances, as well as photographs showing some parts of the new turbine, caused them to change their minds. Thus they got on the track of a preliminary preparatory stage for a new and very powerful type of armored, radio-controlled aircraft".

Mr. Rothkugel points out that the logical projection of Vesco's statements on liquid air would involve a saucer in with air would be drawn in through the skin or through slots in the upper wing (saucer), then rapidly cooled by special equipment into liquid air. The liquid air would be burnt in a combustion chamber and the hot air and steam would be exited through a turbine used to produce the electricity which this process would require.

The saucer would be drawn along through the atmosphere by the low pressure area to its front and top as well as by aerodynamic forces caused by its wing at low speed. With the addition of more liquid air into the combustion chamber, the expansive forces involving the conversion of a liquid to a gas would provide additional performance enhancement. This amazing and little-know method was invented and patented by the Austrian Karl Nowak in 1943 (21) and will work even with inert gasses. Of course, even nitrogen, sometimes considered an inert gas and which constitutes the major component of our atmosphere, can be burnt with sufficing electrical ignition as is witnessed in lightning. The cooling needed to liquify the air would be generated using a cryostat, probably liquid helium. Liquid helium is the coldest of gasses, minus 452 degrees F, just above absolute zero. In addition to the cryostat, magnetic cooling machinery, such as is employed to produce liquid nitrogen would be employed (22). From the cooling power of liquid helium and evaporative techniques, liquid nitrogen and liquid oxygen can be made which are the major constituents of our atmosphere.

A saucer which could gather its fuel along the way has one obvious advantage. It could stay aloft for days if not weeks. More conventional chemical power could be employed for take-offs

and landings and for bursts of speed necessary for military applications. In fact, there is no reason that the propulsion systems of the Fleissner saucer and the liquid air saucer envisioned by Vesco could not be combined into one aircraft.

It is unknown at this time if actual steps were taken to realize a liquid air powered flying saucer by the Germans. Whether it was undertaken or not it certainly did lead thinking on to the next step in this process and for this step there is more than a little evidence. This step was mentioned in the Aftonbladet article. It involves atomic power. Yes, the Germans intended to build a nuclear powered flying saucer (23).

These are the conclusions first reached by Dr. Milos Jesensky and engineer Robert Lesniakiewicz in 1998. The former author is a Czech and the latter author is a Pole. Both belong to a large UFO organization which functions in both countries. After the Soviet pullout there were no restrictions on excavation of unused military sites belonging to the Germans during the Second World War. This organization got busy interviewing witnesses who had connections to those times as well as identifying German underground facilities. They opened up as many of these as they could find, and they were numerous. Most of the Polish sites were within the borders of Germany at that time since the borders, before and during the Second World War, extended into about 20% of Western Poland. Other sites were in the heavily German dominated areas of Moravia and Bohemia, now the Czech Republic.

Of course, the Germans had taken out what they wanted before retreating and then sealed up the entrances with explosives. As an example of how far this research group was willing to go, they not only opened up and explored the upper levels of Der Riese, mentioned earlier, but also explored the flooded lower levels, in the cold, silent darkness using scuba gear. Besides Der Riese, other very large sites were discovered and explored including "Robert 1", "Robert 11", and "Robert 111".

They found that the larger sites were really composed of a complex of sites. For instance, at Der Riese some of these sites within the larger facility were involved in mining uranium ore. Some were involved in refining the ore. Some other sites were involved in nuclear research (24).

Wartime German work in nuclear research was not confined to bomb building, as it was in the USA. The Germans were also interested in harnessing the atom as an energy source. Remember, Germany was dependent upon foreign sources of oil for energy. German planners long realized this was a weakness and had been trying to correct the problem since the early 1930s. Great plans were in the works, if not actually built, for atomic reactors used to generate electricity. These were sometimes called "uranium machines" by the Germans. Not only were these uranium machines to be used to generate electricity but they were also destined to

power submarines and aircraft.

Dr. Jesensky and Mr. Lesniakiewicz assembled and analyzed the great volume of evidence they had gathered over the years. They analyzed the physical evidence of the sites and interviewed as many people as possible. From the thousands of observations made and facts collected, they tried to draw conclusions. They found a close proximity and close association of the German nuclear program to the German flying saucer program. They concluded that one aim of the German nuclear program was to build a nuclear powered flying saucer (23).

There is some independent evidence supporting this conclusion. After the war, German physicist Werner Heisenberg wrote a paper concerning German interest in atomic energy. In that paper Heisenberg stated that in the summer of 1942 discussion had occurred among technical people specializing in issues of heat. This discussion concerning the handling of technical questions about the efficiency of conversion of heat from uranium to determined materials, for example, water or steam (25). It is hoped the reader would recall Dr. Giuseppe Belluzzo's specialties (materials and steam turbines) in connection to this discussion.

Further evidence can be gleaned from British Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee Report. This report seems to follow a pattern we will see used again twice. The report does its best to discredit the informant in question, in this case a physicist and chemist, Josef Ernst, on one hand, while on the other hand the British thought it had enough merit to include this testimony concerning German research in some detail. Evidently, the intelligence agency in question is trying to cover all the bases in the event of any contingency. No matter if the scientist in question were to be cited or discredited, there would be language in the report substantiating both.

The report describes several areas of totally new German technology but what is of most importance to us here is Ernst's report of a new high speed fighter. The project designation is P-1073, and it was being developed by Messerschmitt. Three different engines were to be employed. The first was a B.M.W. 003 engine using petrol as fuel. The second engine was to use crude oil. The third aircraft was to use an atomic engine. This engine was described as 60 cms. long and 20 cms. in diameter. Ernst said it produced about 2,000 horse power! This aircraft was supposed to have a speed of 2,000 kilometers per hour (about 1250 m.p.h.) and a ceiling of 18,000 meters (over 54,000 feet). It was made at a Camp Mecklenburg. Only one model was ever made and it was destroyed, as was Camp Mecklenburg, by the SS before being taken by the Allies (26).

Establishment historians have all told us that the German atomic program was inept and disorganized. There may be some evidence for the charge that they did not share information between themselves due to strong rivalry (27) but the real facts are

British Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee Report Number 142

C. Interrogation of Josef Ernst

In the course of interrogation it became clear, that Ernst was not at all reliable, and though there may in some cases be a factual basis for some of his claims, they are as a whole inaccurate and of doubtful value.

(a) Personal history of J. Ernst

Ernst's own account of his life did not agree with the details which were extracted from a file in his possession, and which are given below. He was born at Malsch, near Ettlingen in 1899, and claims to be a physicist and chemist. He became a teacher, but was removed from his position in 1923 for dishonesty and then tried to make a living by obtaining financial backing for various inventions which he claimed to be capable of developing. He was eventually charged with obtaining money by false pretences and imprisoned at Mannheim in 1944. Here he claimed that he had a process of obtaining petrol from oil, and was brought to Berlin by the S.S. Hauptamt under the charge of Kreutzfeld. After spending some time in hospital, he was ready to begin work, and in April 1945 was brought to Hinterstein, near Sonthofen, again under the charge of Kreutzfeld.

(e) High speed fighter aircraft

Ernst said that while he was in Camp Meclenburg, he found out that there were three new types of high speed fighter aircraft. One of these was the P 1073, made by Messerschmidt with a B.M.W. 003 engine using petrol as fuel; and the second was a similar aircraft using crude oil as a fuel. The third was alleged to be powered with an atomic engine. The fuselage, which was the same as the P 1073, was of wooden construction and was fitted with skid landing gear. The engine was 60 cms. long and 20 cms in diameter, and produced about 2,000 h.p. This aircraft was supposed to have a speed of 2,000 km./hr. and a ceiling of 18,000 m. The engines were made by the prisoners at Camp Mecklenburg. Only one model was ever in existence, and that was completely destroyed, as was the whole camp, by the S.S. during the Allied advance.

Top: British efforts to accredit and discredit their informant, Josef Ernst. This theme appears repeatedly in Allied documents in association with German informants. The intelligence people were merely covering themselves for all eventualities. Bottom: A German atomic airplane built at Mecklenburg. The Mecklenburg facility utilized some personnel which were considered to be a security risk.

quite different than heretofore publicly disclosed (28). The overwhelming fact is that until now establishment historians have not had enough information to reach final conclusions about the German atomic program. Many facts have been concealed and these facts are only now being brought into the open. One fact is that there were even more German atomic programs than previously known, and the fact is that one of these programs was run by the SS (28).

One establishment historian, Thomas Powers (29), perhaps unwittingly gives us some insight into the discussion at hand, Powers concentrates on the historical sequence of the German atomic program and with the people involved and their relationships with one another. He also follows the progress of the many organizations researching atomic physics for the purposes of energy production and bomb making. Powers documents six such groups.

One group concerns this discussion. It was run by the Heereswaffenamt or Army Weapons Department. Its Director of Research was Dr. Erich Schumann who was also the scientific advisor to Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel. Schumann was a professor of military physics at the University of Berlin. He also held a commission in the army so with these credentials he was able to move comfortably in both academic and military circles. Schumann should be thought of as an administrator rather than a research scientist (30).

The field of research was left to Dr. Kurt Diebner (31). Diebner was a physicist for the Heereswaffenamt since 1934 and headed his own atomic research project. German physics during the war years was geared towards practical results. During the early phases of the war it was thought that nuclear weapons were unnecessary. The thinking at the time was that the war could be won without an atomic bomb using conventional weaponry. Therefore, work on atomic weapons was de-emphasized in the early years of the war. Work on atomic means of energy production was always a high priority, a priority which only got higher as the war drug to a conclusion.

Germany always felt more threatened by dependence upon foreign sources for energy. Therefore, harnessing the energy potential of the atom for an ongoing source of energy was always a concern for German atomic scientists, much more so than for the Americans. This aim is clearly mentioned in discussion among the scientists involved in the work.

In early 1942 the success of Diebner's reactor experiments lead him to propose a full-scale effort to develop both power-producing machines and atomic bombs. He continued to pressure Schumann who was more pessimistic about the possibilities of bringing this research to a practical result. Schumann finally became convinced and agreed to give a presentation to top Nazi officials of their findings. The text of Schumann's speech was

to stress the more conservative energy production aspect of atomic research rather than the building of a bomb. This was considered more feasible and so gives us an insight into the German atomic program and its thinking (32).

One example of their optimism was the participation of Diebner in plans for building an atomic power plant for Germany's submarine fleet. The year 1945 was mentioned as a target date for this to happen (33)(34).

Diebner's relationship to Schumann is made clear by Powers. Powers also introduces us to two additional players who were not officially involved with this project but who somehow interject themselves into things making their view heard.

The first is industrial physicist, Carl Ramsauer. Ramsauer was the head of the German Physical Society and a leading researcher for the electrical firm Allgemeine Elektrizitaetsgesellschaft. Ramsauer urged the German research establishment to rid itself of ethnic physics and get down to the business of using science to win a war (35).

A second scientist interjected himself into the fray in support of Ramsauer. This was none other than Ludwig Prandtl whom we have met earlier (36). Prandtl was familiar with the potential of fission's use in the war effort and insisted that the Nazis let scientists do science without reference to ethnic background or politics. Why was German atomic research so important to an a scientist involved in aeronautics? What aims did Prandtl have in common with these other individuals which linked them together? What was the urgency that compelled Ramsauer and Prandtl to intervene in a matter outside their areas of expertise and in opposition to the will of Nazi officials?

To answer those questions, let us look at each individual involved and his major area of interest. Professor Erich Schumann's interest was the military application of atomic energy. Dr. Kurt Diebner's interest was the development of atomic energy for nuclear weaponry as well as for a variety of other applications. As an industrialist, Karl Ramsauer's expertise was putting technology into large-scale, practical, production. In this time and place that meant military production. We already know that Professor Ludwig Prandl's interests were round-wing, suction aircraft. The interests of these four could only coincide if we were discussing tha military-industrial production of a nuclear powered, round-wing, suction aircraft.

In addition, it is now known that Dr. Diebner, more than any other well known German scientist, was at the heart of the German atomic bomb development. It was Dr. Diebner who participated in the development of a German uranium bomb which was being prepared in one of the underground facilities at Jonastal, specifically at a facility "Burg". Not only did Dr. Diebner do this but he did



NAZIS HAD 10,000 mph ATOM PLANE—IN THEORY

MANY of Germany's inner secrets had been unlocked by the United States and Britain and were being adapted for the war in the Far East when the Japanese *surrendered.*

MORE THAN 300 BRITISH AND AMERICAN TECHNICAL EXPERTS FOLLOWED HARD ON THE HEELS OF THE INVADING ARMIES IN EUROPE TO TRACK DOWN SECRETS, HOWEVER WELL HIDDEN, BY THE GERMANS.

The thoroughness of the search in Germany foreshadows a similar probing for secrets now locked in Japan.

This is revealed in a statement issued on behalf of the Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee and the Technical Industrial Intelligence Committee — agencies authorized by the British and United States Chiefs of Staff — and published by the British Ministry of Information and United States Office of War Information.

Discoveries show that German invention was far ahead of her capacity to translate theory into industry.

Not only had the Germans made significant progress in the development of the atomic bomb and on the production of "heavy water," but they had contemplated a piloted missile with a possible range of 5,000 miles.

The designer envisaged commercial applications for trans-Atlantic passenger transport in 17 minutes.

The Germans were working on a formula for new war gases which they hoped would prove more deadly than any chemical agent yet developed.

DETAILS FOR NEWER NAVAL VESSELS

They had specifications and construction details for naval vessels of advanced design, including submarines with high underwater speeds and apparatus for sustained underwater operations.

They had developed a system of Radar camouflage, consisting of anti-Radar coverings and coatings to be employed on submarines and other weapons and had highly advanced jet engine, rocket-assisted take-off, and aero dynamics designs.

New uses had been found for many staples and from coal the Germans were making synthetic butter as well as alcohol of both beverage and industrial types, aviation lubricants, soap and petrol, and they had designs for various secret types of guns and gunsights.

Other German war secrets ranged from records on the location of German capital in neutral countries and the status and composition of German cartels, speed-fications of long-range rocket developments which scientists described as "sensational."

The information gathered is not only valuable in the shaping of the policy for control of Germany but *is expected* to influence post-war scientific and industrial developments.

BOMBER CHIEF RETIRING

Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur T. Harris, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Bomber Command since February, 1942, will relinquish his appointment next month, and shortly afterwards retire from the Royal Air Force, announces the Air Ministry.

He will be succeeded by Air Marshal Sir Norman Bottomley, at present Deputy Chief of Air Staff.

999 Was His Unlucky Number

THE unluckiest crook in London is now serving six months in Wandsworth Jail and still finds it difficult to understand how he landed there.

When he left a Peckham woman by the back window carrying a suitcase filled with silverware, jewellery and clocks, police met him at the end of the road.

His capture was a result of the new radio - telephony system — calling all cars — which is being introduced by Scotland Yard. The snag was caught during a "dummy" run in South London.

A housewife dialled 999 and found herself speaking to the information room at Scotland Yard. The quick-witted inspector switched a police car which was on the testing trip in the area to the road and the burglar was under arrest then, minutes and twenty-five seconds later.

Scotland Yard hope for a big increase in London crime through the introduction of the new system.

Although all of London will not be covered at first, supplies of the necessary radio parts are now coming in, and Chief Inspector Bowman of the Yard's Communications Branch, can complete the work he began in 1939.

Every patrol car, flying-squad car and "Q" car—lash and removal vans disguised—will soon be in radiotelephonic communication with the Yard's control information control room.

Poison Gas Bomb Panics VJ Crowd

Hundreds of people celebrating victory in Strasbourg, Northern Ireland, were affected when a police gas bomb was released in the crowd.

Women and children panicked and within a few moments of the explosion the street was littered with people lying ill.

Taxis and private cars drove the affected people to their homes and doctors were kept busy throughout the night attending to them.

The symptoms were those of a lung irritant gas containing chlorine.

Police believe that the bomb was let off by one of the celebrators who did not realise the seriousness of what he was doing.

MONTY STARTS SAVINGS DRIVE

Field-Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery and Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, commanding the RAF in the British zone in Germany, are personally directing a drive against heavy spending by British occupation forces.

With nothing to buy locally,

Gen. McCreery Arrives For Vienna Talks

The Allied Commanders in Austria met recently in Vienna. The BTA Commander, Lt.-Gen. Sir Richard McCreery, is seen, at the British airfield at Vienna, above, with (left to right) Wing Commander East (orderly Commander), Lt.-Gen. Betrovsky (representing Marshal Koniev) and Air Commodore Epstein (Commander of the Air Division, Vienna).

Below, the BTA Commander steps to shake with one of the RAF Regt. crowd of honour at the airfield.

The Russians Are To Quit Manchuria In 3 Months

UNDER the terms of the treaty between China and the Soviet, published simultaneously in Chungking and Moscow during the week-end, Russia is to render military and material assistance to the Chungking central government of China in a plan of collaboration to prevent a repetition of Japanese aggression.

Reaffirming respect for China's full sovereignty in her three eastern provinces, Stalin has given an assurance that after the Japanese capitulation the Russian forces will withdraw from Manchuria within three months.

In the case of Sinkang, Russia reiterates that she has no intention of interfering in Chinese internal affairs while China is to recognise the independence of Outer Mongolia if the plebiscite proves that the people so desire.

The trunk line of the Chinese eastern and south Manchurian railways will be combined into one jointly-owned and operated line known as the Chinese Changchun railway *for a period of 30 years* after which it is to revert to China.

Dairen has been declared a free port by the Chinese Government and for 30 years Port Arthur will be a joint Chinese-Russian naval base.

Although the Chinese Communists are not specifically mentioned, the treaty is regarded in Chungking as a political defeat for them at a particularly difficult time.

NO CIVIL WAR?

It is the impression in London political circles that the recent conversations between the Chinese Prime Minister, Dr. T. V. Soong, and Generalissimo Stalin have notably reduced the risk of civil war in China.

THREAT OF 'UNBEATEN JAP ARMY'

FEARS of a Japan still believing, in spite of defeat, in its glorious destiny and the invincibility of its army, with the Japanese General Staff "going to ground", as did the German staff in 1918, were expressed by *The Times* yesterday.

In the demilitarisation of the Japanese people the paper urged the honest application to Southeast Asia of the principles of San Francisco.

"The circumstances of the Japanese surrender, the paper observes, imposes upon the Allies the necessity for extreme caution.

"ARMY DEFEATED IN . . .

"REMOTE" AREAS

"While the Japanese naval and air forces have been almost annihilated and the civil population has been shattering demonstrations of Allied might, the land forces have sustained likely much defeats in areas remote from public observation," *The Times* adds.

"Large bodies of Japanese troops will return home with no other experience than that of victory and many Japanese commanders of overseas territories will bend with truth that they surrendered not to Allied armies, but in deference to Imperial rescript.

"The way is thus open for the propagation of the myth which proved so formidable a feeder in the rise of the Third Reich—that the Army had never been conquered and that the war was lost by poor civilian morale caused by the Allies employing unfair weapons.

"The Allies can expect little aid from civil authorities in opposing this dangerous myth.

"The governing class from the Emperor downwards is engaged in persuading the nation that the Imperial prerogative remains intact and the destiny of Japan glorious."

The Times claims that the road to be aimed at is the demilitarisation of the minds of the Japanese people.

"First is the most main instrument which may be expected to contribute powerfully to such conversion.

"First is Soviet application to South-east Asia of the principles of the San Francisco Charter and second a spectacle of unity among the United Nations in pursuit of their declared aims.

"One of the contributory motives of Japanese aggression has been a deep resentment at the disposition of the Western Powers to treat the Eastern peoples as their inferiors.

WISHED TO UNITE EAST AGAINST WEST

"Japan desired to unite the East against the West under her own leadership and let the Japanese invaders displayed even zeal in handling the newly-ac-

Peace In Long Buckby, Too

People in the Northamptonshire village of Long Buckby are speaking to each other again now that Japan has surrendered.

Their war started on VE-Day, when it was found that the parish council had not arranged any celebrations.

Jack Cooper, secretary of the local Comforts Fund, Frank Riddell, the village fishmonger and Home Guard, Bill Coleman, the ailment sweep and Bob Silcock, bootmaker, got together and with many more helpers arranged VE celebrations 25 days

The 8th Army News, Triest, August 28, 1945, page three. For a short period of time, before the Cold War started heating up, censorship, both military and civilian was lax. It is from this time period from which we get much valuable information

this within a working association with the SS atomic research team mentioned above (37). This SS connection runs back to Prag, the Skoda Works and the Kammler Group who held knowledge and control of every truly innovative weapons system being developed by the Third Reich including those at Peenemuende. As we know, this included the development of flying discs. The association of the facilities in and around Prag, the Kammler Group, atomic energy and German flying discs has been made by other researchers using other evidence (38). This connection seems very strong.

The Germans were planning an nuclear powered flying saucer just as they were planning a nuclear powered submarine. The proof for both of these claims is the fact that the Americans discovered such plans, further developed them with captured German scientists, and built them in America after the war. We already know about the nuclear submarine and proof of American plans to build a nuclear flying saucer based upon German ideas has just been reveled.

Jim Wilson, writing in the November, 2000 edition of Popular Mechanics discloses something of major importance. Wilson tells of the days following the collapse of the 3rd Reich and a rumor which had begun circulating in Allied military intelligence circles. Interrogations of captured German aircraft engineers pointed to the development of a super-fast German rocket fighter at a secret base in Bavaria (the reader will recall the research aircraft 8-346 and P-073 mentioned earlier). This aircraft, according to Wilson's article, featured odd looking curved wings which blended into the fuselage.

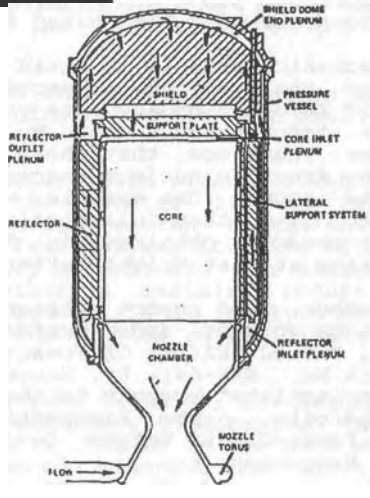
Documents obtained by Wilson point to an American secret saucer project, separate and parallel to Project Silver Bug, of German inspiration and involving captured German personnel. This project, called the Lenticular Reentry Vehicle (LRV), was a flying saucer designed to carry four nuclear tipped missiles into earth orbit for a mission duration of six weeks at a time. The saucer had a four man crew, was forty feet in diameter and was powered by a combination of chemical rocket engines and nuclear power (39).

The chemical engines were the hypergolic rocket engines of the same type as employed by the Germans during the war in the Me-162 rocket interceptor and referred to earlier.

Besides the chemical rocket engine, two atomic engines were employed as atomic rockets. In this type of engine a liquid gas (perhaps liquid air as described above) which is very cold, is passed through the atomic reactor or passed through a radiator of molten metal heated by the reactor. The liquid gas turns to vapor instantly and is accelerated out the rear of the rocket at a greater velocity than can be obtained by burning two liquid gases, for instance, hydrogen and oxygen. Although a shielded nuclear reactor is certainly heavier than an air-cooled aero-engine, there might an overall weight savings as compared to a



Nuclear Gas Core Reactor



TYPICAL ROCKET PROPULSION REACTOR

Top: The simple story is that hydrogen is passed through or by an atomic reactor. The very cold liquid hydrogen in instantly heated and greatly expands, providing thrust for the rocket. No actual combustion occurs and no oxidizer is needed. Bottom: A detailed look at the reactor itself.

conventional liquid rocket system since a liquid oxidizer, such as liquid oxygen, need not be carried on the vehicle. The atomic engine would also produce electricity for the saucer using this expansive output coupled to a turbine generator.

Wilson cites some evidence that this saucer was built and actually flew (40). Orbiting at an altitude of 300 miles and with a six week mission, this saucer was in reality an orbiting space station capable of raining destruction down upon any country or countries deemed an enemy. One can extrapolate a rotation system by which such a dreadnought was always kept on station for such a contingency. Klaus-Peter Rothkugel has suggested that an orbiting doomsday space station such as this was to be called the "Gatland Space Station" and that it was part of a strategic military joint-effort between the United States, Britain, Canada and perhaps Australia. Before the Popular Mechanics revelation, this assertion might have been dismissed as lacking in proof but now this idea must be given a hearing.

Wilson states that project's general contractor was North American Aviation in California but the project was managed out of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio where German engineers who worked on rocket plane and flying disc projects were housed under secret contract with the United States government (41).

The Popular Mechanics article is based upon information obtained from working on the American perspective and going back in time. The Freedom Of Information Act was very skillfully employed in obtaining this information. What Mr. Wilson did not know was what the reader knows now, that there is a trail of information leading to the American nuclear saucer project which started in Germany in the 1930s. One example which links both lines of evidence and bringing them full-circle back to the German origin is one report recently obtained via FOIA on a particular German scientist working at that Wright-Patterson facility.

This is a December, 1946 report written by one of those captured German scientists working under contract for the USA, Dr. Franz J. Neugebauer, titled "Effect Of Power-Plant Weight On Economy Of Flight (Project No. NFE-64). Dr. Neugebauer was, in fact, one of those "booty scientists" brought to the USA under the auspices of Operation Paperclip. The Biographical Note in the report, "Effects Of Power-Plant Weight On the Economy Of Flight", describes Dr. Neugebauer as:

"Dr. Franz J. Neugebauer is the foremost German authority on this subject. An Expert on internal-combustion engines and a specialist for Diesel compound aircraft engines, he held leading positions at Junkers in Dessau and Munich from 1924 to 1943, and was director of the engineering department of the Institute for Aeronautical Research at Munich from 1943 to 1945.

Dr. Neugebauer is employed at present in the Propulsion Section, Analysis Division, Intelligence (T-2), AMC, Wright

field, Dayton, Ohio" (42).

Two comments are in order. The first is that Junkers-Dessau is associated with a possible German saucer project designated "Schildkroete" which will be discussed later. The second comment is that Dr. Neugebauer was not brought to the USA to build diesel-powered aircraft. Diesel engines are much heavier than piston type aero-engines of those times. Dr. Neugebauer's relevant expertise is, in reality, his knowledge of the effects of heavy engines on aircraft performance and economy.

Nowhere in this report are the words "atomic rocket" mentioned but the implications are clear. As touched upon above, an atomic rocket's weight distribution would be somewhat different from that of a conventional rocket or aircraft. The nuclear reactor would be weighty but the fuel load would be lighter because no oxidizer, such as liquid oxygen, would be necessary. Also, the power output would be somewhat greater than an ordinary liquid fuel chemical rocket. The three variables as opposed to the already known figures for piston, jet or chemical rocket engines are greater engine weight, lesser fuel weight, and greater power output. A new equation was necessary if atomic rockets were to be fitted into an aircraft design calling for a certain speed, payload or range. It was Dr. Neugebauer's job to do this computation.

The following is a paragraph from the introduction of this report (43). It seems to say nothing but state the obvious until one thinks "atomic engine":

"Power-plant weight is a factor which affects flight performance; the greater the weight, the greater is that portion of the airplane and the drag which is affected by the power plant. In contrast to the effect of fuel consumption, the effect of power-plant weight cannot be easily determined. For example, it cannot be easily determined whether a certain reduction of fuel consumption is still advantageous if it involves an increase in power plant weight. This report aims to facilitate insight into these and similar questions."

Without ever mentioning the word "atomic", Dr. Neugebauer did the mathematical computations necessary to establish the feasibility of an atomic powered aircraft. Thanks to the work of Mr. Wilson, we know that at least advanced planning was undertaken with the goal of building an atomic powered flying saucer. There is no doubt that the Americans would not have involved captured German scientists in this project unless it was absolutely necessary to do so. The reason it was necessary was the same reason which other German scientists were employed in America's ballistic missile program. It was because both groups of German scientists has previous experience. Both groups worked on very similar projects in Germany during the war. These scientists and their projects were far ahead of the Americans in both these areas. The input of these scientists was absolutely essential if these

projects were to succeed in a timely matter, meaning, ahead of the Soviets.

Two final points or comments should be added to this discussion. First, while the Peenemuende saucer project was run in and around Peenemuende, research and component work were probably also done in other facilities elsewhere within the Greater Reich. References to saucer research at some of these other sites by this or other writers may be, in fact, part of the overall Peenemuende project.

Second, historically speaking, the German atomic projects have always been minimized to say the least. For whatever reason, there seems to have been a concerted effort to deny German expertise in the field of atomic energy. Originally, this may have been government inspired. Now, however, it seems to be a mantra taken up as part of some agenda whose specifics remain clouded. "Nay-saying" regarding German atomic projects has become sheik and those who expound it imply knowledge and sophistication in their opinions. Anyone doubting the high degree of understanding possessed within the Third Reich concerning matters "atomic" should take a look at the evidence being put forth by on-site investigators and German language researchers which have arisen since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Much of this information is in book form available from Anum Verlag. Anyone with the interest and ability to read German language is urged to contact this publisher for a list of publications. After reviewing the evidence, German wartime expertise in atomic research sounds much less far-fetched than the nay-sayers would have you believe.

The Peenemuende Project

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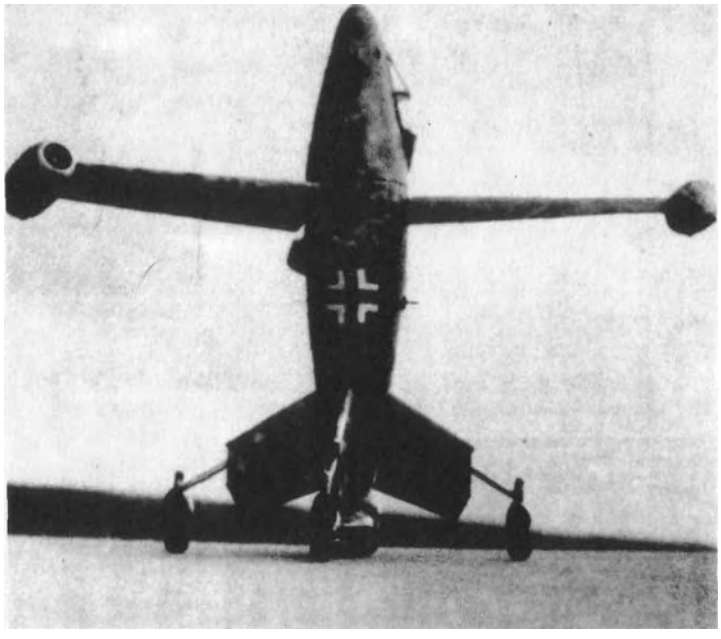
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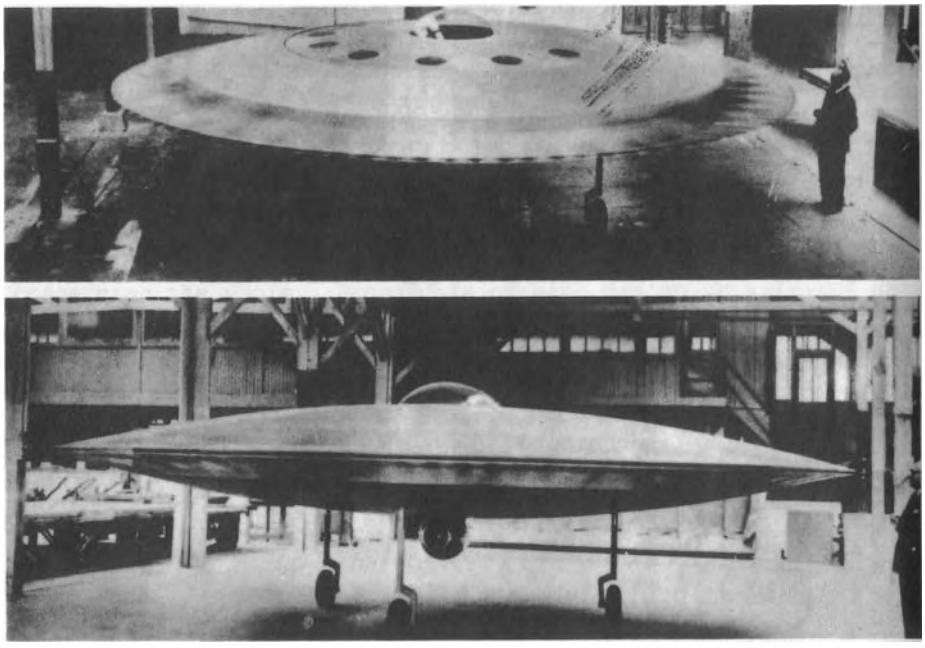
Section Summary

It can be said that the German flying disc program built upon itself, each innovation retaining something from a previous design yet incorporating a new innovation. This progressed through several steps until the original had seemingly nothing in common with final design. At each step a saucer project or at least a saucer design, seems to have been spun off. Each of these spin-offs was not an independent, stand-alone project but remained under the guidance and direction of an overall controlling authority. If viewed out-of-context, the multiplicity of designs and spin-offs have led to confusion concerning the whole. Proponents of each design or spin-off have championed the project with which they were familiar as "the" German saucer project. Let us try to keep idea in mind when discussing the next group of saucers which may or may not have had a relationship to those already discussed.



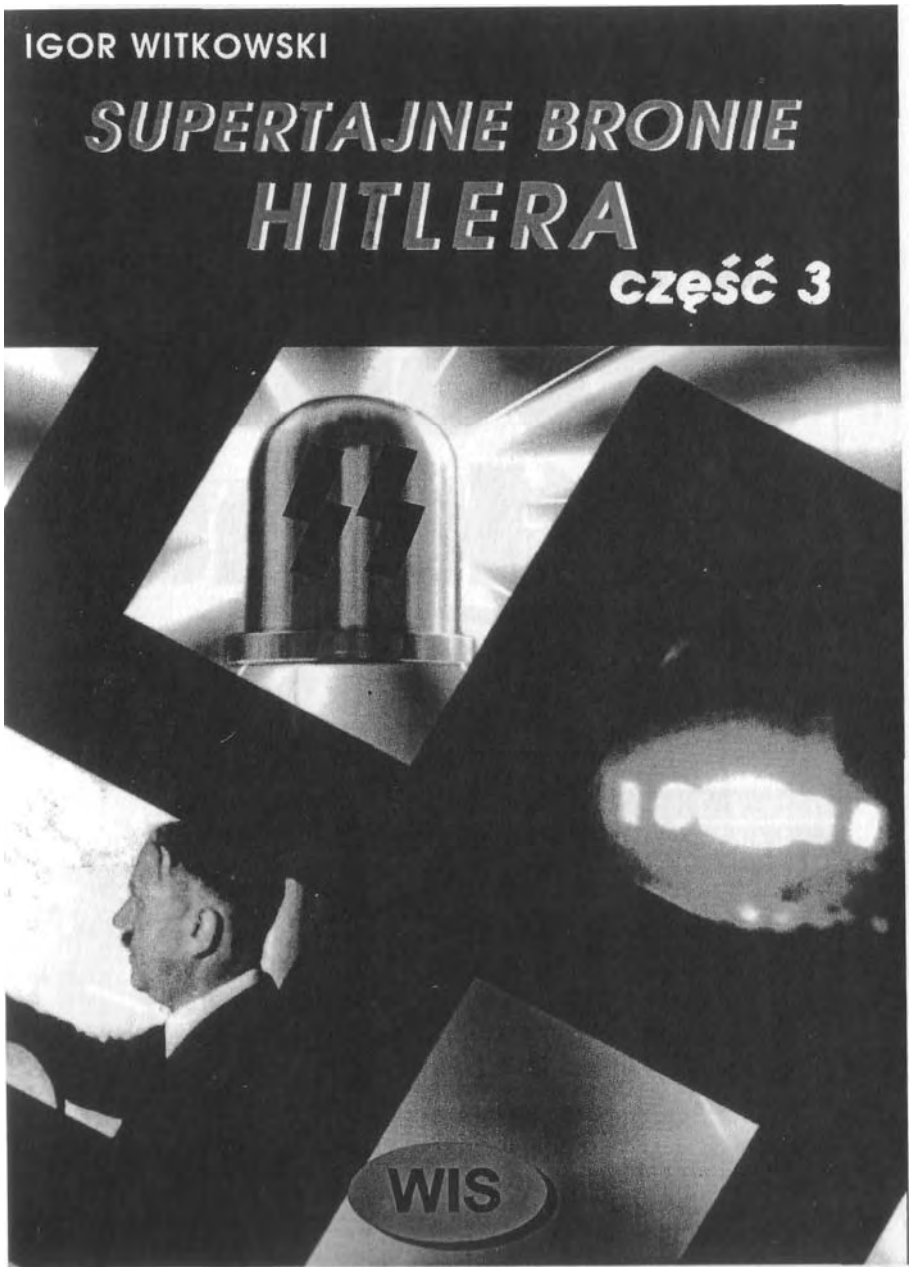


Top: Diagram of the Scriever-Habermohl flying disk. Bottom: The Focke-Wulf powered wing design with three Lorin ramjet engines. The required initial velocity was to be provided by rockets mounted in the engines.





Top: These photos of French aerospace designer Rene Couzinet's flying saucer with a diameter of 27 feet appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer on July 5, 1955. He died in a sudden auto accident shortly afterward. Left: The famous Darmstadt Saucer, a photo taken in August 1953 near the German city of Darmstadt.



A Polish language book on Hitler's secret weapons, including saucer and cylindrical aircraft.



A Finnish language book on Hitler's secret weapons, including saucer and cylindrical aircraft

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE GERMAN FIELD PROPULSION PROJECTS

THE VICTOR SCHAUBERGER MODELS

THE KM-2 ROCKET

FIELD PROPULSION SAUCERS

A German Eye Witness
A Combined Intelligence
Objectives Sub-Committee Report
The Smoking Gun: An F.B.I. Report
Discussion of German Field Propulsion Saucer
Atomic Saucers Again
The Karl Schappeller Device

CHAPTER FOUR

German Field Propulsion Projects

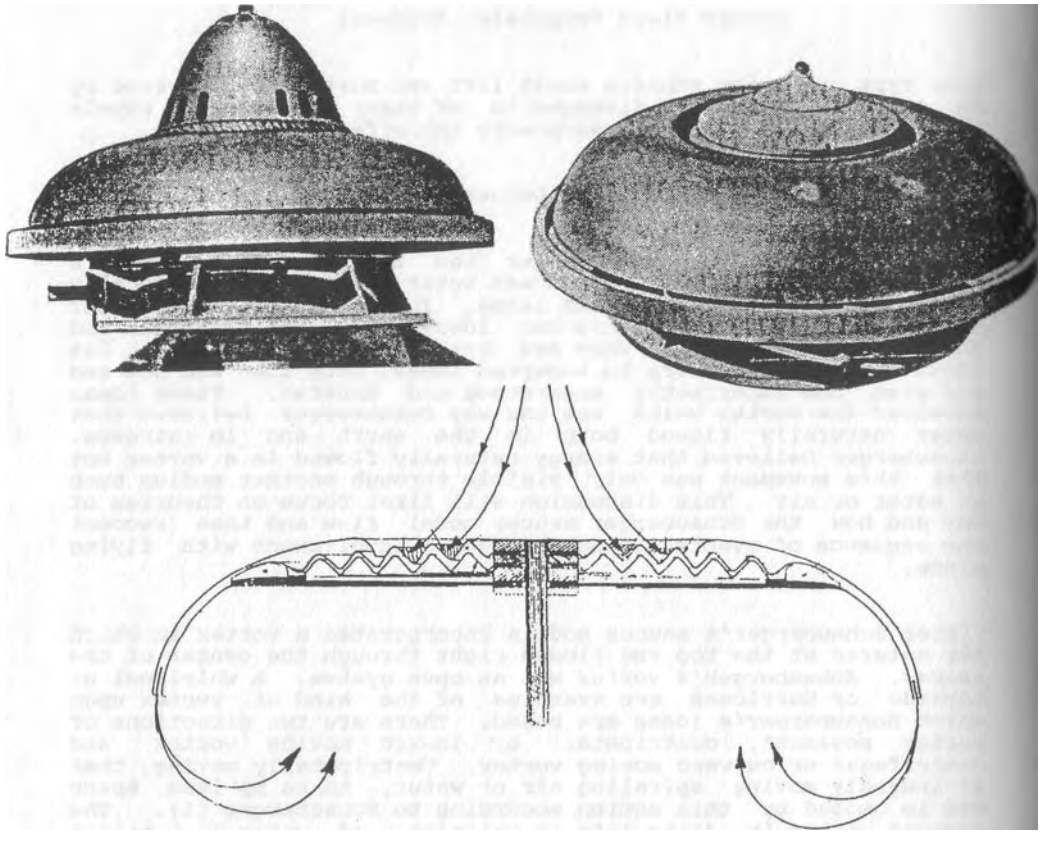
This type of flying vehicle would lift and move itself powered by an electric, magnetic, diamagnetic or ether field which repels earth's magnetic field or overpowers the effects of gravity.

The Viktor Schauberger Models

An Austrian, Viktor Schauberger was first and foremost a naturalist. His primary focus was water as found in naturally occurring streams, rivers and lakes. In observing the movement of water he formulated his own ideas about its movement and energetic properties. They are applicable in air also. His ideas are guite contrary to accepted ideas, both then and now and are even now imperfectly understood and debated. These ideas involved the vortex which was the way Schauberger believed that water naturally flowed both in the earth and in streams. Schauberger believed that energy naturally flowed in a vortex but that this movement was only visible through another medium such as water or air. This discussion will first focus on theories of why and how the Schauberger saucer model flew and then recount the sequence of events in Schauberger's involvement with flying discs.

Viktor Schauberger's saucer models incorporated a vortex in which air entered at the top and flowed right through the center of the saucer. Schauberger's vortex was an open system. A whirlpool or tornado or hurricane are examples of the kind of vortex upon which Schauberger's ideas are based. There are two directions of vortex movement, centripetal or inward moving vortex and centrifugal or outward moving vortex. Centripetally moving, that is inwardly moving spiraling air or water, takes up less space and is cooled by this motion according to Schauberger (1). The example we see in daily life is the motion of water in a toilet after flushing. He called this centripetal movement "implosion". Implosion was always accompanied by explosion as the fluid expanded again in an outward, centrifugal spiral. The process is first centripetal then centrifugal. The form this vortex took is really dictated by function according to Schauberger. The "function" is the energy flow. The spiral vortex is the shape the energy flow takes in its movement (2). Energy flows in at the top of the vortex in the characteristic double-spiral manner. These air molecules are imploded, that is, they are made more dense and they yield heat as they progress (3). Air molecules are squeezed tighter and tighter together as they move down the vortex until the sub-atomic particles themselves become unglued transforming into new and unrecognized forms of energy (4). As the vortex itself decreases in diameter implosion and speed are

Viktor Schauberger's Saucer Models



Top: Schauberger models. Bottom: Sectional diagram. The zig-zag is the air passage. The passage is a hollow space between two plates. As the saucer spins on its axis, the air enters and moves away from the center toward the rim following the up and down flow of the zig-zag. The spin causes individual tornado-like vortices to form as the spin causes the air flow to fold over on itself as it moves outward. Vortices become smaller in diameter and more "densified" until they reach the rim where they are released into the atmosphere, rapidly expand, and yield energy. Model is multi-section, copper. Courtesy Klaus-Peter Rothkugel

increased until they reach the point within the vortex where centripetal forces stop and centrifugal forces take over.

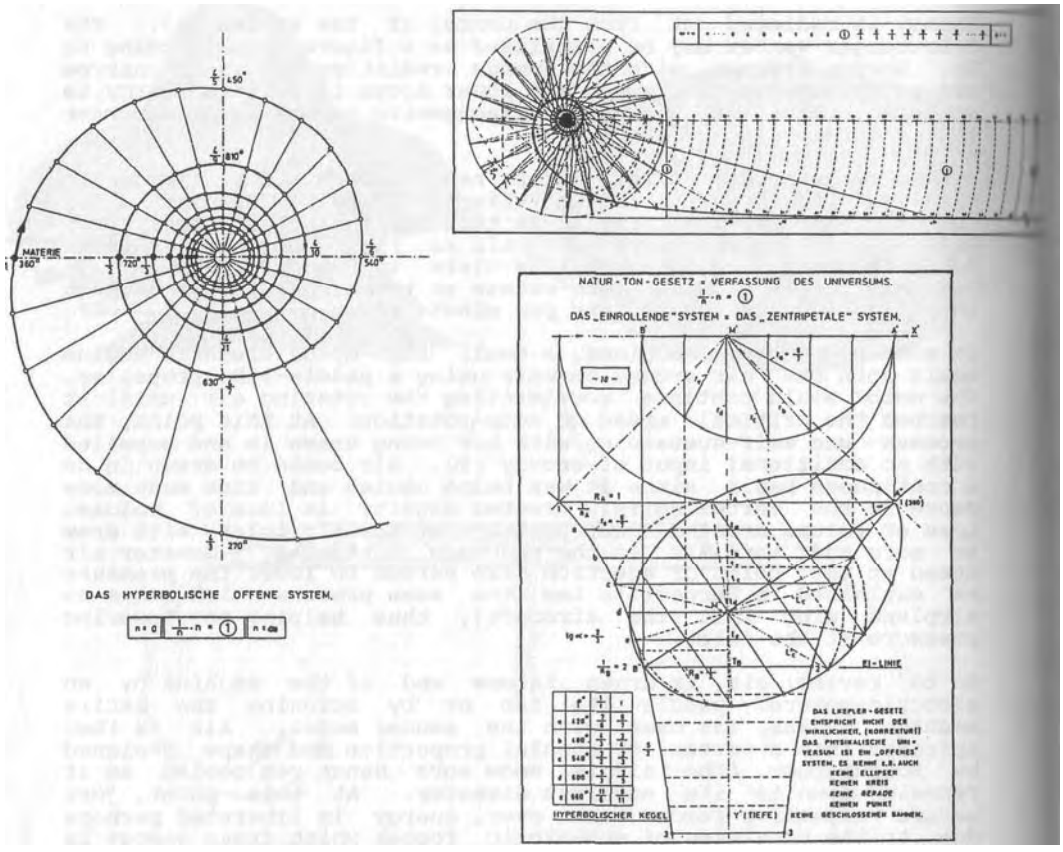
Energy is radiated out from the center of the vortex (5). The Schauberger vortex may be visualized as a figure "8" according to Dr. Gordon Freeman, with the energy radiating out at the narrow mid-point between the upper and lower loops (6). This energy is produces levitation. It may be diamagnetic energy as Schauberger believed (7).

Viktor Schauberger first built new designs for flumes to transport logs. He then built water purification machines using the principle of the vortex. He then built electric generators, heaters and coolers using only air as fuel. The breakthrough using machines was Schauberger's claim to have found a way to make his vortex machines auto-rotate at rotational speeds between 10,000 and 20,000 revolutions per minute (8).

In some Schauberger machines, a small high-speed electric engine would spin the air around an axis using a paddle-like propeller. The motor would continue accelerating the rotating air until it reached the critical speed of auto-rotation. At this point, the process was self-sustaining with air being drawn in and expelled with no additional input of energy (9). Air could be drawn in on a continuous basis since it was being cooled and thus made more dense in the vortex spiral. Greater density is loss of volume. Loss of volume created lower pressure at the air inlet with drew in more and more air as the reaction continued. Greater air speed at the point of ejection also served to lower the pressure as explained in Bernouli's Law (the same process which makes an airplane wing lift the aircraft), thus helping to lowering pressure at the inlet.

So to review: air is drawn in one end of the machine by an electric-powered, paddle-like fan or by spinning the entire machine as was the case with the saucer model. Air is then spiraled into a vortex of special proportion and shape designed by Schauberger. The air is made more dense yet cooled as it funnels down to its smallest diameter. At this point, just before expansive forces take over, energy is liberated perhaps due to the un-gluing of sub-atomic forces which frees energy in some manner currently imperfectly understood. The air begins to expand in a centrifugal motion as it warms. It is at this midway point that the air exits the saucer model at its periphery or lip of the saucer to expand centrifugally in the open atmosphere. Once a speed of 10,000 to 20,000 revolutions per minute is attained, the machine auto-rotates without need of the small electric-powered starter motor.

The exact proportions for the Schauberger pipes are designed geometrically. This geometry is of a rather esoteric nature. For instance, the bend of the spiral pipe is calculated using the Golden Section. For some time a true engineering genius, Dr. Gordon Freeman, has been writing to some interested parties and



Top Left : The Hyperbolic Open System. The movement could be centripetal or centrifugal. Top Right: Law of Natural Tones resulting from the hyperbolic spiral. Bottom: The egg-shape, built according to the non-Euclidian Law of Natural Tones, correct some of the planetary motion laws of Kepler according to Schauberger.

explaining how certain shapes or wave patterns can impact conventional physics. He believes one needs to understand known science as well as a more esoteric doctrine in order to appreciate the nature of free-energy and some types of field propulsion UFO craft. The work of Viktor Schauberger is an example of this. In this work there remains a world of knowledge imperfectly understood by most of us.

Returning to the mechanism by which these models flew, Schauberger himself always made the point of the fact that his saucer models were constructed of diamagnetic materials. Diamagnetic materials are those which are repel a magnetic field. Schauberger considered copper diamagnetic (10) and the surfaces of the saucer models coming in contact with air were made of copper.

As mentioned above, the very atomic structure of these atoms may have altered by this process. Coats tells us that electrons, protons and neutron may have been separated from one another (11). It has been suggested that the electrons and protons of these atoms were stripped from their nuclei. Their opposing charges were free and attracted one another resulting in their mutual annihilation of one another yielding a release of energy (12). This would occur exactly at the point where centripetal forces ceased and centrifugal forces began, these air particles reversed their spin and altered their rotation.

Further, Coats explains that the neutrons, which were left over in the process described above, and contrary to accepted views, are themselves magnetic (13). These neutrons were expelled from the saucer centrifugally along with water, water vapor and air which had not reacted as stated above. These "magnetic" neutrons, on the outside of the saucer body may serve to increase the diamagnetic reaction of the copper saucer which would be both pushing away from the earth and the cloud of surrounding "magnetically charged" neutrons. In other words, the Schauberger disc may have been repelling away from the magnetically charged atmosphere which it itself had just created.

Dr. Richard LeFors Clark proposes a more detailed description of similar ideas involving the mechanism of the Bloch Wall (14). This will be discussed in the section involving Karl Schappeller but it should be kept in mind while reading these ideas that Dr. Clark had Schauberger in mind. These ideas and others pertaining to both Schauberger and Karl Schappeller will be presented in the Schappeller section to follow.

The history of the Schauberger flying disc models is as follows. According to Alexandersson, Aloys Kokaly, a German, began work for Viktor Schauberger in the early days of the Second World War producing certain parts for a "flying object" which were hard to obtain in Austria. The parts were to be delivered to the Kertl Works in Vienna which was the site of this work at the time. The Kertl Works were operating "on higher authority" in association

with Schauberger. Kokaly was received at Kertl by its chief and told by this individual, somewhat bitterly, that one of these strange contraptions had already flown. As a matter of fact it had gone right through the roof of the Kertl plant (15). The year was 1940.

Coats tells us that the purpose of this device was twofold. First, it was to investigate free energy production. This could be done by running a shaft to the rapidly rotating wheel-like component which was auto-rotating at between 10,000 and 20,000 rpm. Using reduction gearing, some of that energy could be mechanically coupled to an electric generator producing electricity at no cost. The second purpose of these experiments was to test Schauberger's theories on levitation and flight (16).

Two prototypes were said to have been built at Kertl. The test flight was done without Schauberger's presence or even his permission to do the test. The model flew as described above but it did considerable destruction to the Kertl Works so there were mixed feels concerning the success of this flight. The force of levitation was so strong that it sheared six 1/4 inch diameter high-tensile steel anchor bolts on its way to the roof. Coats reports that according to Schauberger's calculations based upon previous tests, a 20 centimeter diameter device of this sort, with a rotational velocity of 20,000 rpm, would have lifted a weight of 228 tons (17).

A few years earlier in 1934 Schauberger had met with Hitler to discuss alternative energy ideas (18). Nothing come of this meeting immediately but after Germany annexed Austria in 1938, Schauberger became involved in research at Professor Kotschau's laboratory in Nuremberg. Assisted by his son, Walter, who had just completed engineering studies at a technical college in Dresden, Viktor Schauberger went to work with a Dr. Winter on a plan to extract electrical energy directly form a water flow. Some success was achieved. Alexandersson reports that a potential of 50,000 volts was achieved but that no practical results came from this at that time (19).

Probably based upon the fact that Viktor Schauberger was a veteran of the Great War, he was inducted into the Waffen-SS in 1943. This put him under the direct control of SS chief Heinrich Himmler. Schauberger was ordered to castle Schoenbrunn near the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. There he was to select qualified prisoners, twenty to thirty craftsmen, technicians and engineers, and begin work on a new, secret weapon. Schauberger arranged improved conditions for his team and produced another flying saucer model (20).

In May, 1945, because of the deteriorating circumstances of the war, Schauberger was re-located to Leonstein in Upper Austria by the SS. There, just after a successful test flight of his latest device, it was seized by an American intelligence unit which appeared to be well informed about it. Schauberger was de-

briefed by American intelligence, according to Coats, detained, and told not to participate in further research (21).

Coats was actually able to locate a surviving example of a Schauberger saucer model. Excellent photographs of this device are to be found in his book, Living Energies, as well as a dissection of it into its various components. It is unclear if this device was one of the earlier (1940) or later (1945) projects.

After the war, Schauberger worked on agricultural projects in Austria until one day in the late 1957 when he was contacted by two Americans. They promised Viktor almost unlimited resources if he and his son Walter would work for them in the United States (22). Discussion concerning the exact source and motives for this offer are beyond the scope of this discussion but suffice it to say that they were powerful interests. The Schaubergers were sent to Texas, near the Red River, where Viktor was asked to disclose everything he knew and Walter was asked to set Viktor's terminology into the standard language of physics and engineering. This whole episode proved extremely unsatisfactory for both Schaubergers and they returned to Austria after about three months. As a condition for their return, Viktor was asked to sign away his knowledge to this powerful concern. Viktor was given a contract in English, which he did not read. Nevertheless, the deal was done and the Schaubergers returned to Austria (23). Viktor, already in poor health, died five days later on September 25, 1958. Walter continued advancing his father's research in Austria until his death in 1997.

Coats provides us with pictures of one of the Schauberger saucers in question and an explanation of its workings (24). This saucer was composed of a number of copper plates bolted together. Air was drawn in at the to and into the rapidly spinning saucer which was set into motion by an electric motor. In this machine no paddles pushed upon the air to start it. Instead, a motor was used to spin the whole saucer model to the desired number of revolutions per minute. The air was thus spun rapid over channels formed by the upper and lower surfaces of two copper plates. On these plates alternate ridges and depressions on both plates kept the air moving in snake-like wave forms and it moved toward the periphery of the saucer. Because the saucer was rapidly spinning, the air was folded over upon itself as it moved laterally into many individual vortices. The air was rotating in these vortices and moving up and down between the ridged plates. It was also moving around as the saucer spun on its axis. This is a double-spiral motion which additionally duplicates the undulating motion seen on the Schauberger log flumes. The air was cooled and made more dense as it progressed towards the periphery. At and around the saucer the periphery, it was ejected into the atmosphere at great speed.

In this machine, centripetal air flow changes to centrifugal air flow at this periphery. The air, once outside the saucer,

spirals away in a centrifugal motion. It is at this periphery, at the midline of the saucer, where the change of motion takes place. It is here that energy is liberated. It is this energy which gives the saucer its quality of levitation.

Sometimes the Coanda Effect is cited as a reason this saucer flew (25). Coanda effects, if present at all, are only a secondary force if Viktor Schauberger's calculations are correct. Coanda effects alone could never be powerful enough to generate the lifting force equal to 228 tons which Schauberger estimated his small model produced.

The important factual points to keep in mind are these: First, this saucer-model, probably in more than one version, actually flew. Second, one model still exists today. Therefore this "flying saucer" is a physical reality which can be photographed, touched and studied. Third, explanations of the mysterious energetic forces causing lift in this device should not be forgotten. The German scientific leadership was interested in implosion and in what Schauberger had to teach them but they did not necessarily want to be limited by the use of air to achieve these results. Instead, they may have wanted to use Schauberger ideas but actuating these principles with electronic components. We will see some ideas relating to Schauberger in a future example.

The Viktor Schauberger Models

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A shred of evidence comes down to us though the years in the form of a newspaper article by Lionel Shapiro in the Denver Post, dated November 9, 1947, and titled "Spies Bid for Franco's Weapons". (Please refer to a copy of that article). It should be noted that this was a few months after the summer of 1947, the first and largest UFO flap in history, which included the Kenneth Arnold sighting and the flying saucer activity of Roswell. It should also be noted that the Denver Post was nor is not a tabloid publication.

In doing research, this newspaper was contacted in an attempt to learn the whereabouts of the author, Lionel Shapiro. Unlike so many newspapers in the United States which have been purchased and merged by conglomerates, this newspaper is still intact and in existence. Unfortunately, no record could be found of Mr. Shapiro in their personnel files although they did maintain files going back that far. Also, no record could be found in their sister publication, The Rocky Mountain News. It was suggested that Mr. Shapiro was "a stringer", that is, a writer who did not work directly for the newspaper and whose work was purchased on a piece by piece basis. His work seems to have been channeled through the North American Newspaper Alliance. More of Mr. Shapiro's history and connections will unfold as the tale progresses.

This article describes two devices. The first is an "electromagnetic rocket", sometimes referred to later as the "KM-2 rocket" in other literature. The second is a nuclear warhead small enough to be fired by an artillery piece. The nuclear, warhead which is affixed to a cannon projectile, is novel at this time and is interesting since such devices were built and fired shortly thereafter by the United States military. The article's description of the nuclear cannon is correct. This was a German invention and was under development in Germany during the latter stages of the war. A prototype was even built and it carried the German designation of DKM 44 (1). This very cannon was copied by the Americans and became the T-131 which fired a nuclear warhead (2).

The discussion of the nuclear cannon is really beyond the scope of this book but what is important to bear in mind concerning this discussion is that if fifty percent of this article has proven to be accurate. The nuclear cannon was built and it stemmed from a German prototype. Does this not at least raise the possibility that the other fifty percent is accurate also?

Returning to the electromagnetic rocket itself, this device is right on point for the discussion of field propulsion. Some points are ascertained in reading this article. Its description as a "rocket" would lead one to believe it was cylindrical in shape rather than saucer-shaped. It is suggested that this

Spies Bid for Franco's Weapons

Agents Ascribe 'Flying Saucers' to New Rocket

By LIONEL SHAPIRO.

GENEVA.—Three German scientists working under the personal sponsorship of Generalissimo Francisco Franco have developed two highly advanced weapons of war, according to specifications and blueprints smuggled out of Spain by the agent of an independent European spy organization.

The first weapon is an electromagnetic rocket which, it is claimed, is responsible for the "flying saucers" seen over the North American continent last summer and for at least one and perhaps two hitherto unexplained accidents to transport aircraft.

The second weapon is an artillery warhead employing the principle of nuclear energy and described as having a startling disintegrating power.

Blueprints of the weapons have been offered for sale to at least three of the great powers. The degree of credence placed in them by the military intelligence sections of these powers is indicated by the fact that two of them—of whom this correspondent has certain knowledge—have made strenuous and, indeed, dramatic efforts to acquire the blueprints.

Big Sums Offered

The disclosure that these plans were available has touched off the most intense activity among secret agents in European capitals since the end of the war. Huge sums of money and even threats of death have been involved in negotiations.

The nation which coupled a threat of death to its bid is Soviet Russia.

I came upon the story three weeks ago by accidental interception of a document cataloging the weapons. This was being circularized through Europe's intricate network of secret agents. Since then, careful checking among agents and military intelligence organizations in several countries has disclosed:

That the principal powers fully believe Franco has been developing new weapons.

That the weapons (particularly the electro-magnetic rocket) do actually exist and are now being manufactured in Spain.

According to the information available, the weapons were developed in secret laboratories located near Marbella on the south coast of Spain just east of Gibraltar. They were tested in Franco's presence early last summer. The rocket, known as KM2 after its inventors, Professors Knoh and Mueller—was tested off Malaga while Franco watched from the deck of his yacht.

The rocket is described as having a range of 16,000 kilometers (9,942 miles) traveling in a given direction. Its flight can be controlled by radio for at least the first 5,000 kilometers (3,107 miles) and when the control is removed the rocket is attracted by electric vibrations of flying planes or the magnetism of the nearest mass of metal. It explodes when it reaches the attracting element.

The agent who smuggled the blueprints out of Spain, and who presumably was present at the tests, claims that the rockets were directed over North America and that they were responsible for at least one and probably two transport-plane accidents which, for want of better explanation, were attributed to structural defects.

The nuclear-energy projectile is credited to a Professor Halkmann. It is described as twenty-two centimeters (8.7 inches) long and is used as a warhead for artillery shells. The agent claims that Franco is already mass-producing automatic guns to fire these new shells and that the first tests of the projectiles show them to have unprecedented explosive qualities.

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Post-War German science for Generalissimo Francisco Franco. This is from the Denver Post, November 9, 1947, four months after flying saucers were seen all over the USA.

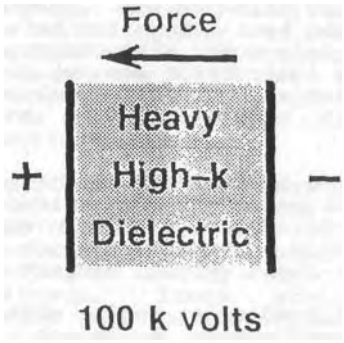
device was responsible for the flying saucer sightings over the USA that previous summer. This speaks for its operational range. It was said to have been tested off Malaga while Franco watched. The device was constructed in the town of Marbella, east of Gibraltar. Finally, it was said to have been of German origin, even naming the German scientists who built it.

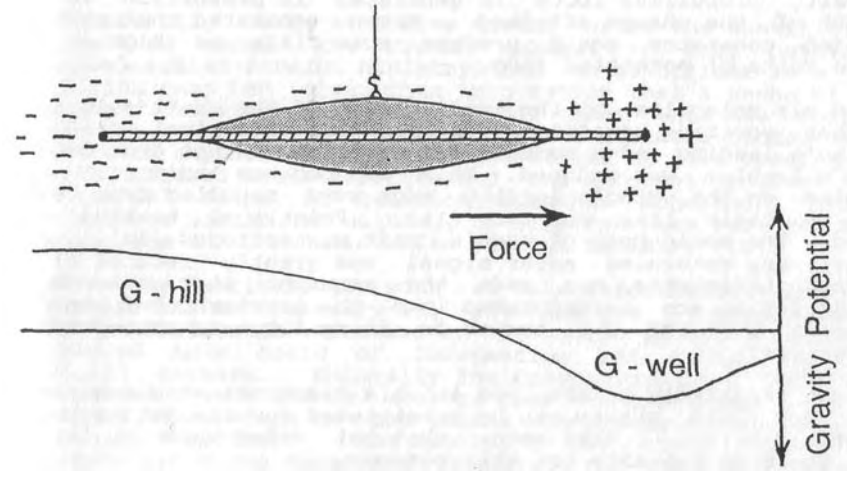
Even Spain itself is of some interest here since this country's ruler, Generalissimo Francisco Franco, was openly sympathetic to the Nazis. The Nazis had assisted Franco militarily in the Spanish Civil War during the 1930s and were instrumental in his retention of power. During the final stages of the Second World War and afterward Spain was seen, by the Germans as a safe haven for all those things they wished to keep out of Allied hands, including secret weapons. Many shipments of gold, secret blueprints, specialty steel, machine tools, scientists and high ranking Nazis were sent to Spain (3). Colonel Otto Skorzeny, head of several SS post-war, self-help organizations even set up his headquarters in Madrid (4). Spain served as a home-away-from-home for the SS after the war.

In analyzing the means by which the KM-2 device flew, it must be noted that gravitational force can be overcome through the use of a strong electrostatic charge as shown by the work of T. Townsend Brown beginning in the 1920s. This is sometimes referred to as the Biefield-Brown Effect. Imagine a torpedo-shaped model with a dielectric center section suspended by a string from the ceiling. If this model were charged with high voltage, one end would become positive and the other end would become negative. Movement would occur toward the positively charged direction if the voltage was sufficient and the charged ends remained separated by the dielectric (5).

This dielectric is an insulating material which can keep positive and negative charges from interacting with each other and so canceling each other out. They are commonly used in capacitors or condensers which have a positive charge on one side while retaining a negative charge on the other. If the charge can be contained by the non-conducting dielectric, a force is exerted in the direction of the positive side with the application of 75,000 to 300,000 volts. One way to conceive of this action is to imagine a gravity hill whose slope increases with the intensity of the ion charge. The craft being powered simply slides down the gravity gradient like a surfboard on a wave (6).

This concept is a new, non-conventional form of flight. It is non-aerodynamic method of flight. All previous conventional flight had either been through the use of lighter than air balloons, winged craft powered by propellers, jets or rockets or the brute force of rockets themselves. Using this method, Brown advocated defeating gravity by generating another form of energy over which gravity could be surfed. It is a form of field propulsion.





T.T. Brown found that when strong electric charges are separated by a dielectric, movement occurs towards the positive charge as if gravity were reduced on the positive side or as if the charged object were sliding down a hill.

T. Townsend Brown demonstrated this means of propulsion to the American military during the 1950s. He used a saucer-shaped model tethered only by a high voltage line supplying the charge to the model (7). During that decade Brown built increasingly larger, faster models using this method. Brown found that a saucer or a triangle was the best shape for this type of flying craft. A secret proposal, code-named Winterhaven, was to develop a Mach 3 antigravity saucer interceptor was put forth to the U.S. Air Force (8). This project was further developed through the 1960s but after this all traces of this concept seem to disappear.

But where Brown is overlooked is not only did he have a method of electrostatic propulsion but he also had a self-contained method to impart this charge to a flying craft. He invented a flame-jet generator or electrokenetic generator which supplied the necessary high voltage in a light weight, compact manner (9).

The flame-jet generator utilized a jet engine with an electrified needle mounted in the exhaust nozzle to inject negative ions in the jet's exhaust stream. A corresponding but positive charge is automatically built up upon the leading front edge of the craft. As long as there is no leakage through the dielectric or insulating material, in this case through the wings and body of the craft, propulsive force is generated in proportion to the strength of the charge attained. Brown estimated that such a flame-jet generator could produce potentials as high as 15 million volts of potential (10).

Ionized air molecules on the leading edge of the craft's surface had other positive benefits. The positive electrical field on the wing's leading edge reduced air friction so that drag caused by air molecules was reduced. This was because individual air molecules on the wing's leading edge were repelled from each other by their like charges (11). Frictional heating was reduced. The sonic boom of such a craft was softened (12). And finally, any returning radar signal was greatly reduced (13). Dr. Paul LaViolette has made the argument that all these characteristics are incorporated into the American B-2 bomber, concluding that the B-2 bomber is in reality an anti-gravity aircraft (14).

As Brown repeatedly points out in his Electrokinetic Generator patent, any fluid stream can be substituted for the jet engine's fuel and air (15). This means that hot water vapor or steam itself would be suitable for this purpose.

If T. Townsend Brown had been working on this form of flight since the 1920s, is it not conceivable that others were also? Remember that the KM-2 device is described as an "electromagnetic rocket". If a combination design is considered, one which combines the electrokinetic apparatus with the electrokinetic generator, a picture emerges which would seem to fulfill the description given to the KM-2 "electromagnetic rocket".

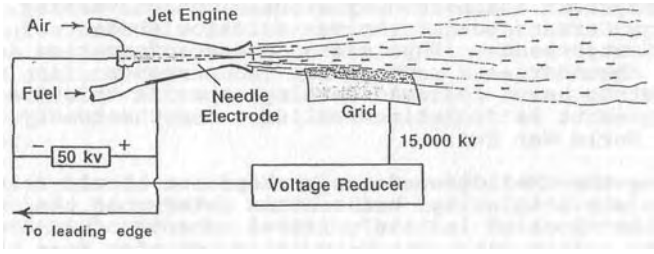
The real question may be if the flow of this knowledge went from Brown to the Germans or from the Germans to Brown as was the case with so much high technology in the post-war years. T. T. Brown's early collaborator and mentor was a Dr. Paul Biefield a Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Dennison University. Dr. Biefield was a German speaker who was a fellow student of Albert Einstein in Switzerland. Physicists share information across international boundaries. There is no reason for German scientists not to have followed developments in this Biefield-Brown Effect, as it is sometimes called, for the twenty years leading up to World War Two.

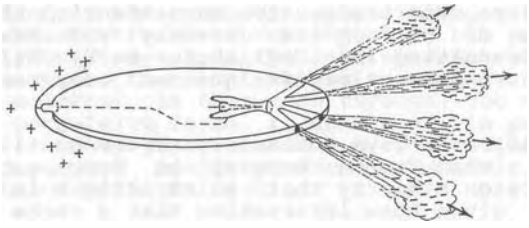
Before leaving the KM-2 discussion, perhaps we should return to the reporter who originally broke this story of the German "Electromagnetic Rocket" in 1947, Lionel Shapiro for a closer look at who he really was. It seems this reporter does have a history of breaking or leaking stories through the North American Newspaper Alliance. These stories which, prior to his involvement, could only be classified as "secret". The point in question is a 1946 report, brought to our attention though the extensive research of Dr. Milos Jesensky and Mr. Robert Lesniakiewicz and translated into English for me by Milos Vnenk. This account is of post-wartime intrigue can only be outlined here.

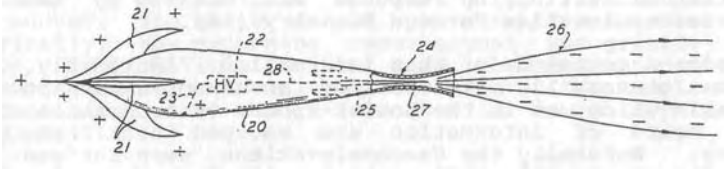
On October 13, 1945, over five months after the hostilities in Europe had ended, the French embassy in Prag notified the Czechoslovakian Foreign Ministry that an SS officer in a French detention camp had given them information that a cache of secret documents existed near Prag. This cache took the form of a tunnel in which 32 boxes of secret documents were hidden and were wired with explosives before being sealed at its opening. The French offered their services and the information given to them by the SS officer in question, Guenther Achenbach. But even after three months of waiting, no response was received by the French from the Czechoslovakian Foreign Ministry (16).

Somehow the Americans got wind of this information. Incredibly, the Americans on February 13, 1946 mounted an armed incursion into Czechoslovakia which was in the Soviet sphere of occupation, retrieved this hoard of information and escaped back into occupied Germany. Naturally the Czechoslovakians were furious and demanded and got an apology from the Americans. They also demanded the return of the German documents stolen from their sovereign territory. The Americans did return documents but probably not those sensitive documents for which the expedition was mounted (17).

Dr. Jesensky and Mr. Lesniakiewicz have made an extensive study of the German technical facilities surrounding Prag and the purposes for these facilities. It is their conclusion that the sensitive technical information recovered and which prompted this dangerous action was nothing other than plans of the German disc airplane, the "V-7" (18).







Top: T.T. Brown's flame-jet generator, capable of supplying millions of volts. Middle: Brown's saucer design which is definitely food for thought. Bottom: Brown's electric rocket incorporating flame-jet generator. The KM-2 rocket must have been a very similar device.

It was Lionel Shapiro, writing under the name Lionel S. B. Shapiro who broke this story for the North American Newspaper Alliance (19). As confirmation, it can be added that the story was also covered by Ms. Lux Taub in the Swedish publication "Expressen" with stories on 2/19/46, 2/22/46 and 2/24/46 (20).

In the immediate post-war world there seems to have been a relaxation on the release German technical information. Not the detailed analytic work done by the various Allied intelligence teams combing the carcass of the dead Reich, but the popular reporting by Shapiro and others who received the "o.k." to publish brief stories recounting Nazi technology which would be squelched later as the cold war got underway.

But even given this relaxation, what are the chances of one reporter stumbling upon both the stories of the electromagnetic rocket and the U.S. incursion into Czechoslovakia, first, and on his own? It is also noteworthy that both of these stories dealt with the topic of this book, or at least one which is related to that theme. Mr. Shapiro must have been a very well connected reporter indeed! He is also an excellent source of information.

A point of speculation should be made concerning the KM-2 device. As stated above, T. T. Brown believed that water vapor or steam was a suitable medium for his electrokenetic generator. Water vapor is present in the atmosphere, as we all know. A small atomic engine, such as was mentioned earlier in connection with the Messerschmitt P-1073, burning and being cooled by atmospheric gasses, might provide enough water vapor to enable the electrokenetic generator to produce the high voltage required. This would be an atomic powered field propulsion device. Further, Friedrich Georg gives us details on an atomic steam engine with the Germans were designing to power a propeller driven aircraft (21). An easy substitution of a device similar to the Brown electrokenetic generator for the propellers could have been made enabling a device with all the characteristics given for the KM-2 electromagnetic rocket to have been born. And of course Dr. Giuseppe Belluzzo would have been waiting and willing to do the plumbing.

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Field Propulsion Saucers

The existence of World War Two German field propulsion flying saucers is a topic which is denied by virtually every reputable authority in aviation history. It is also denied by many researchers studying German saucers. The problem is that in the years immediately following the Second World War the earth's skies suddenly began to be populated by flying craft which did some remarkable things. They flew at unheard of speeds. They made very sharp turns, seemingly non-aerodynamic turns, even at this extreme speed. They lacked the glowing tail of jets or rockets but they glowed or gave off light at night from their periphery or from the whole craft. They were silent or almost silent. Sometimes they gave off sounds that an electric generator or motor might make. Sometimes vehicles with electrically based ignition systems ceased to operate in the presence of these saucers. No government claimed these flying craft, yet they were seen all over the world.

The press and popular culture attributed these unusual craft to an extraterrestrial source. Yet, after over fifty years, no real proof for this assertion has ever come forth. Let's come back down to earth. By all accounts these saucer were solid and material in nature. Perhaps it is time to attribute their origin to a solid, material source.

It seems only proper to begin searching for an explanation for field propulsion saucers with the very sources which we now know built conventional flying saucers, the Germans of the Third Reich. The earliest reference to a field propulsion saucer being a German invention is from a 1960 book by Michael X in which it is described as a "flying egg" (1). Michael X., under the name Michael X. Barton, is also the author who, in 1968, wrote The German Saucer Story. In the second book returns to the theme again (2). This time he cites a source. His primary informant, Hermann Klaas, describes twelve secret weapons to Barton. They are:

1. The flying disc
2. A tank made entirely of one piece of metal
3. The sound wave weapon
4. A laser beam weapon
5. A flaming artificial cloud
6. A robot bomb
7. A charged cloud weapon
8. An armor piercing projectile
9. The electromagnetic KM-2 rocket
10. A paralyzing ray
11. Electronic ball lighting
12. The flying bottle, tube, sphere, etc.

Thirty-two years later we certainly know that some of these weapons did exist. It has been confirmed that the Germans were

working on weapons numbered 1, 2, 3, 6, and 8 for instance. It has been confirmed that the Germans were working on x-ray or gamma ray weapons as well as another type, possible laser weapons. It has been confirmed that the Germans were working on a gaseous cloud as a means of combating enemy bombers. So in view of this track record, his claim of research on a "flying bottle" should be given serious consideration.

But what is the specific evidence which would cause us to believe that the Germans were working on a field propulsion saucer? As one paws through the literature on German saucers, some evidence is encountered which could indicate field propulsion vehicles. There are the still pictures which will be discussed later on. Here, we will focus on just three pieces of evidence, that of an eyewitness, a German pilot, who saw such things on the ground, a Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee report and an F.B.I. report. The F.B.I. report was taken years after the war but for reasons which will be discussed, there is reason to conclude this report has merit.

German Eye Witnesses

The first report comes to us courtesy of researcher Horst Schuppmann. A friend of Mr. Schuppmann's interviewed an eyewitness to German saucers during the Second World War. This report first appeared in the 1998 Geheimtechnologien. Wunderwaffen Und Irdischen Facetten Des UFO-Phaenomens by Karl-Heinz Zunneck (3).

The subject of this interview was a German pilot who flew many missions in a JU-52, taking off and touching down in rough, presumably outlying airfields. The Junkers JU-52 was an aircraft used by the Luftwaffe for many roles and could be described as a mainstay or a workhorse. It was a transport airplane, a troop carrier and even had been used as a bomber. It resembled and was used in a similar way to the American Douglas Dakota or DC-3. The main difference between the two aircraft was that the JU-52 had three engines as opposed to the Dakota's two and the JU-52 lacked a traditional airframe, instead deriving structural strength from a unique corrugated metal shell, which also made the appearance of the JU-52 distinctive.

The sighting in question was reported to the author, Mr. Zunneck, by Horst Schuppmann whose friend knew the pilot of the JU-52 in question. The date was July, 1944. Accompanying the pilot on this three and one-half hour flight was a co-pilot, a mechanic, and the radio man. The airplane took off from Brest-Deblin and flew on a westerly course to Lublin. The flight was unfolding smoothly which was somewhat abnormal for the particular time and stage of the war. Over Stettin Lagoon preparations were made to land. A large white cross was sighted which was the marker for their goal, a meadow landing strip. The aircraft descended,

landed normally and rolled toward a group of bushes which would hide the aircraft from view.

Then things took a decided turn to the abnormal. Harsh orders were received that the pilot, co-pilot and mechanic were not to exit the airplane. Suddenly, the radio man had vanished. The others waited an hour in vain for his return. Finally, the pilot decided to get out of the airplane and find his missing crewman, without orders, and on his own.

On the airfield itself nobody was to be seen. There was only one building visible which was a lonely hanger. The pilot, ever concerned with maintaining cover, headed straight for this hanger. Upon arrival he opened an narrow, high sliding door and entered, hoping to receive some information. No person was to be seen but what the pilot did see bewildered him so that the image was deeply ingrained in his mind.

There in the hanger stood three or four very large, round, dark dish shaped metal constructions on telescope-like leg stands. The objects were about 6 meters off the ground and the objects themselves were 12 to 15 meters in diameter. The pilot compared the shape of the objects to a giant soup dish or soup plate.

Suddenly, out of the half darkness a military guard emerged. The guard let the pilot know that he was in an area which was strictly off limits. In fact, the pilot was told, on no uncertain terms, to disappear immediately or this would be his last day on earth.

This day had started as a routine flight connecting two outlying airfields. This pilot had no expectations of seeing something so unusual that he barley had context in which to place it. Further, even as his mind was transfixed and in a process of trying to give understanding to what he was seeing, he was suddenly. jolted out of this tableau by a guard threatening his very life and ordering him to leave.

Of course the question of what those objects in the hanger really were comes back to this pilot even after almost 55 years. The pilot personally attributes it to the so called "Magnetscheibe", literally, "magnet-disk". According to the pilot rumors of these objects circulated in pilot circles since the summer of 1944 (4).

Two things can definitely be said of this sighting. First, it can be said is that this sighting seems to be of the smaller type of German field propulsion saucer as opposed to a larger version. Second, these saucers can definitely be ascribed to belonging to and in the possession of German military forces during the Second World War. At no time in this report has the word "alien" or "extraterrestrial" ever been mentioned or even considered.

Beyond that it can be said that the pilot personally believed these to be of the "Magnetscheibe" type, that is to say not

powered by chemical combustion. There reasons to believe this is correct. These saucers were found on a remote and rather primitive airfield. They were in the only building present. This means that they did not need an extensive support system.

The chemically powered jet or rocket engines needed an extensive field support structure. They needed to be refueled after every flight. The two liquid fuels used by the Me-163 rocket-fighter, for instance, ignited immediately when they came into contact with each other with explosive intensity. The fuel tanks had to be washed out after each flight and separate ground crews were responsible for each type of liquid fuel. It is noteworthy that no such support ground support structure or personnel was in evidence on this occasion. All that was observed was a large structure filled with saucers and a guard. The ground support necessary for launch of these craft must have been minimal and argues for the field propulsion hypothesis.

Of course the weakness in this report is the lack of the name of the pilot. Even if this report is taken at a minimal level of credulity, it constitutes a rumor of German involvement with field propulsion vehicles.

The reader will recall that the research paradigm being followed is that once mention was made by a German source of a particular thing, then (and only then) corroborating information should be sought from U.S. governmental agencies using FOIA.

A Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee Report

Since we have a German claiming field propulsion saucers we can now follow our research paradigm and search governmental records for corroboration. The Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee reports are a series of reports compiled by agents of the United States and Great Britain. Most were written immediately after the field work was done. The agents targeted specific things such as sites, people, specific technology or other aspects of specific interest. The agents then wrote a summary report which is what is entered into the record.

As with almost all summary reports at this level, the implications of what is being described are lacking. These reports do not set the particular technology into any context. That is, these reports doe not say how a specific technology under study was to be applied in the future in some, if not most, cases. Behind these reports must be a body of information and at least a few individuals intimately familiar with the technology in question. They were familiar with the technology and the context to which it was useful. If another government operative was interested in that topic or its implications, and if his security clearance sufficed, he would be shown the underlying material and presumably be directed to the particular individual

[redacted]

[redacted]
(Target No. CI/659, CIC/139)

Erb with his two assistants, Georg Buhler and Ulrich Lewitz are available at the above address and are known to Mil Gov Detachment at BORKUM.

To be investigated as early as possible. Suggest C.I.O.A.F. and C.R.A.D. (Fuzes) will be interested.

This man was interviewed by two members of the staff of D.D.O.S., and the attached report is compiled from their notes and a statement by Dr. ERB.

Dr. ERB was born in 1912. He is a doctor of Physics. At the outbreak of war he opened a small laboratory and had made a few inventions. In 1940 he was called up, but after a few weeks was released for research work and returned to Berlin to work for Physikalische Reichsanstalt. At this time he worked on acoustic heads for torpedoes. In 1941 he was again working in his own laboratory - mainly on fuzes. He was arrested in Berlin by the Gestapo in Nov 1944 on a charge of "favouring the enemy and sabotage". Buhler was also jailed. They escaped on 22 Apr 45 as the Russians were advancing into Berlin.

It is felt that he is reliable and likely to be of value as a source of information about thelines on which German development was proceeding in the field of experiment in which he was concerned.

Statement of the work of Dr. Otto ERB

1. Before the war, Dr. Erb developed measuring instruments of all sorts. The following are examples of his work:

(i) Measuring apparatus for interference free determination of the hardness and temper of steel.
(ii) Electrical measuring apparatus for automatic control of storage temperature.
(iii) Apparatus for conversion of residual heat into electrical energy.
(iv) Electrical medical apparatus of various sorts.
(v) High tension apparatus.
(vi) Warning mechanisms for excessive temperatures.
(vii) Electric fire fighting apparatus.
(viii) Electric sources of energy of various kinds.
(ix) Apparatus for turning the energy of the sun's rays into electrical energy.
(x) Rearward impulse propulsion for vehs and aircraft.
(xi) Wood gas generator for high performance.

After outbreak of war he had to devote his research to armament work.

[redacted]
CIC 75/139 - 1 - Enclosure

who was its residing expert. Only slowly, if at all, was this secret science leaked or given to American industry and then only with an appropriate cover-story, one which may even supply a pseudo-inventor of that technology. This is conspiracy at its finest. This deception is beyond the scope of this book but what is important for us now is that sometimes a mistake or slip-up was made in writing or censoring these reports and hints of things of stupendous technological worth actually surfaces. Such is the case with Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee Report number 146 regarding Dr. Georg Otto Erb and his work which is reproduced here.

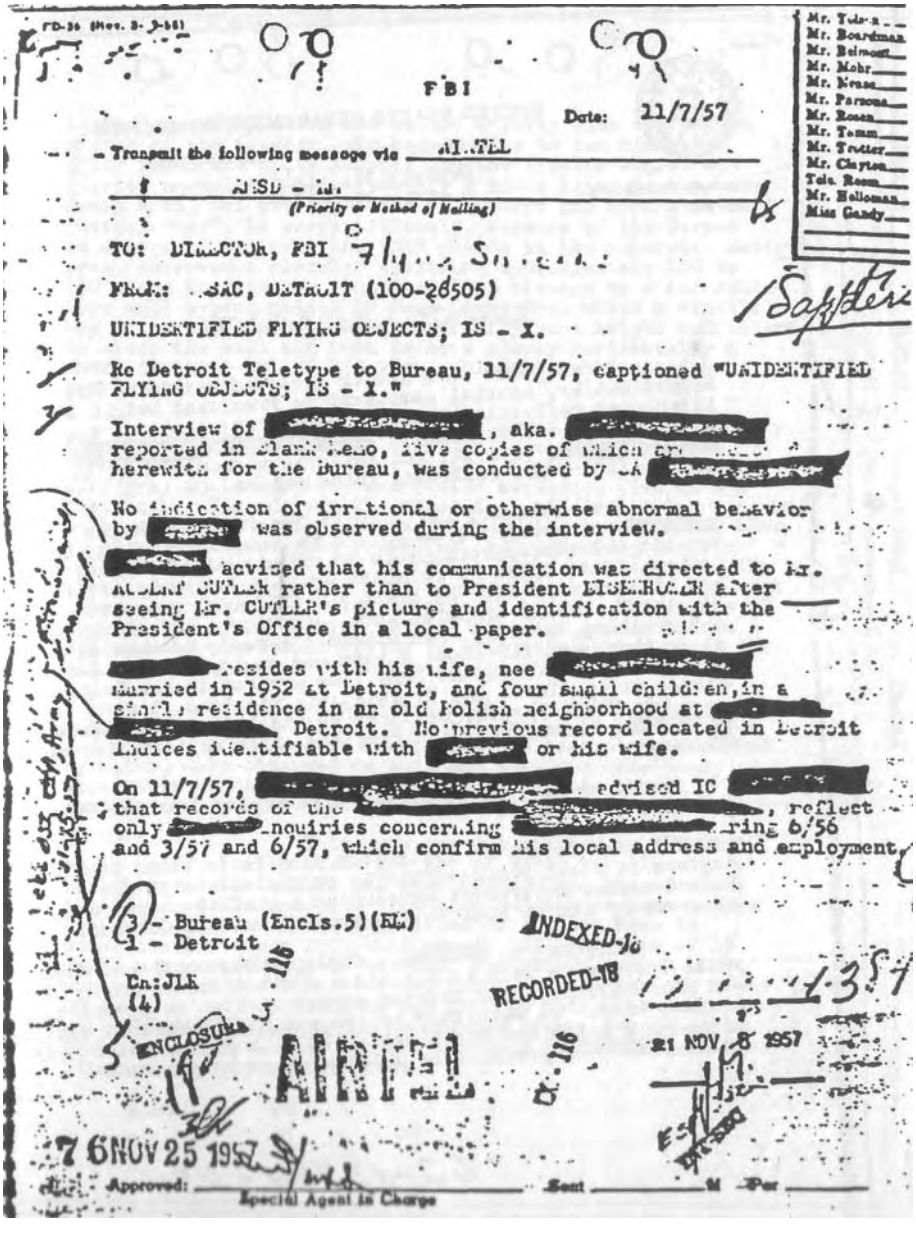
Dr. Erb was on the cutting edge of several technologies according to this report. None of these technologies was especially exciting in 1946, however. Jets, rockets and atomic energy where the hot-ticket items of the time. Nobody cared about new sources of electrical energy. The USA had plenty of electricity and plenty of oil to generate more. It was also known by then that atomic power could be applied to generate even more electricity. Nobody cared about Dr. Erb's experiments listed under item (iii) "Apparatus for conversion of residual heat into electrical energy" or item (viii) "Electrical sources of energy of various kinds" or even item (ix) "Apparatus for turning the energy of the sun's rays into electrical energy". Since nobody cared about these things, there was really no reason not to list them in the summary report. Their significance would only be realized a generation later during the "energy crisis" of the mid-1970s and by then it was too late to censor the report. One can only wonder where this research would have led if it funding had continued over the next thirty years. Or did it continue in secret?

Of course by now many readers will have already read number and grasped the significance of number (x) "Rearward impulse propulsion for vehs and aircraft". Given the nature of Dr. Erb's other work, it is a safe bet that this "impulse propulsion" was not of the jet or rocket nature. In fact there remains little doubt that this propulsion was, in fact, field propulsion. Dr. Erb was experimenting on means to apply forward motion using rearward impulse propulsion to aircraft and "vehs" (vehicles). If this is not the smoking gun for German experiments in field propulsion saucers, it is at least a hint that there is a gun.

The Smoking Gun: An F.B.I. Report

That is right, Fox Mulder was not the first F.B.I. agent to believe in UFOs. The files in question are F.B.I. file numbers 62-83894-383, 62-838994-384 and 62-83894-385. Their date is 11/7/57 to 11/8/57. They deal with a Polish immigrant, then living in the United States, who reported his wartime experience to the Bureau hoping it might throw some light on UFO sightings seen in Texas at about this time.

F.B.I. Reports On A German Field Propulsion Saucer



FD-36 (Rev. 8-3-56)

FBI

Date: 11/7/57

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Boardman
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Nease
Mr. Parsons
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tamm
Mr. Trotter
Mr. Clayton
Tele. Room
Mr. Holloman
Miss Gandy

Transmit the following message via AIRTEL

NISD - 14.

(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, DETROIT (100-28505)

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS; IS - X.

Re Detroit Teletype to Bureau, 11/7/57, captioned "UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS; IS - X."

Interview of [redacted], aka. [redacted] reported in blank memo, five copies of which are submitted herewith for the Bureau, was conducted by SA [redacted]

No indication of irrational or otherwise abnormal behavior by [redacted] was observed during the interview.

[redacted] advised that his communication was directed to Mr. MORLEY CUTLER rather than to President EISENHOWER after seeing Mr. CUTLER's picture and identification with the President's Office in a local paper.

[redacted] resides with his wife, nee [redacted] married in 1952 at Detroit, and four small children, in a [redacted] residence in an old Polish neighborhood at [redacted] Detroit. No previous record located in Detroit bureaus identifiable with [redacted] or his wife.

On 11/7/57, [redacted] advised IC [redacted] that records of the [redacted], reflect only [redacted] inquiries concerning [redacted] during 6/56 and 3/57 and 6/57, which confirm his local address and employment.

3 - Bureau (Encls.5)(RM)
1 - Detroit

Cm:JLK
(4)

ENCLOSURE

INDEXED-116

RECORDED-18

21 NOV 8 1957

EX-116

7 6 NOV 25 1957

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____

Special Agent in Charge

F.B.I. Reports On A German Field Propulsion Saucer

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Detroit 31, Michigan
November 7, 1957

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

In response to a letter directed by him to Mr. Robert Cutler, Special Assistant to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, reflecting that he might have some information about the rocket in Texas, [redacted] Detroit, was interviewed November 7, 1957, and furnished the following information:

Born February 19, 1926 in the State of Warsaw, Poland, [redacted] was brought from Poland as a prisoner of war to Gut Alt Golssen, approximately 30 miles east of Berlin, Germany, in May, 1942, where he remained until a few weeks after the end of World War II. He spent the following years at Displaced Persons Camps at Kork, Strasburg, Offenburg, Hilheim and Freiburg, Germany. He attended a radio technician school at Freiburg and for about a year was employed in a textile mill at Laurachbaden, Germany. He arrived in the United States at New York, May 2, 1951, via the "S.S. General Stewart" as a Displaced Person, destined to the Reverend [redacted], Hamtramck, Michigan; his alien registration number - [redacted]

Since May, 1951, he has been employed at the Gobel Brewery, Detroit.

News report of mysterious vehicle in Texas causing engines to stall prompted him to communicate with the United States Government concerning a similar phenomenon observed by him in 1944 in the area of Gut Alt Golssen.

According to [redacted], during 1944, month not recalled, while enroute to work in a field a short distance north of Gut Alt Golssen, their tractor engine stalled on a road through a swamp area. No machinery or other vehicle was then visible although a noise was heard described as a high-pitched whine similar to that produced by a large electric generator.

62-83394-284

An "SS" guard appeared and talked briefly with the German driver of the tractor, who waited five to ten minutes, after which the noise stopped and the tractor engine was started normally. Approximately 3 hours later in the same swamp area, but away from the road where the work crew was cutting "hay", he surreptitiously, because of the German in charge of the crew and "SS" guards in the otherwise deserted area, observed a circular enclosure approximately 100 to 150 yards in diameter protected from viewers by a tarpaulin-type wall approximately 50 feet high, from which a vehicle was observed to slowly rise vertically to a height sufficient to clear the wall and then to move slowly horizontally a short distance out of his view, which was obstructed by nearby trees.

This vehicle, observed from approximately 500 feet, was described as circular in shape, 75 to 100 yards in diameter, and about 14 feet high, consisting of dark gray stationary top and bottom sections, five to six feet high. The approximate three foot middle section appeared to be a rapidly moving component producing a continuous blur similar to an aeroplane propeller, but extending the circumference of the vehicle so far as could be observed. The noise emanating from the vehicle was similar but of somewhat lower pitch than the noise previously heard. The engine of the tractor again stalled on this occasion and no effort was made by the German driver to start the engine until the noise stopped, after which the engine started normally.

Uninsulated metal, possibly copper, cables one and one-half inch to two inches in diameter, on and under the surface of the ground, in some places covered by water, were observed on this and previous occasions, apparently running between the enclosure and a small concrete column-like structure between the road and enclosure.

This area was not visited by [redacted] again until shortly after the end of World War II, when it was observed the cables had been removed and the previous locations of the concrete structure and the enclosure were covered by water. [redacted] stated he has not been in communication since 1945 with any of the work crew of 16 or 18 men, consisting of Russian, French and Polish POWs, who had discussed this incident among themselves many times. However, of these, [redacted] was able to recall by name only [redacted] no address known, described as [redacted] then about 50 years of age and presumed by [redacted] to have returned to Poland after 1945.

[redacted] 74

Mr. J. Patrick Coyne

You will be advised of any further information which may be received regarding [redacted] and the information furnished by him.

b7d
1

Pursuant to your request, [redacted] letter is returned herewith.

Sincerely yours,

John Edgar Hoover

Enclosure

1 - Office of Security
Department of State

1 - Director
Central Intelligence Agency

Attention: Deputy Director, Plans

1 - Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence
Department of the Army

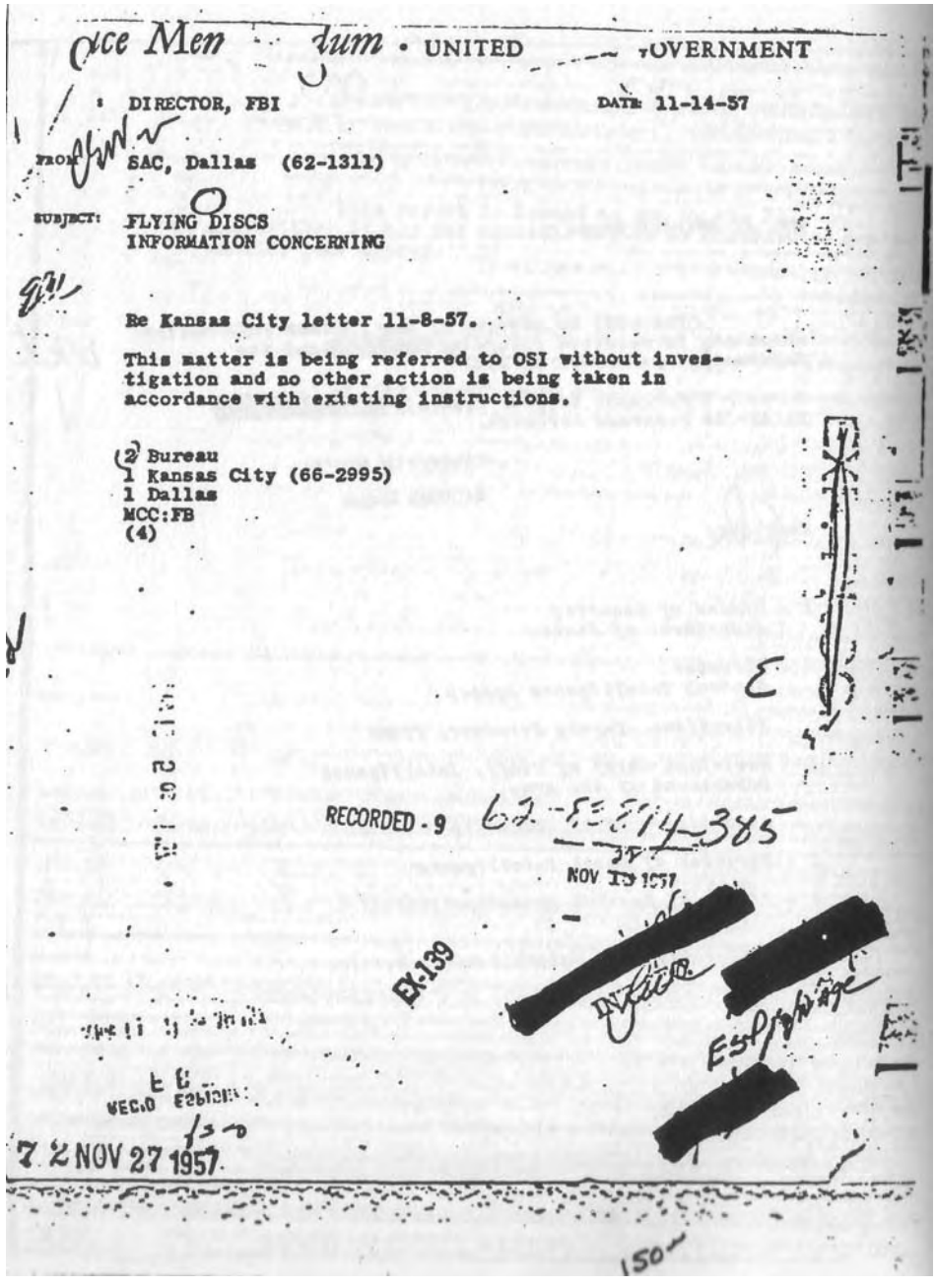
Attention: Chief, Security Division

1 - Director of Naval Intelligence

1 - Office of Special Investigations
Air Force

1 - Immigration and Naturalization Service

- 2 -



ce Men dum • UNITED OVERNMENT

DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: 11-14-57

FROM: SAC, Dallas (62-1311)

SUBJECT: FLYING DISCS
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Re Kansas City letter 11-8-57.

This matter is being referred to OSI without investigation and no other action is being taken in accordance with existing instructions.

(2) Bureau
1 Kansas City (66-2995)
1 Dallas
MCC:FB
(4)

RECORDED - 9 62-5[illegible]-385

NOV 13 1957

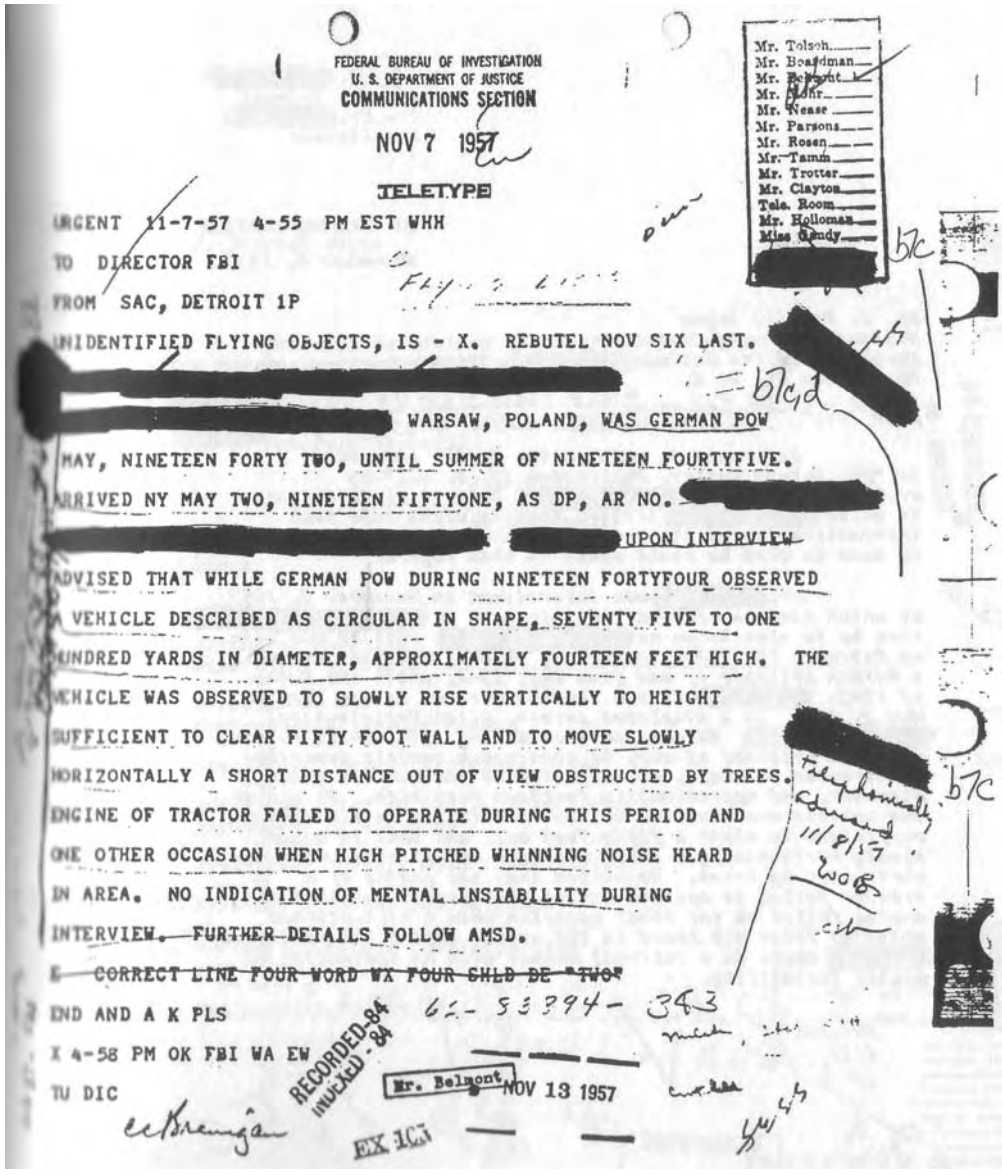
Ex-139

Espionage

7 2 NOV 27 1957

150

F.B.I. Reports On A German Field Propulsion Saucer



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

NOV 7 1957

TELETYPE

URGENT 11-7-57 4-55 PM EST WHH

TO DIRECTOR FBI

FROM SAC, DETROIT 1P

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS, IS - X. REBUTEL NOV SIX LAST.

[redacted] WARSAW, POLAND, WAS GERMAN POW

MAY, NINETEEN FORTY TWO, UNTIL SUMMER OF NINETEEN FOURTYFIVE.

ARRIVED NY MAY TWO, NINETEEN FIFTYONE, AS DP, AR NO. [redacted]

[redacted] UPON INTERVIEW

ADVISED THAT WHILE GERMAN POW DURING NINETEEN FORTYFOUR OBSERVED

A VEHICLE DESCRIBED AS CIRCULAR IN SHAPE, SEVENTY FIVE TO ONE

HUNDRED YARDS IN DIAMETER, APPROXIMATELY FOURTEEN FEET HIGH. THE

VEHICLE WAS OBSERVED TO SLOWLY RISE VERTICALLY TO HEIGHT

SUFFICIENT TO CLEAR FIFTY FOOT WALL AND TO MOVE SLOWLY

HORIZONTALLY A SHORT DISTANCE OUT OF VIEW OBSTRUCTED BY TREES.

ENGINE OF TRACTOR FAILED TO OPERATE DURING THIS PERIOD AND

ONE OTHER OCCASION WHEN HIGH PITCHED WHINNING NOISE HEARD

IN AREA. NO INDICATION OF MENTAL INSTABILITY DURING

INTERVIEW. FURTHER DETAILS FOLLOW AMSD.

~~E CORRECT LINE FOUR WORD WX FOUR SHLD BE "TWO"~~

END AND A K PLS

62-53394-343

X 4-58 PM OK FBI WA EW

TU DIC

RECORDED-84
INDEXED-84

Mr. Belmont NOV 13 1957

EX 107

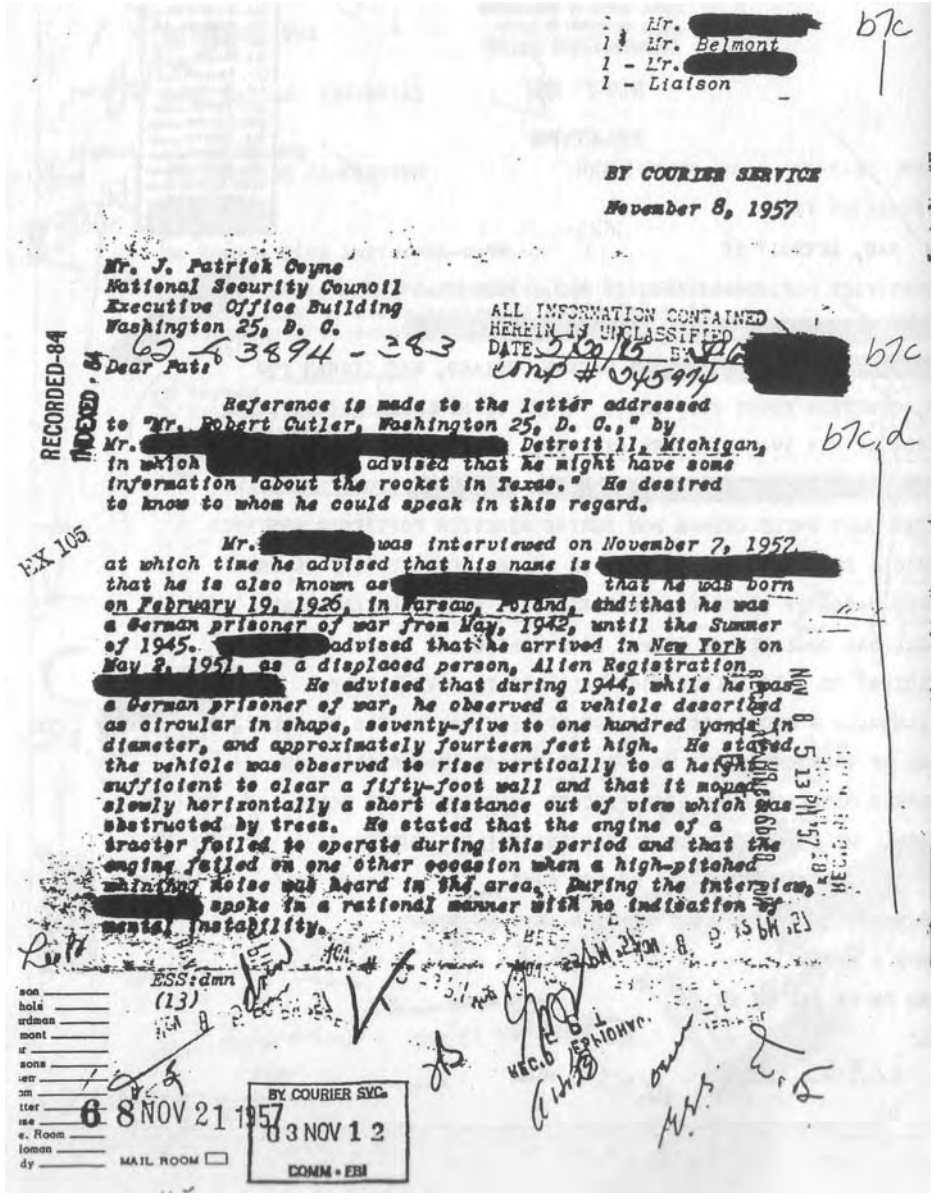
Mr. Tolson
Mr. Boardman
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Nease
Mr. Parsons
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tamm
Mr. Trotter
Mr. Clayton
Tele. Room
Mr. Holloman
Miss Gandy

b7c

Telephonically Cleared 11/8/57 WOB

b7c

F.B.I. Reports On A German Field Propulsion Saucer



1 - Mr. [redacted] b7c
1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. [redacted]
1 - Liaison

BY COURIER SERVICE
November 8, 1957

Mr. J. Patrick Coyne
National Security Council
Executive Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 2/20/15 BY [redacted] b7c
enp # 94594

62-38894-283

RECORDED-84 INDEXED-84

Dear Pat:

Reference is made to the letter addressed to "Mr. Robert Cutler, Washington 25, D. C.," by Mr. [redacted] Detroit 11, Michigan, in which [redacted] advised that he might have some information "about the rocket in Texas." He desired to know to whom he could speak in this regard. b7c, d

EX 105

Mr. [redacted] was interviewed on November 7, 1957 at which time he advised that his name is [redacted] that he is also known as [redacted] that he was born on February 19, 1926, in Warsaw, Poland, and that he was a German prisoner of war from May, 1942, until the Summer of 1945. [redacted] advised that he arrived in New York on May 2, 1951, as a displaced person, Alien Registration [redacted] He advised that during 1944, while he was a German prisoner of war, he observed a vehicle described as circular in shape, seventy-five to one hundred yards in diameter, and approximately fourteen feet high. He stated the vehicle was observed to rise vertically to a height sufficient to clear a fifty-foot wall and that it moved slowly horizontally a short distance out of view which was obstructed by trees. He stated that the engine of a tractor failed to operate during this period and that the engine failed on one other occasion when a high-pitched whining noise was heard in the area. During the interview, [redacted] spoke in a rational manner with no indication of mental instability.

NOV 8 5 13 PM '57

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MAIL ROOM

6 8 NOV 21 1957

BY COURIER SVC.
3 NOV 12
COMM - FBI

Mr. J. Patrick Coyne

You will be advised of any further information which may be received regarding [redacted] and the information furnished by him.

b7c,d

Pursuant to your request, [redacted] letter is returned herewith.

Sincerely yours,

John Edgar Hoover

Enclosure

1 - Office of Security
Department of State

1 - Director
Central Intelligence Agency

Attention: Deputy Director, Plans

1 - Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence
Department of the Army

Attention: Chief, Security Division

1 - Director of Naval Intelligence

1 - Office of Special Investigations
Air Force

1 - Immigration and Naturalization Service

- 2 -

The time of the sighting was in 1944, the place was Gut Alt Golssen, approximately 30 miles east of Berlin. The informant, whose name has been deleted, states that while he was a prisoner of war working for the Germans, a flying object arose nearby from behind an enclosure hidden from view by a 50 foot high tarpaulin-type wall. It rose about 500 feet then moved away horizontally. The only noise the object made was a high-pitched whine. The object was described as being 75 to 100 feet in diameter and 14 feet high. It was composed of a dark grey stationary top and bottom sections five to six feet high with a rapidly moving center section producing only a blur and extending the circumference of the vehicle. Notably, the engine of their farm tractor stalled during this event and the SS guards told the driver not to attempt a restart until the whine could no longer be heard.

Because of what I believe is their importance, these files have been reproduced here in their entirety. One of the most compelling reasons for taking this report so seriously is that the government of the United States of America took this report so seriously. It is hard to believe that an agency such as the F.B.I. would take and retain reports of flying saucers which had no special meaning for them. Add to this the fact that this report was over ten years old at the time it was taken and that it concerns a report originating in another country.

The F.B.I. operates within the USA and usually does not concern itself with foreign matters unless they have meaning for the internal security of the United States. Could the reason that this report was taken and retained for so many years be that it did, in fact, have meaning for the internal security of the United States? Did it have something to do with the flying saucers seen over Texas at the time which also stopped motor vehicles?

As an alternative to the security issues, could there have been another reason that the F.B.I. was so interested in flying saucers? Did the F.B.I. desperately want information on UFOs which was held by the military and other branches of the intelligence community which was not shared with the F.B.I.? It has been rumored that J. Edgar Hoover, head of the F.B.I. at the time, was very interested in learning these secrets but was held "out of the loop". It could be that the F.B.I. was already aware of German saucers through security clearances done on German scientists coming to the USA under Operation Paperclip? The ego of J. Edgar Hoover may have been a factor in the Bureau's guest to learn more on this subject. Hoover may have wanted to be on an equal footing with other intelligence chiefs.

For whatever reason, something in these reports resonated with the F.B.I. The report was taken seriously, investigated and kept. This fact alone speaks volumes for the existence of UFOs in general and German saucers in particular.

Some explanation has been attempted regarding the Schauberger models and the KM-2 rocket. From this point on, the discussion of German field propulsion saucers will move away from the areas centering around observed evidence and into areas of interpretation. Some of the German flying craft described are flying saucers in the classic sense. The F.B.I. report describes something which moves by non-aerodynamic means and which remains the source of speculation.

At this point, mention should be made of the ideas of some prominent writers in this field. The first of these is Mr. William Lyne of Lamy, New Mexico. Mr. Lyne has written two books concerning German saucers and field propulsion, Pentagon Aliens and Occult Ether Physics. His ideas on the mechanisms of field propulsion remain the best thought out and the most detailed on the subject.

Mr. Lyne lives near the secret weapons testing facilities of Los Alamos and White Sands. These were the places where German weaponry was brought for testing after the war and where the United States tested its first atomic bomb. It is still an area Of secret military research and secret military projects. Then as now, aspects of atomic energy figure in this setting. It is also an area which attracted much flying saucer activity in the late 1940s and 1950s. Mr. Lyne was a child during this period of time and personally witnessed flying saucers as did his family and friends. Later, as an adult, he went about trying to explain mechanisms for the type of flight he had witnessed.

Lyne worked within certain parameters. He rejected the alien hypothesis outright. He realized that flying saucers had to have been made by humans. Since he observed the saucers in the 1940s and 1950s, he knew that any explanation of their workings must be limited to the technology present in the 1940s or earlier. He connected UFO technology to other recently imported technology from Germany while believing both had their origins with Nikola Tesla (5).

Further, there is no mention of intangibles by Mr. Lyne. There are no unknown energies or mystical forces at work. Mr. Lyne stands with both feet on the ground. Things are concrete. Machinery is diagramed. Matter and energy function as they always have. In reading Mr. Lyne's work one can almost smell the machine oil and the ozone.

Mr. Lyne builds upon the work of Nikola Tesla who developed his unique ideas over many years of experimentation and invention. This basis built upon real world experimentation, testing and application separates Tesla's ether theory ideas from those which will be explored later. Mr. Lyne presents us with an ether theory in which ether is super-fine matter which exists everywhere. It is so fine that it will go through the holes left

in ordinary matter (6).

A few words about Mr. Lyne's ideas are necessary to set a context for this discussion. Just as an internal combustion engine can be described as a "heat pump" so can the flying saucer drive of Mr. Lyne be described as an "ether pump". Ether (very fine matter) is attracted to the saucer via an electric field, then pumped through the saucer and out again using the principle of magneto-hydro-dynamic pumping (7). This magneto-hydro-dynamic pumping is related to the Hall Effect. Edwin Hall placed a gold leaf strip in which an electric current was flowing into a gap in a magnetic field. An electromotive force was produced at right angles to the magnetic field and the electric current. This electromotive force was proportional to the product of the electric current and the magnetic field (8).

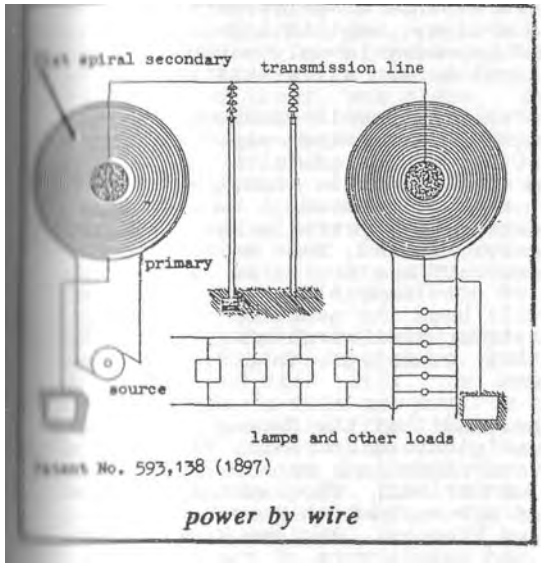
According to experimentation by Tesla, ether is made rigid with high voltage, high frequency electrical energy (9). The convex shape of the upper half of the saucer projects the electrical attractive force, generated by a specific electronic component, in an ever expanding arch over the saucer. Ether is made rigid and anchors the saucer. This is possible since the total mass of the ether caught in the electric field is far greater than the mass of the saucer. Near the surface of the saucer, the "rigified" ether is pulled into the saucer in what Mr. Lyne calls "tubes of force". These tubes of force would be pulled right through the opposite side of the saucer and out if it were not for the blocking force of a second apparatus which nullifies the tubes of force and prevents this from happening. This imbalance is the reason the saucer is able to move (10).

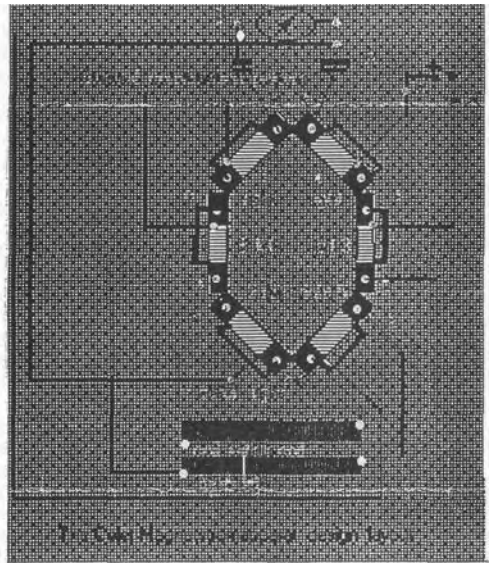
The electrical components necessary for this to take place are, according to Mr. Lyne, a Tesla turbine to supply electrical power and two types of Tesla pancake coils (11).

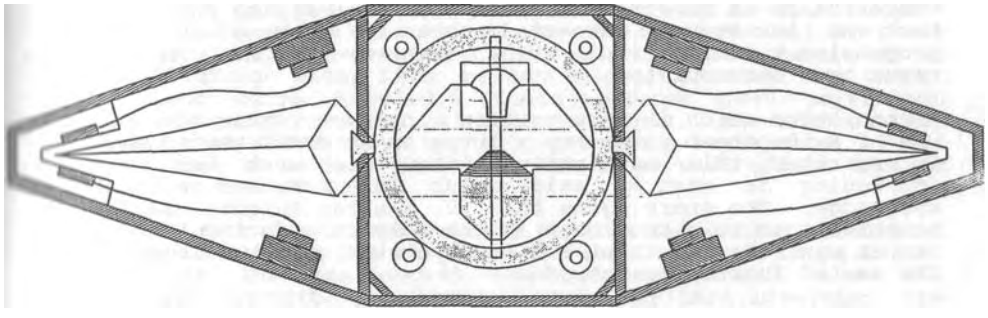
The Tesla turbine is a wheel-like device which is described in Mr. Lyne's book (12) and elsewhere (13). Mr. Lyne orients this turbine vertically in his drawings but oriented with its flat spinning surface horizontally, this might, perhaps, account for the spinning disc witnessed on some saucers.

The Tesla pancake coils are also described in both sources cited. Mr. Lyne goes further and gives instructions as to their manufacture. One type of pancake coil insures forth a negative discharge of DC energy, tuned to a one-fourth wave length, and is oriented in the desired direction of flight (14). The other type of pancake coil is mounted exactly opposite the first and emits a positive AC discharge which is used to dissolve the ether flow or tubes of force.

Dr. Gordon Freeman, a Fucannelli-like scientist who knows about such matters, has been curious about the abbreviated wave-cycle of the first pancake coil. His position is that one must not only understand conventional scientific theory in order to







Top Left: Pancake Tesla coil with the secondary coil inside the primary. Top Right: The smaller of the Hans Coler free-energy machines. Bottom: Cut away showing Vril power plant. Was this related to the Schappeller device?

understand the way a field propulsion saucer flies but one must also understand some concepts which are sometimes labeled "occult". Dr. Freeman has worked out a "common denominator" for some field propulsion vehicles the essence of which he has shared (15). Dr. Freeman's ability to analyze, explain and interrelate physics, engineering and "occult" geometry is only matched by his ability to explain it all on a level we can all understand.

Some individuals see hidden, esoteric or occult knowledge as the inspiration for the breakthroughs the Germans made in field propulsion flying vehicles. Usually coupled with an exotic-theory of UFO origin, it is an egually exotic local from which this exotic theory is said to have originated. We have been presented with this line of reasoning for years in the "UFOs are of extraterrestrial origin" theory. Indeed, some writers see an extraterrestrial origin for German UFOs also as we shall see. But just stating that UFOs are of occult or alien origin is not an explanation in itself. It still begs the question of how they operate. Their method of operation, their technology, must be explained regardless of where they came from in order for the explanation to be a satisfying one.

Returning to earth, another theory is that the German scientists were influenced by some ideas originating in Asia. Tibet and India are the suspects in question. UFOs have been reported over Mongolia, Tibet and India for centuries. The ancient Indians even claimed to have constructed aircraft which resemble flying saucers. These saucers are called Vimanas. Ancient Indian texts in Sanskrit speak of the flight and manufacture of these saucers. The German "Ahnenerbe", an organization whose purpose is associated with researching Germanic ancestry, sent out expeditions to the East with the express purpose of acquiring ancient, hidden knowledge. This is precisely what Heinrich Haarer was doing, whose book served as the basis for the film "Seven Years in Tibet". This link between flying saucers of the East and the West is suspected as an influence on German field propulsion vehicles (16). The exact connection, though, has never been demonstrated.

A connection which is more certain involves Viktor Schauberger's use of Pythagorean geometry. There is no doubt that Schauberger incorporated this mathematics into his work but what is intriguing is what is said about this body of mathematical knowledge. The story goes that it was the Knights Templar who stumbled upon this knowledge in the Holy Land during the Crusades and it was they who kept and incorporated this knowledge through the use of "sacred geometry".

Both the above mentioned schools of thought lead far beyond the parameters of this book but the reader should be aware of what is said about them and their relationship to German flying discs.

Whether it is called "occult technology" or "conventional technology", in the end, it is just simply technology. And in

the end, as Dr. Freeman says, "all machines can be reduced to numbers". What is called by some "occult" might be better called "arcane". This is because this technology, which seems to be the basis of field propulsion, is taught only to certain individuals, technological initiates, who use and need this knowledge for their work on government sponsored black projects. These scientist utilize a technology and understanding which are reserved for their use alone. This knowledge is not taught and not made available to the rest of us. We, the great unwashed masses, are given Einstein and the Theory of Relativity and told that this is the pinnacle of learning. As with all secret information, this arcane knowledge is held on a "need to know" basis. Our government believes that we simply don't need to know. It takes a true genius like Dr. Freeman to recognize this knowledge and set it before us in language that we can understand. It is hoped that Dr. Freeman will publish a book sooner rather than later.

Mention of the "occult" brings us to another line of evidence concerning field propulsion, that put forth by Norbert Juergen-Ratthofer and Ralf Ettl. Mr. Ettl became involved while doing research for a film project on Dr. Wernher von Braun. A film company was paying for this research. A package or several packages of information were obtained by the production company which had more to do with UFOs than rocketry. This information was laid aside by Mr. Ettl but he returned to it after enlisting the help of Norbert Juergen-Ratthofer who had a special interest in that subject (17).

The packages contained breathtakingly clear photographs of German saucers in flight. Some of these pictures may be just models but some look authentic and are posed against a landscape. Nowadays, pictures can be generated via computer and these pictures surfaced within modern times. At least one negative from these pictures which was given to Mr. Vladimir Terziski by Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer and seen by this writer, so at least not all of these pictures were computer generated. The pictures have been seen in public and through video film presentation, for about ten years. To the best of my knowledge these pictures have never been debunked using modern technical photo-analysis. Therefore, they have never been shown to be anything less than legitimate. Until they are shown to be less than legitimate, we must accept them as they are represented to us.

Besides the pictures, these writers provide an entire historical and cultural context for these saucers within the Third Reich, This contest involves secret organizations within the SS. Further, the context provided by these writers involving the occult, channeling, and extraterrestrials. This is the weak point of their presentation since the case for these latter connections is really not strong enough to be "in evidence".

Besides the books of Mr. Ettl and Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer, several other German language writers contribute books on a similar or



Ghostly image of a saucer, said to be a Haunebu 2, on a test flight. Photograph originally from collection of Norbert-Juergen Ratthofer, courtesy of Vladimir Terziski

related theme. The more notable are D.H. Haarmann (18) and 0. Bergmann (19). Mr. Ettl and Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer themselves have written several books which are all in German language and available through their publisher (20). Mr. Ettl and Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer have also done two video films, "UFOs Das Dritte Reich Schlaege Zurueck?" and a second film, whose English title is "UFO Secrets of the 3rd Reich". This second film is very well done and contains the pictures mentioned earlier. These films should be seen by anyone seriously interested in German field propulsion saucers (21) (22).

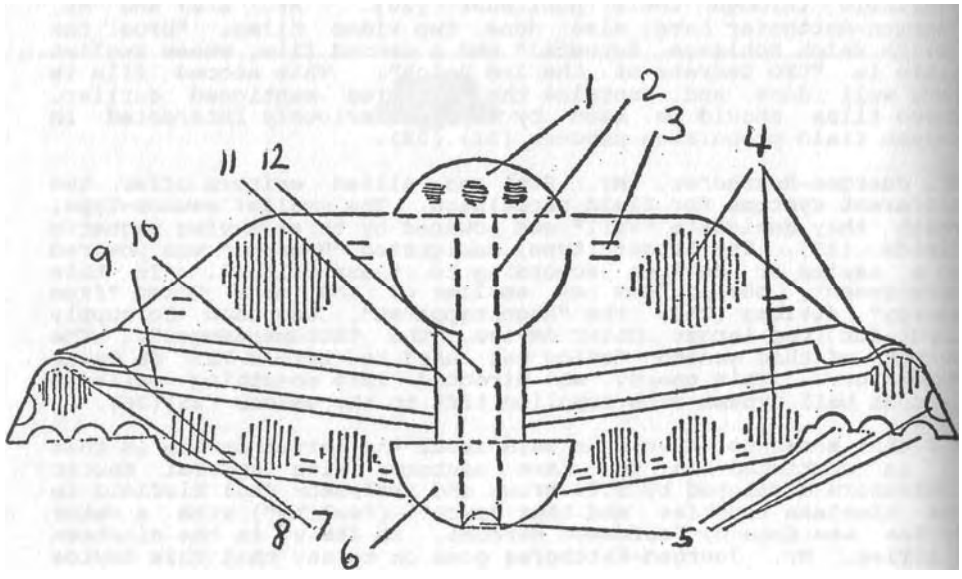
Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer, Mr. Ettl and allied writers offer two different systems for field propulsion. The smaller saucer-type, which they designate "Vril" was powered by three moving magnetic
fields (23). The larger type, designated "Haunebu" was powered by a series of devices according to these writers. In this arrangement, the output of smaller of the Hans Coler "free energy" devices (24), the "Magnetapparat", was used to supply input for the larger Coler device, the "Stromerzeuger". The output of this second device was used to turn a Van de Graaf generator. This energy was directed into something called a Marconi ball dynamo with supplied lift to the saucer (25)(26).

All that seems to have been said about the latter device is that it is mentioned in the same sentence with special saucer condensers developed by T.T. Brown and Professor Paul Biefield in the nineteen twenties and that "such" ("solche") with a rotor system was done by Professor Marconi, in Italy, in the nineteen thirties. Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer goes on to say that this device is to be considered, in principle, a forerunner to the Searl system (27).

The Haunebu pictures strongly resemble the Adamski saucer pictures of the early 1950s. These saucers were seen and pictures of them taken world-wide. There were many different sources for both sighting of Adamski saucers and pictures of them. There were so many in the early 1950s that it is hard to believe that all of them are fakes. Mr. Ettl and Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer maintain that these "Adamski saucers" are really the German-designed Haunebu type saucers (28). Since they were flown after the war, certain questions as to their origin arise. These questions will be treated in an upcoming section of this book.

Besides the Vril and Haunebu designs mention is made by Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer of another type of field propulsion vehicle. This saucer uses a chemical engine to drive a field propulsion generator (29). The type of chemical engine involved is similar to the famous Walter (Walther) engine, which were to be installed on some types of German submarines.

The Walter process involved a closed circuit system activated by the thermal energy produced by the decomposition of a high concentration of hydrogen peroxide. This reaction occurred in the presence of a catalyst, potassium permanganate, in a



Chemical/Field Propulsion Saucer (N. Juergen-Ratthofer). 1. Plexiglass pilot's cabin. 2. Crew rooms. 3. Intake air slots (hermetically sealed in space). 4. Vacuum ring retainers with high-performance vacuum pumps. 5. Lifting and steering jets connected to the Walter turbine system. 6. Walter turbines and electric generators with connected machine maintenance rooms. 7. Disc rotor wheel, rotating clockwise. 8. Electromagnet outer ring rotating counter-clockwise. 9. Disc wheel, inner part of the electromagnet outer ring. 10. Segmented disc-rotor and wing screw with adjustable flight blades. 11. Axis of saucer with (a) two electric motors to drive the counter rotating disc motors: electro-gravitation plant, (b) various electrical connections, (c) fuel and water tanks. 12. Connection shaft between pilot's cabin and machine room.

decomposition chamber. This resulted in a 600 to 700 degree gas composed of steam and oxygen, under natural pressure sufficient to drive a turbine. After the gas had done its work if was fed into a reclamation chamber which recycled at least part of the gas back into the engine. Additional fuel, Juergen-Ratthofer mentions methanol, could be fed into the system for more heat. The system without additional fuel is called the "cold" system while with added fuel it is called the "hot" system. In fact, the cold system was used on the V-2 rocket to drive the turbo-fuel pumps since known pumps could not handle the volume of liquid necessary to feed this new type of rocket.

In the hybrid saucer Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer describes, the cold system drives a rotor-stator arrangement which doubles as a blade lifting wing similar to that of a helicopter. The rotor-stator-blade is internally housed in the cowling of the saucer. The output of the rotor-stator is a strong magnetic field which presumably frees the saucer of the constraints of gravity as claimed for the other field propulsion saucers (30). In addition, spaces within the saucer have all air removed by special vacuum pumps with increase the buoyancy of the craft within the atmosphere. Further, some of the hot oxygen-steam mixture is jetted out at the periphery of the saucer while being mixed with methanal for additional heat and therefore thrust. Again, we are reminded of Dr. Belluzzo. We are also reminded of Vesco since he hints at a similar engine (31) which he even vaguely links with "electromagnetic waves" (32). Have we come full-circle?

In the same vane, would be negligent not to mention that an atomic engine might easily be substituted for the Walter engine. The atomic engine might be one of three types. It might be the type which burned the atmosphere itself. This burning would produce hot air and steam from the water contained in the atmosphere. It might be one which produced steam using water carried in tanks. It might be one which super-heats and ejects a gas such as hydrogen or helium. Any of these mediums could be ejected through the rotor blades yielding the desired result. A device of this type would tie together many of the German saucers-plans so far discussed.

Dr. Freeman points out that Marconi "stole" Tesla's inventions. Tesla also built a power-plant of spherical construction which contained vacuum tubes and so may have been superior to the device of Schappeller which we shall look at next. Surprisingly, some detail exists about this Tesla free energy device (33). Tesla used his engine to successfully power a Pierce Arrow automobile. This means that a spherical, working field propulsion device existed in the USA powering, not a flying saucer but an automobile. Dr. Freeman warns not to be confused by many spherical devices, all of which seem different. The fact is that they all work on the same principles (34).

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Atomic Saucers Again?

It is possible that all of the options for the field propulsion of German flying discs have not been presented or had a fair hearing. Two of these other possibilities are reviewed below. The first is the possibility that a world-shattering breakthrough in field propulsion occurred during the Third Reich involving atomic energy. This is plausible given the extensive and mostly still-secret atomic research done by the Germans coupled with the government's attempt to down play UFO sightings immediately following the war. The second possibility is that a field propulsion device was developed out of the early work of the Austrian inventor, Karl Schappeller. This possibility is strengthened by the fact that individuals and organizations involved in this research openly acknowledged that one of their aims was to build an "ether ship".

The German conventional saucer program culminating with atomic propulsion has been discussed. Evidence of German field propulsion saucers has been reviewed. We already know that each step in the conventional German saucer program was a logical development of the previous saucer design. The question is: did the power utilized in the German field propulsion saucers arise from nuclear power? Was there a breakthrough which has been kept secret for almost sixty years?

We have discussed the link between nuclear facilities and flying saucers. Is this evidence, in itself, that an association exists? The association could be for one of two reasons. First, these areas may simply have been the most secure facilities available. The two projects may not have been connected at all. For security reasons, both projects were simply run out of the same area.

The second possibility is that the two projects were run out of the same facility because they are connected somehow. If there is a connection between nuclear energy and field propulsion, what type of connection is this? The connection under discussion is a direct conversion from nuclear energy to field energy. This connection is on the order of the connection between electricity and magnetism or heat and electricity or nuclear energy and heat. Does such a connection exist?

The answer I got from everyone asked was a resounding "no". The consensus seemed to be that the closest we could come to this was to convert nuclear energy to heat energy and then to electrical energy though the medium of a steam turbine. This is how nuclear power plants and atomic submarines work. This method seemed to have nothing to do with flight since the hardware involved is much too bulky and heavy.

We have already reviewed some other options for nuclear powered saucers. Klaus-Peter Rothkugel suggests that the atmosphere itself could be burnt using liquid air as a fuel and a nuclear reactor as a heat source. Friedrich Georg has documented some aircraft engine designs, apparently left on the drawing board, involving a propeller engine driven by steam heated by nuclear power. We have seen the enigmatic Messerschmitt design involving a small nuclear engine on a high-speed aircraft. We have also discussed the atomic rocket approach which involves heating and ejecting of liquid hydrogen using a nuclear reactor in the Lenticular Reentry Vehicle.

While there is no known direct connection between nuclear energy and field propulsion, Dr. Gordon Freeman has made me aware of an alternate method of production of electrical energy through the use of nuclear decay. This is important because with enough electrical energy both electrostatic and electromagnetic field propulsion are possible. Let me relate to you what Dr. Freeman told me as to how this process works. It is amazingly simple.

The simplest method involves the use of two solar cells which are the same size. A piece of paper, the thickness of a business card is cut to the same size as the solar cells. Radium chloride is painted onto both sides of the paper. The paper is then fitted between the solar cells. The radium chloride emits alpha and beta particles which activate the solar cell. The reader might ask, if this method works, why has it not been patented? The answer is, that in a slightly more efficient configuration, it has been patented (1).

There are other forms of this simple example. Imagine a simple circuit used for purposes of generating electromagnetic waves. This circuit would consist of a wire connecting a capacitor and then to a coil. An electrical input is given to this circuit whereby the capacitor is sufficiently charged in order for it to discharge. The electrical energy is carried by the wire to the coil where it is charged. Electrical energy is then carried back from the coil to the capacitor by another wire completing the circuit. Alternately, the capacitor (electrical field) and the coil (magnetic field) are charged and discharged. The output of this circuit are electromagnetic waves, such as fill the electromagnetic spectrum. The system works until electrical resistance in the three components converts enough electrical energy into heat to sufficiently degrade its output.

What is done using the new atomic decay system is to paint the capacitors with radium chloride. This unstable compound emits alpha and beta particles when magnetically or electrostatically pulsed. These particles are absorbed by the capacitors (as well as the other components), the end result of which is an increase in electrical energy in the circuit. If enough capacitors can be wired into the circuit in series to produce enough energy to offset the ohmic degradation, then the output can be maintained for a long time. Radium chloride has a half-life of 800 years.

Of course, if an extra capacitor were wired in to the circuit, an excess of energy would result. Even if this excess energy is small, it can be very important. Devices using a similar method have also been patented (2) (3).

In the next step, the circuit described above is given an antenna and a tesla coil. The radium chloride doped capacitors are turned to one of the resonant frequencies for the tesla coil. An antenna is used which is suitable for receiving this same frequency output. A feed back loop is set up whereby energy is being pulsed into the system in these resonant frequencies. It is estimated that an output of three thousand watts can be obtained from this "lifetime battery" with an input of only fifty watts (4). A transformer and other devices can be used to tailor the electrical output produced by this device according to the need. Details for construction and tuning of this "battery" are available commercially (4).

This whole device can be held in one's hand. Imagine the power of one hundred or one thousand such units. Certainly a U-boat or a field propulsion saucer could be powered using this system.

Dr. Freeman believes this nuclear doping might be the missing link in several free energy devices. Dr. Freeman has evidence that both the Hubbard and Hendershot generators were doped with nuclear material. He has evidence that Hubbard actually worked for the Radium Company of America. Further, he has found evidence that it was radioactive material which was used to dope Moray's germanium valve (5).

Even further, he has suggested that the initial starting energy necessary for the operation of the Schappeller device, which will be discussed shortly, was supplied by a radioactively doped electret (5). Bolstering Dr. Freeman's claim is a U.S. patent using such a radioactive electret to maintain its charge (6). This is not the approach favored in this book, but the use of something like the "lifetime battery" to start the Schappeller device is not beyond the real of reason. In fact, there is some evidence that a very strange battery was being produced in wartime Germany.

During the war years, at least until 1943, none other than Professor. W. 0. Schumann was engaged in building something called a "battery" at the Technical Institute at Munich. This battery was a project to itself and funded by the Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, forerunner of the Reichsforschungrates, the Reich Research Council (7). The Reich Research Council coordinated high-priority war research between academic, industrial and military facilities.

This is the same Dr. Schumann who was brought to the United States after the war as part of Project Paperclip (8). This is also the same Dr. Schumann noted for the discovery of the Schumann Resonance. Dr. Schumann was no stranger to free energy

devices since it was he who evaluated a working Hans Coler device in 1926 and could find no fault, hoax or bad faith, on the part of its inventor (9).

Rumor has it that Dr. Schumann's specialty was antennas and that he was responsible for building or improving American submarine communication after the war. It is said this was done by employing extra low frequency radio equipment and mile-long antennae which were towed behind the submarines themselves. The radio waves employed for this communication were said to go directly through the earth's center. Dr. Schumann also discovered something called the Schumann Resonance which deals with the resonant frequency of the planet earth itself.

Returning to wartime Munich, why would a full professor and world-class scientist be devoting years of research and government sponsorship to a battery while Germany was in the middle of a war? The answer is that this battery was something special. Was this similar to the "lifetime battery"? Could this type of energy production have been the promised means of freeing Germany from dependence of foreign oil? Was this battery an energy producing device, capable of powering or starting a field propulsion saucer?

The old problem arises. The question is not could this be the way it was done. The question is was this the way it was done, What proof is there that nuclear decay was used by the Germans to produce energy by any other means than is in practice today? Dr. Freeman provides one hint.

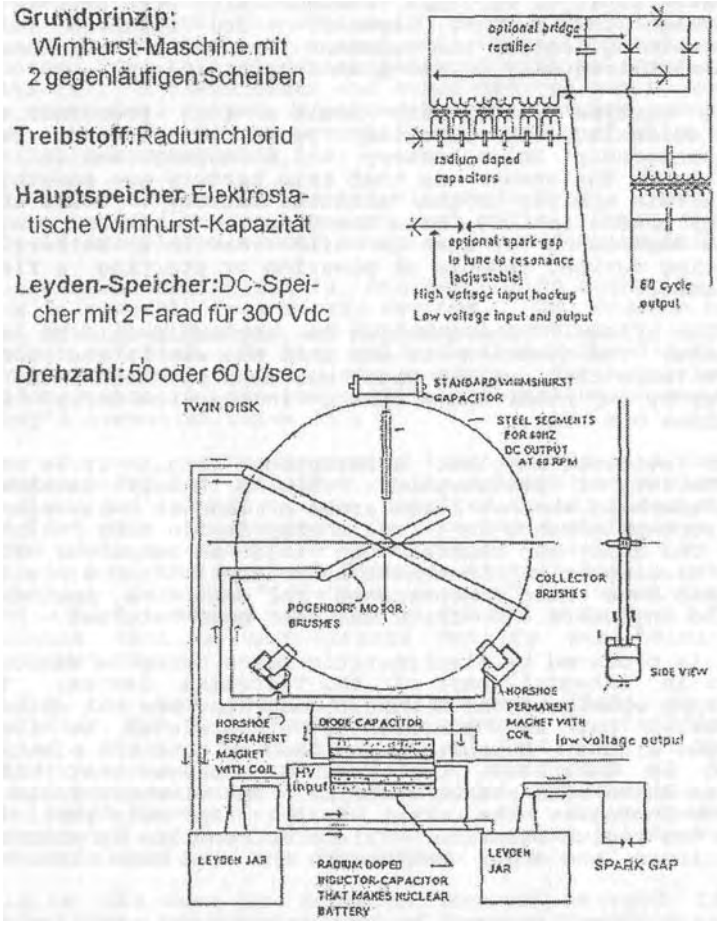
This scrap of evidence involves a religious sect. It is the Methernita Society of Switzerland. This is a self-contained, Christian brotherhood who own large areas of land in Switzerland. Among their accomplishments is a free energy device they call the Testatika. One desk top machine can yield an output of 3000 watts. This machine or machines have been in existence since the late 1970s and have been demonstrated for outsiders, including scientists and engineers. No fraud has ever been detected.

High voltage is produced by electrostatic means using a Wimhurst generator as in integral part of the Testatika device. The counter-rotating wheels of the Wimhurst generator are not allowed to spin freely, but are purposefully restricted to lower revolutions per minute. Capacitors are used to hold the electric charge which is generated. Dr. Freeman believes that these capacitors are doped with radium chloride. The electric field of the capacitors increases the output of alpha and beta particles derived from the radium chloride. This electron flow is absorbed by the capacitors and other components and fed back into the system.

The Methernita Society has never been forthcoming concerning the workings of this device. The machine itself seems to be the brainchild of one person, Paul Baumann, who is described as a

Der Testatika-Generator

Der erste wissenschaftliche Konverter zur Umwandiung elektrostatischer Energie in elektrodynamische Energie



Dr. Freeman's drawing of the Testatika.

"technician". Even in the old films of the Testatika, Mr. Baumann does not look like a young man. Germany is Switzerland's neighbor and what better place to utilize secret wartime technology than in a closed religious order. Dr. Freeman informs me that one of the builder's assistants talks of radioactive and non-radioactive forces in conjunction with this machine. Dr. Freeman has put these scraps of evidence together and made a drawing which is reproduced here.

Let's try reversing an equation. What if the T. T. Brown relationship between a highly charged capacitor, gravity and movement were altered? What if the highly charged capacitor were fixed and unable to move in a gravitational field? Would not the energy evidenced in the movement of the capacitor in T.T. Brown's work be translated into electrical energy and contained in this fixed machine? Would this not be a generator?

Let's flip it around again. Could not a flying version of T. T. Brown's charged capacitor have gotten charged via decay of radioactive material with accompanying hardware similar to what has been described above?

One more point should be made concerning the possible relationship between atomic energy and field propulsion. We do know that electromagnetic radiation can be generated by atomic fission or fusion. This is done whenever nuclear weapons are detonated. It is called an electromagnetic pulse. This is a well-recognized phenomena and the military's communications and sensitive electronics have to be "hardened" against this electromagnetic pulse as a battlefield necessity. So the relationship between electromagnetic and atomic energy does exist. The question still remains as to a technological breakthrough in the application of this phenomena and to whether the Germans pioneered this effort involving flying craft.

Atomic/Field Propulsion Sources

1. United States Patent, Patent Number 5,443,857, August 22, 1995, granted to Howard C. Rivenburg, "Power Source Using A Photovoltaic Array And Self-Luminous Microspheres".

2. United States Patent, Patent Number 5,642,014, June 24, 1997, granted to Steven J. Hillinlus, assigned to Lucent Technologies, Inc., "Self-Powered Device".

3. United States Patent, Patent Number 4,835,433, May 30, 1989, granted to Paul M. Brown, assigned to Nucll, Inc., "Apparatus For Direct Conversion Of Radioactive Decay Energy To Electrical Energy".

4. Lifetime Batteries, 13A and 13B, contained in catalog of Energy Research Company, P.O. Box 1514, Jackson, CA. 95642

5. Freeman, Gordon Dr., personal letter to author dated 3/7/02

6. United States Patent, Patent Number 3,949,178, April 6, 1976, granted to Sten Hellstroem and Rolf Bertil Goeran Joenson, assigned to Telefonaktiebolaget L M Ericsson

7. Bundersarkiv, Postfach 450569, 12175 Berlin, file on Dr. W. 0. Schumann, courtesy of Mark D. Kneipp.

8. Foreign Scientists Case Files, 1945-58 "Winfreid Otto Schumann", Location Box 151,631/26/01/07, The National Archives, 8601 Adelphi Rd., College Park, Maryland 20740, Courtesy of Mark Kneipp

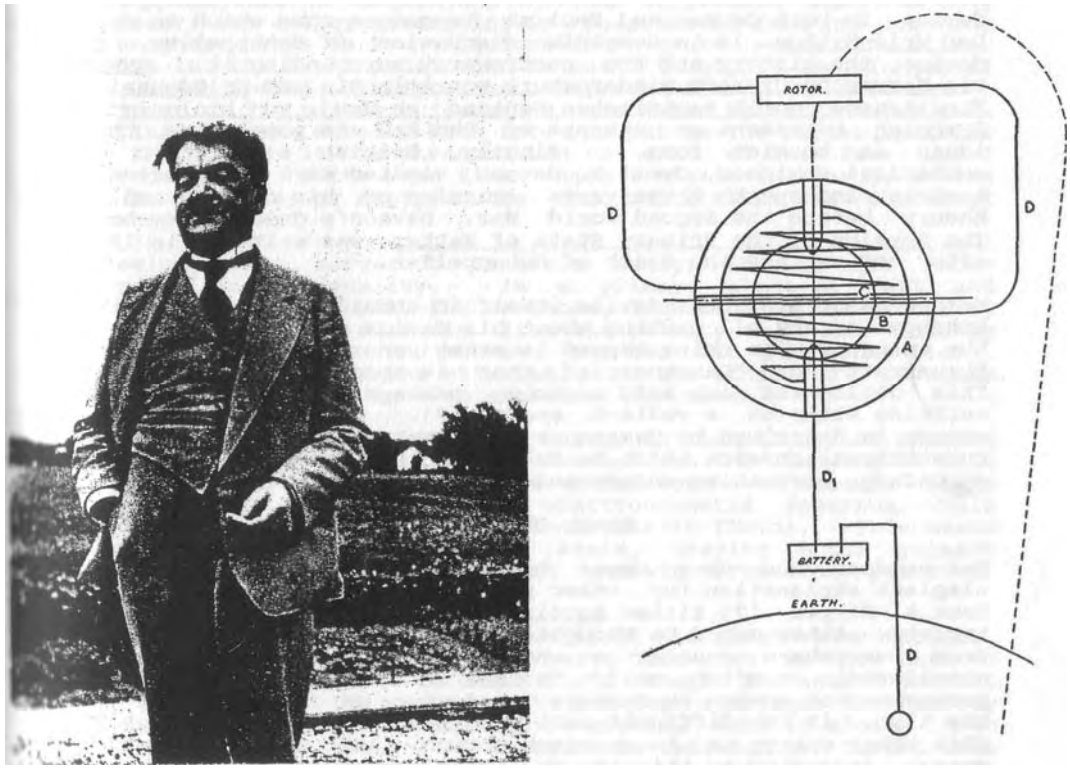
9. British Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee Final Report Number 1043, item number 31, "The Invention of Hans Coler, Relating To an Alleged New Source of Power", Bryanston Square, London

The Karl Schappeller Device

Was the Schappeller device an engine used in German field propulsion saucers? This is a possibility. Because so little has been reported about this device in the English language, the following is a report describing Karl Schappeller and his device in some detail.

Karl Schappeller (1875-1947) literally went from being born in poor house to owning a castle during his lifetime. His economic success was mirrored in his experiments in energy as a lay-scientist, culminating in the invention of a free-energy device which attracted considerable attention around 1930. Schappeller made no secret of his invention and actively sought private financing to manufacture and distribute the results of his research. He was in touch with financial concerns and even spoke with a representative of the British Admiralty concerning the utilization of his device to power the Royal Navy's ships (1).

At this time, 1930, the device was somehow appropriated and further worked upon by a governmental organization of the German Weimar Republic, the Reichsarbeitsgemeinschaft or Reich Works Association (RAG). At least one aim of the RAG was to make Germany self-sufficient in energy production. Specifically, they published their intentions to utilize many Schappeller devices in a system of broadcast energy distribution throughout Germany which would result in the entire elimination of the electrical grid (2). As we know, Adolf Hitler assumed power three years later and was also very interested in making Germany independent of foreign sources of energy for strategic reasons. It is known that political and scientific structure was set up to work on the energy problem as evidenced later by the synthesizing of gasoline and oil products from coal by the 3rd Reich. One of these



Left: Inventor Karl Schappeller Right: Karl Schappeller's Device. A. Steel outer casing. B. Special ceramic lining in which tubes are embedded. C. Hollow center, filled by glowing magnetism when in operation. D. Tubes, circuit and earthling.

political and scientific structures was contained within the SS and it is known that Karl Schappeller actually met with SS Reichsfueher Heinrich Himmler in Vienna in 1933 (3).

Fortunately, there are good descriptions of the Schappeller device in both German and English languages upon which to draw. Per Vril-Mythos is a complete discussion of Schappeller, his device, the history and the controversy surrounding it. "Vril" Die Kosmische Urkraft Wiedergeburt von Atlantis and Weltdynamismus Streifzuege durch technisches Neuland an Hand von biologischen Symbolen represent an attempt by the RAG to popularize their ideas in booklet form. Finally, British electrical and mechanical engineer, Cyril W. Davson, visited Karl Schappeller in Austria and spent three years learning of his device and his theory before the Second World War. Davson's descriptive book, The Physics of the Primary State of Matter, was written in 1955, after the war and the death of Schappeller.

Before describing the device itself it should be understood that Schappeller and all writing about his device do so believing that the energy-source being tapped is ether energy, sometimes called "Raumkraft" or "Raumenergie", that is space energy (4)(5)(6). This device was also said capable, perhaps with some tuning, of emitting ether as a radiant energy (7). The physics of ether energy is described by Davson as a primary physics as opposed to conventional physics which he believed could only be considered a secondary, derivative understanding.

Ether Theory

For readers who have never heard of "ether", perhaps the simplest explanation for ether physics is that of the late Dr. Hans A. Nieper (7) titled Revolution in Technology, Medicine and Society. Ether could be thought of as an energy source emanating from everywhere equally at once. The universe could be considered, as often said, "a sea of energy". It forms a background of energy everywhere, and since it is everywhere all the time, it is difficult make independent measurement of it. This ether energy is in constant motion. All energy is radiant energy, according to this theory. This can easily be appreciated as to electromagnetic radiation but it is also true of that very elusive thing called gravity. Newton described the effects of gravity but he never told us exactly what it was. Dr. Nieper tells us that gravity is really a push, not a pull. Gravity is acceleration and is caused by the ether field. Again, all energy is radiant energy whose fundamental basis is ether radiation.

From the aforementioned book by Dr. Nieper:

"In addition, Nieper established the axiom that all natural accelerations can be attributed to a single unified basic principle, namely, the interception (or braking) of a field energy penetrating from the outside (gravity acceleration, magnetic, electromagnetic, electrostatic and radiesthesic

acceleration). "

In trying to explain ether, it might be thought of as an all pervasive liquid occupying all of space. This liquid concept is useful because a liquid can not be compressed but can only transfer the energy attempting to compress it from one location to another. This is how an automobile's brakes work. The driver pushes in the break pedal when he wants to stop. The plunger of the break pedal attempts to compress fluid in the master cylinder. The master cylinder is connected by metal tubes full of fluid to each wheel. When force is put on the master cylinder by the driver it is transmitted to each of the four wheel cylinders full of the same fluid which transmit the force, moving the break shoes or stopping the disc which stops the wheels of the car.

Likewise, ether serves to transmit energy through this "non-compressibility" quality. In a primary electric coil and secondary electric coil, for instance, induction in the secondary does not take place directly from the primary as is new held by physics, but though and between the two via the ether field. This concept, that of the stimulation of the ether field as means of energy transport, is also expressed by Davson.

Using this perspective, that all energy is radiation, the braking of ether radiation, that is the slowing down or stopping of this radiation, can cause or generate other forms of energy. This word "energy" means the entire electromagnetic spectrum. This means electric, magnetic and electrostatic fields. This means heat. This also means gravity. Again, gravity is the primary radiation of the ether field. It radiates from every point in the universe equally.

This concept seems ridiculous until it is given some thought- One might ask: How can gravity be a push when we know better? After all, things fall to earth don't they? The answer is that the effects we feel and call gravity are due to gravity shielding. Ether radiation can be braked, that is slowed down and absorbed by mass. It is then re-radiated or turned into mass. It is re-emitted as slower ether radiation or even as heat. Some of it can is converted into mass inside a planet. If there is a loss of ether radiation, then there is shielding. Thus, a planet would shield from this radiation in one direction. That direction is always toward its center which is the direction of greatest mass and that is what we describe as "down". This is simply the area which contains the maximum amount of shielding. In all other directions the ether radiation continues to exert its push on us. The area of minimum shielding is directly opposite the area of maximum shielding, so things fall (or more correctly are accelerated or "pushed") to earth.

Think about this for a minute. Being in deep space is a little like being underwater. Underwater, all pressure from all points are so similar that we feel weightless. We are weightless in

deep space because the ether field exerts a push on us from all directions equally. In space, the nearer one gets to a large body the stronger the push is from the opposite direction since the body shields or converts the ether radiation. The result of this thinking is a mechanism totally different from "gravity" as we know it but appearing as exactly the same observed phenomena.

The beauty of this ether theory of gravity is that gravity functions like every other form of radiation. Its underlying cause, ether radiation, can be converted to mass or, in certain circumstances, re-radiated or converted to other forms of energy. No Unified Field Theory is necessary. The ether field is the unified field. Further, there is no need to look for something separate called "anti-gravity". If gravity is a push then it is all anti-gravity. All we have to do to make a UFO is to find this particular gravity frequency and find out how to generate it.

Ether physics was a lost physics. Physics was hijacked early in the 20th Century by alleged results of the Michelson-Morley experiment. The Michelson-Morley experiment assumed "ether" was matter. There is some confusion here. We know now that particles moving near the speed of light are measured as waves, that is energy, rather than as matter. Nevertheless, ether theory has been discredited among physicists who, in turn, discredit others who raise the subject. It is only through the efforts of "free energy devices" and free energy researchers that this knowledge is being returned to us. Without this ether theory, the reason these devices work cannot be explained at all. Rejection of ether theory allows these devices to be dismissed as "theoretically impossible" and so fraudulent by simple deduction. They are marginalized and dismissed as "perpetual motion devices". According to established physics, perpetual motion devices violate physical laws of conservation of energy. Without an ether theory as an explanation, they do violate laws of conservation of energy and so their detractors are able to simply dismiss them out of hand. The simple fact that some of these free energy devices actually work does not seem to bother these scientists in the least. Rather than change the theory to accommodate the observed facts, the facts are ignored and substituted by dogma. Whether we like it or not, we are living in an energy Dark Age.

Instead of ether theory, we have all been led to focus upon Einstein and his Theories of Relativity. Two or three generations of scientists have wasted themselves on "trying to prove Einstein right". This misguided thinking has resulted in stagnation. One need go no further than the many "free energy" devices which have arisen to the level of notice in spite of accepted scientific theory to see that this statement is true.

Needless to say, German scientists of the Nazi period labored under no such illusions. They never abandoned ether physics. This was the fundamental reason why field propulsion UFOs were

first developed in Germany. After the Second World War two different sciences developed called "Physics". One was the relativism taught in schools. The second more esoteric type was utilized only secretly, by the secret government, for deep black projects.

Structure of the Schappeller Device

According to Davson's description upon which we will rely, the Schappeller device is really composed of two separate units, the rotor and the stator. The stator is constructed as follows: Its surface is round or ball-shaped, being composed of two half-shells of steel. These half-shells contain the internal structure and are air tight. Attached at each "pole" of each half-shell is an iron bar magnet, most of whose structure is internal. This means that the bulk of the magnet is inside the steel ball, one opposite the other. There is a space between the two bar magnets at the very center of the sphere.

Insulation, a ceramic material, is placed on the inside of the steel ball leaving a hollow central area. Within this hollow area and around the space between the magnets are wound two internal coils. These originate at the bar magnet poles and each terminates at the center of the sphere with a connection leading out of the sphere to the rotor. These coils are composed of a hollow copper tube filled with a special and secret substance called the "electret". Upon leaving the sphere the electret filled copper tubes are replaced by conventional copper wire. An electrical connection is made from the outside surface of one pole to one pole of a special type of battery which is grounded at the other pole or, as an alternative, to a special device called an "Ur-machine" which will be discussed.

This electret is a permanent magnet within the sphere. This type of magnetism is not identical with ferro-magnetism or electromagnetism, it is much stronger (8). The actual composition of Schappeller's electret remains a secret but another electret has been made by Professor Mototaro Eguchi. It consists of carnauba wax and resin, perhaps also containing some beeswax. It was kept in a strong electric field while baking slowly until it solidified. For purposes of production of Schappeller spheres, a complete electret manufacturing plant would have to be set up which had no parallel in present science (9).

Before being set into operation, all the air is pumped from the hollow core of the sphere. This whole ball is mounted on a swivel mechanism so that the poles can be moved from the vertical to the horizontal. The stator is completely unattached from the rotor. The stator can function without the rotor and the stator is capable of producing electrical energy without the rotor. The rotor could also be used to generate additional electrical energy.

The rotor consists of: A steel wheel of special design fixed on

the shaft to be driven and surrounded on its outer surface by magnets which are attracted and repelled by the force of the stator. The copper wire attached to the internal copper tubing filled with electret runs through this wheel and supplies electric power to the magnets. The magnets are hollow and filled with the same electret. There are always an odd number of magnets.

A variant of this rotor comes to us from Taeufer, who refers to this further development as the "Ur-Machine". This machine is composed of six sphere units as described above, five revolving around a sixth set above or below the plane of the other revolving spheres. A seventh unit would be employed to rotate the rotating five spheres and so would be offset, and not attached to the others. The five rotating spheres would charge the sixth stationary sphere. The sixth and seventh spheres would function as an anode and cathode and so ground the unit. The Ur-machine could be used to activate other spheres instead of a battery-earthing procedure (10).

As a prime mover, an engine, the rotor would be employed turning a driven shaft. The stator would be offset, that is, moved off center in relation to the rotor. Schappeller worked out various angles of efficiency (11). The driven shaft could be used to power any number of machine applications such as, for instance, the propellers of a ship.

Means of Operation

The device is started through totally unique battery and a connection to the earth (12). A specific excitation impulse must be given to the device (13). This electric impulse was conducted through the iron magnet and jumped the gap in the center of the sphere to the other iron magnet.

What occurred then sets this device apart from all others. In the vacuum of the sphere, in the center space between the two bar magnets a field of "glowing magnetism" was set up. This glowing magnetism was something entirely unique. It is recognized as a magnetic field but much more powerful and unlike any magnetic field of an iron bar or an electric coil. Once the initial input had been made to start the device, the battery and ground could be disconnected. The device would continue of operate on its own (14).

For an understanding of what is really happening here we have to consider the bar magnet. We think of a bar of iron with two poles, one positive and one negative or perhaps one north and one south pole. But there are really three components to the bar magnet. There are the two poles and the neutral zone between the poles If we cut the magnet in half we get two new poles. For the Schappeller this neutral area is very important. Imagine a bar magnet running through the vertical axis of the ball. Then imagine the center section cut out. We now have a north pole at

the top of the ball, a south pole at the bottom of the ball just as we do with the planet Earth. In the center we have a missing section with a south pole, opposing the north pole at the top of the ball and, likewise, a north pole opposite the south pole at the bottom of the ball. We have now four poles and a split bar magnet with a gap in its center section.

It is this gap in the center where Schappeller's "glowing magnetism" is generated by grounding, that is, charging the device via a special battery and an earth connection. This glowing magnetism is the mystery. Davson cites Schappeller's calculations and gives this form of magnetism as being one thousand times more powerful than that produced by present magnetism (15). He also states that in this form of magnetism the electricity is stationary while the magnetism is radiated (16).

To repeat again, Davson contends throughout his book that this glowing magnetism is not found in secondary physics, that is, in modern physics, and that this glowing magnetism is a manifestation of primary physics. As a phenomenon of primary physics, it is responsible for and can generate heat, electricity and magnetism.

After initial stimulation and in a state of glowing magnetism, no further input of energy is needed from the battery. The device is able to draw in energy to it directly from the surrounding ether, bind this energy though its magnetic electret material, that is the filling in the hollow copper coils of the internal coil, and then re-radiate energy producing heat, electricity, magnetism or mechanical work depending upon the application.

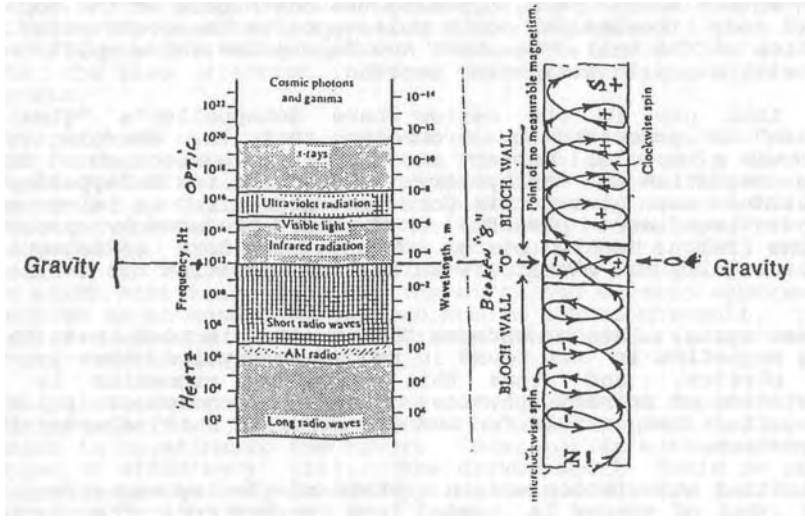
Stated another way, this is an implosion device and it is described as such (17) (18). Unlike the Schauberger device which is associated with the word implosion, the Schappeller device operates purely at the energetic level. Energy is drawn towards the center, through the magnets, into the field of glowing magnetism, and then radiated outward.

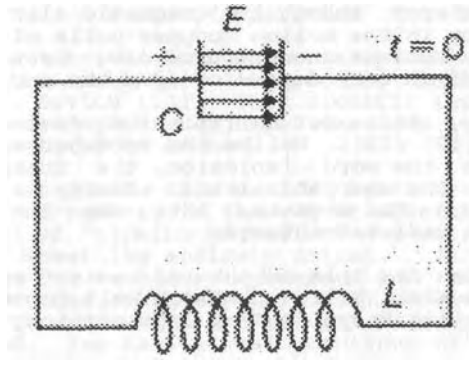
My first explanation for this output of radiant energy involves the concept of the Bloch Wall. A Bloch Wall is defined by Van Norstrand's Scientific Encyclopedia, 1958 edition, pages 201 and 202, as follows:

"This is a transition layer between adjacent ferromagnetic domains magnetized in different directions. The wall has a finite thickness of a few hundred lattice constants, as it is energetically preferable for the spin directions to change slowly from one orientation to another, going through the wall rather than to have an abrupt discontinuity" (18).

In electromagnetics the Bloch Wall is external to the hardware itself. It is the point of division of the circling vortex, or spin, of the electronic magnetic energies of the north and south

Bloch Wall And Oscillating Circuit





Top: Bloch Wall, a gravity wave source as a function of the electromagnetic spectrum? (Dr. Richard LeFors Clark)
Bottom: Oscillating circuit. Charged capacitor (electric field) discharges, current carried through insulated wire to charge coil (magnetic field) which discharges, charging capacitor. Oscillating electric and magnetic fields yield electromagnetic waves.

poles. The negative north pole magnetism spins to the left while the positive south pole spins to the right. Energy is being conducted into the Schappeller device through the un-insulated poles and being conducted and spun on its way to the center of the unit. The point of zero magnetism, no spin and magnetic reversal, where the two spin fields join, is the Bloch Wall (19).

The Block Wall radiates energy. Remember, if energy is coming in then it must be going out. The Bloch Wall may generate radio, radar and other electromagnet frequencies but what is most interesting is that it is actually able to radiate gravity as according to Dr. Richard Lefores Clark. According to this interpretation, the conjunction of two dipolar generated force field vectors, a quadropole force field or gravity is generated according to Dr. Clark. Gravity being a quadropole source, radiates in a circular, 360 degree, pattern of two cycles. Dr. Clark has fixed the point of emission as below that of radar and above infrared at 10 to the twelfth power Hertz (20). Dr. Richard Lefors Clark believes gravity is a radiation (21) and so a "push".

Another Opinion

In late 2001, I wrote a magazine article on the Schappeller device (22) which contained most of the material described above. In that article a request for alternative explanations for the Schappeller device was made. I received a letter from Mr. Michael Watson, BSc, Charted Physicist and Member of the Institute of Physics in the United Kingdom. But there was something in Mr. Watson's background even more impressive than his professional credentials. Cyril W. Davson was a family friend whom Mr. Watson knew well in his youth and with whom he had discussed Schappeller and his ideas at length, many times. In Mr. Watson's letter was a brief summary of Schappeller's theory in which he cut through most of the confusing terminology.

This summary is important for a couple of reasons. Mr. Watson's summary of Schappeller's ether theory as described by Davson dovetails nicely into the ideas of Schauberger yet seems to allow for Tesla's experimental results on ether as explained by Bill Lyne. The following is what I learned from Mr. Watson's letter:

Most of us have heard of the two Thermodynamic Laws. These are laws of heat. The First Law of Thermodynamics states that energy is conserved, meaning that the total amount of energy in the universe always remains the same. This is no surprise for most of us and it is not the real concern here.

What is of concern is the Second Law of Thermodynamics which discusses heat and entropy. The word entropy might be thought of as a state of randomness or chaos. Negative entropy would then mean movement toward the less random or the more ordered in any particular thing. If we apply this to a system, then entropy tends to increase until the system breaks down in utter chaos

This will occur unless the system is re-charged with additional outside energy. A concrete example is less confusing.

Imagine a new automobile just coming off the assembly line. It has taken a great deal of energy to find, refine, forge, weld, and paint the metal parts of this car alone. This same concept also applies to all the other components of the car. This energy and organization constitute a highly organized state, or, said another way, a state of negative entropy.

What happens next illustrates entropy. The car is purchased. Whether it is driven hard or just sits in the garage does not matter in the long run because what happens to the car is that it starts to fall apart. This change may be small at first and may only occur at the molecular level, but it occurs nevertheless. The engine, transmission, paint, rubber, electronics, etc. all will fail with time. Even it the car just sits in the garage, in a thousand years the metal will eventually oxidize. Finally, the car rusts away forming a reddish brown heap. This is exactly the opposite of the organization and energy used to put the car together. This disorganization is entropy. The only thing which will reverse this, as we all know, are additional inputs of energy by the owner in the form of maintenance and repairs.

All things in a relative state of relative order move toward a state of disorder. In terms of heat, heat will always flow into a colder place from a warmer place. When something is heated there is a rise in its entropy. With increasing heat its molecules move faster and faster in random chaos as a bomb does when it explodes. Increasing heat means increasing randomness and chaos which is entropy. Cold, then, can be seen in terms of negative entropy. Any cold object is simply more organized and less random than the same object once it is heated.

Schappeller had something to say about the Second Law of Thermodynamics. He said there was another and unknown thermodynamic cycle which runs opposite the Second Law. To name this idea we will call it "Reverse Thermodynamics". It is the reverse of the Second Law of Thermodynamics in that it leads to an increase in entropy. Not only is there an increase in order but there is an increase in cold! Schappeller, according to Mr. Watson's letter, built his spherical device primarily to demonstrate the principles behind this Reverse Thermodynamics. It was not designed as a practical machine.

To demonstrate the difference between the Second Law of Thermodynamics and Reverse Thermodynamics two theoretical machines shall be examined. Actually, a machine running according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics is not theoretical at all. Combustion machines are of this type. For simplicity sake we will use a wood burning stove such as the type invented by Benjamin Franklin for the heating of a house.

Wood is put in a hollow iron vessel with an adjustable hole at

one end. The adjustable hole admits atmospheric oxygen. An initial small input of heat is added to the wood and oxygen until burning occurs. A great deal of heat is produced once the wood begins to burn. We know heat expands. Carbon, carbon dioxide and water vapor are also produced as byproducts of the combustion. Entropy is increased. Since entropy is increased, so is pollution so perhaps we all can agree that this is a good example of the destructive technology so characteristic of the world in which we live.

In our example of a theoretical Reverse Thermodynamic machine the byproducts of the previous example can be used as fuel. But Schappeller's machine has the additional property of being creative, that is, negatively entropic. Schappeller believed this creative process to be individualistic, so we need a specific template to use as a pattern for this creation. Heat, water, and carbon dioxide are imputed into this machine. Quite amazingly, oxygen is yielded as a byproduct of this reaction! The heat is also absorbed in Schappeller's Reverse Thermodynamic machine! This absorption of heat is another way of saying that the machine is implosive in nature rather than expansive or explosive as was the heat producing machine. What is most amazing, however, is that entropy is actually reduced yielding, something which has been created - wood!

Actually, this machine is not theoretical either. It exists and works as we speak. These machines are all around us. We call these machine "life". In this case our machine is a tree. In the tree, energy, sunlight, is absorbed and combined in a cold process with water and carbon dioxide to form wood. The template used as a pattern for this seemingly intelligent, creative, process is simply a seed. In this type of reaction the "cold" force is something other than the absence of heat. This cold is an active cold. It is a "densifying", implosive cold. It is a life-giving cold. This is a cold, life giving force. To quote Watson:

"This process is life force and the reverse of the second law of thermodynamics; it is the vital force: Vril."

This is one huge difference between the physics of Schappeller and Schauberger and the physics of the Nineteenth Century. The physics of the Nineteenth Century explain everything in terms of the inanimate. Laws of physics are written using inanimate examples. Chemical reactions are described which stem from inanimate models. Animate models are simply made to conform with the inanimate assuming that life is just a special case which eventually will be shown to be nothing but chemistry and so subject to the same Second Thermodynamic Law as the inanimate. Schappeller and Schauberger both say in their own ways that this is not so. They say, each in their own ways, that a new and different law of thermodynamics applies to living forces. They say that this more akin to a life process than previous theories allow. They say this force is creative. Those that subscribed

to these new ideas claim it was not only a new physical law but a new science and that Germany would lead the way to this new science. Let us take a closer look at what is claimed to be the physics behind this new science.

The first concept to be considered is cold. Cold in this sense does not mean the mere absence of heat. This is interstellar cold, the cold found in the vacuum of space. In this relative vacuum, matter is not found in sufficient quantity to use to measure this cold. Think about how we measure cold. We measure matter which is cold. We measure the heat in air or water for instance. In the absence of matter how would cold be measured? There is no doubt that if we could, for instance, place a thermometer in a glass of water in deep space, the temperature recorded would be at or very near absolute zero, 0 Kelvin or -273 degrees Centigrade or -460 degrees Fahrenheit.

The presence or absence of matter in deep space may be the subject of conjecture. The presence or absence of energy in deep space is something universally accepted. For instance, we all know that light passes through interstellar space. We see the proof when we look up at the stars, planets or the moon. Besides visible light, other electromagnetic radiations freely pass through space. These include x-ray, gamma and cosmic rays. Yet besides electromagnetic radiation many people now believe that in the depths of space there resides another form of energy with is found there as well as everywhere else all around us. This energy sometime goes by the name of "zero point energy" but for our purposes we can simply call it "ether energy". It is sometimes argued that this energy is really the result of ether rather than ether itself and that ether really is matter. For a moment, let us postpone this discussion and focus on the vast, stretches of interstellar space which are filled with ether energy, near or at absolute zero.

Mr. Watson points out Dawson's words on page 83 of The Physics Of The Primary State Of Matter where he says:

> "Cold is not therefore the absence of heat, primary heat and cold having nothing to do with molecular action (in the cosmos) there are no molecules available".

The reader may recall that something strange happens to electrical energy at absolute zero. For instance, if a disc of conducting material is held at absolute zero and the disc is given an electric charge, the electric current will circulate around and around the disc forever, never loosing its energy as it would if the disc were sitting on an office desk at room temperature. This property of cold is instrumental in the storage of at least one form of energy. The vast stretches of cold interstellar vacuum must be seen as a vast energy storage sea in a state of heightened negative entropy. Schappeller called this undirected matter-energy reserve potential "latent magnetism.

Out of this latent magnetism, both energy and matter could be produced with the corresponding stimulation. The non-excited electromagnetic field was viewed by Schappeller as simply latent magnetism. Matter is a condensation out of bipolar ether. Therefore, electromagnetism is a product of matter and is nothing more than bipolar ether in a different condition. Latent magnetism could be, then, excited into matter. Latent magnetism could be influenced by either of the thermodynamic principles discussed, the Second Law of Thermodynamics or by Reverse Thermodynamics. This vast ether field, whose most notable characteristic is the property of cold, latent and awaiting stimulus, is the progenitor of both energy, as we know it, and of matter.

Since primary cold, this vast reserve of negative entropy potential, is responsible for both matter and energy and since all energy eventually degenerates into heat, it follows that, as navson puts it, again on page 83:

> "Primary heat, as may now be understood, is composed of cold energy".

This is seems like a surprising play on words, especially from a man of science, but this statement follows perfectly from Schappeller's reasoning nevertheless.

We turn now to Schappeller's concept of "stress". Both heat stress and cold stress can be applied to an electromagnetic field. Heat stress is the usual type of stress applied to electromagnetic fields in secondary physics. Secondary physics is the physics of our everyday world according to Schappeller. Primary physics is the physics dealing with the cold force and ether yielding matter and energy, which constitute the secondary reactions and so Schappeller uses the term "secondary physics" to describe our world as we know it.

An example of heat stressing of the electromagnetic field is the condenser and the coil. A charged condenser results in an electric field and a charged coil results in a magnetic field. A charged condenser and coil, connected by a wire circuit alternately charge and discharge each other, producing electromagnetic radiation unit the heat caused by the resistance of the wire degrades the whole process into heat. Heat stress on the electromagnetism is +/-.

Cold stress on the electromagnetic field is something totally new to our science and technology. It is also seen in terms of +/- but the machines used to produce it are not known in our world. Mr. Watson did not say this but if we return to our examples of heat stressed machines, the condemnor and the coil, the corresponding cold stressed machines might be the Schappeller sphere and the Schappeller coil electret. The sphere collects the charge through the magnets, holds and condenses it in its glowing center corresponding to the electric field of the

condenser. The internal coils filled with electret produce a magnetic field in the presence of the intense and pulsing electric field. According to my interpretation, the whole Schappeller sphere is a combined condenser/coil combined into one machine made possible through an initial input of cold stress.

As in our example of the condenser/coil interaction producing an electromagnetic wave, so an attraction exists between a machine obeying the Second Law of Thermodynamics and one obeying the law of Reverse Thermodynamics. This attraction can lead to interaction. For instance, an imploding or centripetal vortex can couple with an exploding or centrifugal vortex. The centripetal vortex is an example of a system following the law of Reverse Thermodynamics while the centrifugal vortex represents a system following the Second Law of Thermodynamics. We have all seen these two systems working together in everyday life. The common toilet is such a machine although the centrifugal side forms inside the drain pipe which is out of sight.

Perhaps there is another example which is more germane to our discussion. It is the diagram of the Vril power plant. (This engine diagram is used here as an example for discussion and is not a blind endorsement of the diagram's existence or accuracy.) In this interpretation of this diagram, we are really dealing with two separate devices. First, is the central spherical device which may be a refined version of the Schappeller sphere. An initial charge would be imputed into the sphere to start it after which the unit would continue to gather up the surrounding energy. This is a Reverse Thermodynamic machine. The sphere generates a magnetic field which could be offset by rotating as in the Schappeller device. The offset field would feed and so rotate the arms of the electric generator surrounding the sphere. The electric generator would gather electric energy, feeding the four large broadcasting fixtures on the walls of the saucer. These fixtures might be, for instance, Tesla pancake coils. The electric generator is an example of a machine complying with the Second Thermodynamic Law.

Both components of the power plant are bonded together in a single system since the output energy of the broadcasting fixtures on the walls of the saucer constitute additional input energy for the sphere. The two components attract one another and use and depend upon one another as they circulate and recirculate energy. As the energy level of one component increases so does the energy level of the other. Indeed, the biggest problem facing the use of such an engine may be employing a means to stop it.

The actual levitation might be the particular electromagnetic radiation coming out of the sphere. In this interpretation, the broadcast fixtures are used to steer the saucer. Davson gives output frequencies for the sphere as 10 to the sixth power (22).

Mr. Watson points out in his letter that one reason machines

utilizing the Reverse Thermodynamic principle have not been recognized is that a cold stressed magnetic field is a cold machine. Even a centripetal vortex cools rather than heats. All our devices of measurement ultimately measure heat in some form. Measurement of cold is more difficult. The example already given, the problem of measuring temperature in interstellar space in the absence of matter is an example of this problem.

Finally, the reader will recall that Mr. Watson points out that electromagnetism manifests itself bipolarity, yielding four components in all. These are +/- hot electromagnetism and +/- cold electromagnetism. The reader will recall that two hot electromagnetic components can be joined (the condenser and the coil) and set into a cycle producing an electromagnetic wave. Is it possible that two complementary hot electromagnetic and cold electromagnetic machines could be set into cycle producing not a bi-polar but a quadropolar, 360 degree radiation, such as the one described by Dr. Richard Lefores Clark, to produce gravity?

Planned Uses For The Schappeller Device

If the above discussion has any meaning at all in the quest for an answer to the UFO question, one use for which the Schappeller device must have been destined was that of a power plant for a flying machine. Was this so? The Schappeller device had many planned uses. In 1930 this device was planned as a source of broadcast energy, reminiscent of Tesla, for both German homes and industry. The device could also be used as a generator, battery, transformer, or antenna (23). It is reported that toward the end of the war the SS researched the possibility of using this device in the form of a death ray (24). But additionally, and in answer to our question, the Schappeller device was envisioned as a levitation device for a flying machine. Here is some of that discussion from our sources:

"The new dynamic technology will, in the future, be able to drive electric locomotives and automobiles without the manufacture of costly armatures and everywhere through connection to the atmospheric voltage network. Hypothetically, is certainly the installation of a sufficient number of central amplification facilities which transports from the Ur-Machine the specific magnetic impulse from the dynamic spherical element. New types of aircraft with magneto-static power devices and steering, which are completely crash and collision proof, could be built for a fraction of the cost of today's aircraft—and without the lengthy training of everyone who will be servicing these aircraft".

From "Vril" Die Kosmische Urkraft Wiedergeburt von Atlantis by Johannes Taeufer, page 48.

"Our problem must be to drive toward the space ship problem to new understanding of a realization! Here a definite postulate can be established: "Spherical space ship with its own atmosphere—also technical creation of small planets with world-

dynamic propulsion and buoyancy!".

Will this be possible? ---

Major powers in the world prepare themselves in any case presently, especially in Germany."

The above from Weltdynamismus Streifzuege durch technisches Neuland an Hand von biologischen Symbolen. pages 11 and 12. Please note the use of the words "spherical space ship" (Kugelraumschiff).

From Davson in The Physics Of The Primary State Of Matter, page 240:

"The Rotor is laminated to prevent eddying and the magnets do not project; the Rotor periphery is thus entirely equiradial. The Rotor is fixed to the shaft to be driven and the Stator is fixed about a metre above the earth's surface. The latter is, of course, flexible because the earth can include the sea or even the floor of an ether-ship."

From Davson, page 199:

"As has already been explained, the new Technique will not concern itself with the air as a supporting medium, but directly with the ether. Therefore, the body may be a vertical sealed cylinder with conic ends or any other suitable form. Such a body is obviously rigid and inelastic, and it must contain an ether stress of sufficient intensity to support its mass against the ether stress of the earth's stressfield, which means that the glowing magnetism core in the Stator, provided in the body to be lifted, must be able to vary its intensity according to the height at which the ether-ship is to be raised and supported whilst in transit, as the ether stress or field, itself, varies inversely as the square of the distance from the earth's surface. The actual design and solution of all the various problems in the production of such ships, the choice of methods of propulsion, whether independent or directional, belong to the new Technique, whereas here we are only interested in the principle as applied to the problem of Gravitation."

Finally, from Davson, page 177:

"Now the reason that an unsupported body falls to the ground is primarily because it has "no hold" on the medium. It was previously explained that any inert mass or body has only a latent stressfield which functions merely as the force of cohesion and has no mobility and thus only a latent internal stressfield and no external stressfield. This means that it has no "hold" on any elastic medium such as the ether or the air, therefore it must fall, and it falls towards the greater inductive energy.

If the inductive energy, through some exterior cause, could be made suddenly to increase enormously, there would come a point when the body would be supported, or rather suspended, before it reached the earth's surface.

The new Technique could accomplish this by placing a Schappeller Stator in the body in question, where the body is suitably constructed, thus setting up a glowing magnetic stressfield which would hold or keep the weight or mass of the unit body suspended, not in the air—the stressfield would have no reaction on the air—but only on the earth's magnetic stressfield.

This is the basis of the new principle for "ether ships""

Employing the Schappeller mechanism is only half the total explanation. In a field propulsion saucer there are possible two types of "drive" needed. The first is the "Auftrieb" or levitation. Employment of levitation makes the craft buoyant. It weighs nothing. If it weighs nothing it can be moved very easily. "Antrieb", impulse or motive power is the second drive involved. It moves the craft directionally. Levitation only would be supplied by the Schappeller system. Directional movement is so far best explained, in my mind, using the Tesla pancake coils as explained by Bill Lyne.

Concluding Thoughts on the Schappeller Device

In the end, what can be said of the Schappeller device? certainly, it did exist. It drew attention and funding from people within the German government of the time. It was studied by a qualified outsider, a British engineer, for a period of three years and was judged to be genuine.

There are some obvious problems, however. Exotic energies have been evoked which have not been explained satisfactorily. Therefore, the facts are not in evidence yet. Certainly more proof is required before the claims made for this device or the energies involved can be wholly accepted. For the time being we must put this discussion aside, awaiting further correlations.

There are some solutions connected with this device also. If we accept the idea that both the Schauberger and the Schappeller devices worked on the theory of implosion, then one explanation will serve to explain them both. It also allows for an ether-as-matter explanation. This may fit into the evidence gathered by Nikola Tesla. The commonality of these devices could then be sought and perhaps a more efficient device built as a result. We will pick up this theme again in the discussion section of this book.

It should be pointed out that the quest for this "new science" is not specific to Schappeller or Schauberger. Mr. Watson passed on

these words from Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, a scientist who collaborated with Dr. Rudolf Steiner around 1920. Although he is not happy with the translation he sent it as he found it which is as it is presented here:

"...the method of science, in a materialistic sense, is based on analysis splitting apart, disintegration, separation, dissecting and all the procedures which have to destroy and take apart, to work on the corpse rather than to grow, to develop, to synthesize. That the human mind was captured by these methods of braking apart: in that I saw the source of our present situation. My question therefore was: (to Rudolf Steiner) is it possible to find another force or energy in nature, with does not have in itself the ductus of atomizing and analysis but builds up, synthesizes. Would we discover that constructive force, which makes things alive and grow, develop adequate building up of methods investigation, eventually use this force for another type of technic, applied to drive machines, than because of the inner nature of this force or energy we might be able to create another technology, social structure, constructive thinking of man rather than destructive thinking. This force must have the impulse of life, of organization within itself as the so-called physical energies have the splitting, separating trend within themselves.

My question to Rudolf Steiner October 1920 and spring 1921 therefore was: does such a force or source of energy exist? Can it be demonstrated? Could an altruistic technic be build upon it?".

My questions were answered as follows: "Yes, such a force exists, but is not yet discovered. It is what is generally known the aether (not the physical ether) but the force which makes things grow, lives for instance in the seed as Samenkraft. Before you can work with this force you must demonstrate its presence. As we have reagents in chemistry, so you must find a reagent for the aetheric force. It is also called formative aetheric force because it is the force which relates the form, shape, pattern of a living thing, growth. You might try crystallization processes to which organic substrata are added. It is possible then to develop machines, which react upon and are driven by this force. Rudolf Steiner than outlined the principles of the application of this force as source of a new energy..."

Since this quest for a new science with the accompanying new machines had a relatively long history in Germany, certainly pre-dating the 3rd Reich, it is almost certain that the Schappeller device or others built along a similar understanding were further developed during the Nazi period. What became of it after the war is unknown. It can be assumed that this device did not escape the scrutiny of the numerous Allied intelligence units tasked with combing Germany for examples of German science. Perhaps someday a government report will be de-classified explaining all this as it was in the case of another free-energy machine, that being the Hans Coler device, which was declassified

by the British in 1978 (25) and which worked, according to Mr. Watson, using the same principles of cold magnetism. Until that final reckoning comes aspects of the Schappeller device will still remain a mystery. And until a more final reckoning comes, the question of if the Schappeller device was used as a source of field propulsion in German flying saucers must be deferred.

The Karl Schappeller Device

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Chapter Summary

There is ample evidence that the Schauberger saucer model flew. The fact that the Schaubergers were brought to the United States to continue the work leads to the assessment that they worked on something of value to the government of the United States. The U.S. government was neither interested in his water research nor was it interested in his work on agriculture. We are left to conclude that it was his work on a new form of levitation, his saucer work, which brought Viktor Schauberger and his son Walter Schauberger to the United States. After learning all they could, the government of the United States dismissed the Schaubergers rather badly, foreshadowing the treatment of the German rocket scientists two decades later.

Lionel Shapiro was a credible and incredibly well connected reporter of the war and post-war years. The fact that he was able to break stories relating to secret weaponry in Czechoslovakia indicates that he had some connections within the U.S. military. With the war won, the years of 1946 and 1947 seen

to have been a period when the guard of censorship was relaxed. This noose would be re-tightened as the cold war got underway. No fault can be found with Mr. Shapiro's article or its content. The article on the KM-2 electromagnetic rocket and Mr. Shapiro's other stories appeared in a respect newspapers, not a tabloids. His post-war report of the KM-2 electromagnetic rocket must be taken on face value as legitimate.

The German eyewitness account of "Magnetscheibe" prompted investigation into U.S. governmental sources for corroboration. The CIOS report and the F.B.I. report provided corroboration. In the CIOS report we find a U.S. governmental admission of experiments in field propulsion for aircraft undertaken in wartime Germany by Dr. Erb. The F.B.I. report on a field propulsion German saucer must be taken seriously because the F.B.I took it seriously. The F.B.I. carefully took the report and investigated the veracity of their subject. The F.B.I. then sent copies of this report to other intelligence agencies within the U.S. government which is indicated on the F.B.I. report itself. The Bureau saved the report all these years. The fact that this report deals with German technology but was taken by a domestic law enforcement agency, one whose "spy" activities are geographically restricted to within the USA, is noteworthy. It may indicate that the F.B.I.'s Director, J. Edgar Hoover, was kept "in the dark" about the real nature of flying saucers and may have wanted to show the other intelligence agencies that he was not so easily cut out of the information loop.

If you do not believe this F.B.I. report does not constitute something special, ask yourself, if you had walked into an F.B.I. office and described a UFO sighting you had made over ten years previously, what do you suppose the Bureau's reaction would be? Would you be taken seriously? Would your background be investigated and would your story be the subject of such extensive treatment? Would your report be kept for forty years? Or, on the other hand, would you be politely shown the door by a condescending uniformed security officer. Something in this report really struck a nerve at the F.B.I.

There is some suggestion that the Germans worked on a chemical engine which produced levitation. There is a possibility that electricity was produced by the Germans directly from atomic energy. There is some evidence, from both German and English language sources, that the Karl Schappeller device was being developed within Germany during the period of time in question. There is evidence that both the Schauberger and the Schappeller devices can be explained in terms of implosion and that implosion may have yielded the levitation force behind field propulsion vehicles. There is ample evidence that the Germans had access to the ideas of Nikola Tesla. The work of Tesla may be seen as an alternative method of propulsion or as a method of moving a field propulsion vehicle after it was made weightless by another method. There are wartime pictures along with many very similar

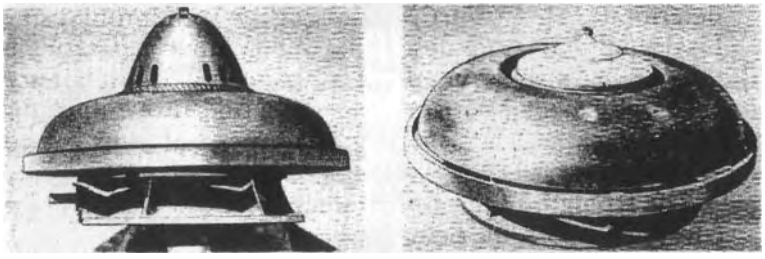
post-war pictures which indicate that the development of field propulsion vehicles took place at this time.

Concerning these pictures and related reports of flying saucers one is thrust up against the intelligence services of the government of the United States of America who see fit to involve themselves. As we will see, it is the latter's rather clumsy attempt to suppress and discredit the flying saucer phenomena which actually speaks volumes for its existence.

The exact methods pertaining to the propulsion of these saucers may be plausible but they can only be taken as provisional at this time. There may be hundreds of ways to power a field propulsion saucer. The question is not "how could it have been done" but "how was it done".

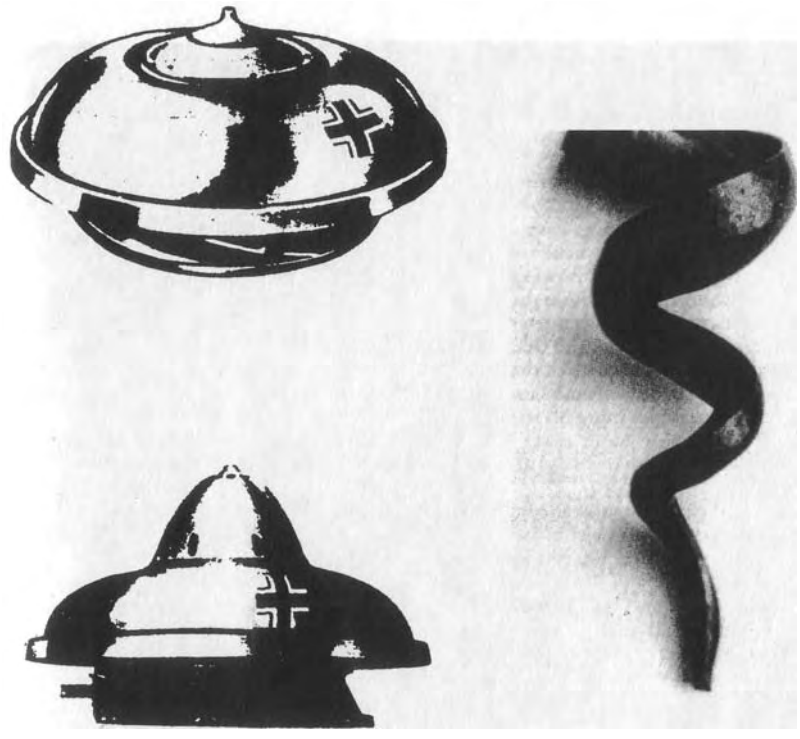


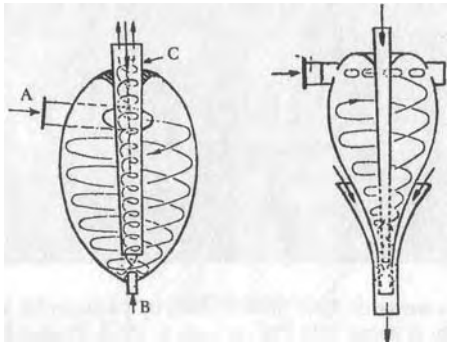
The brilliant Austrian scientist Victor Schauberger.



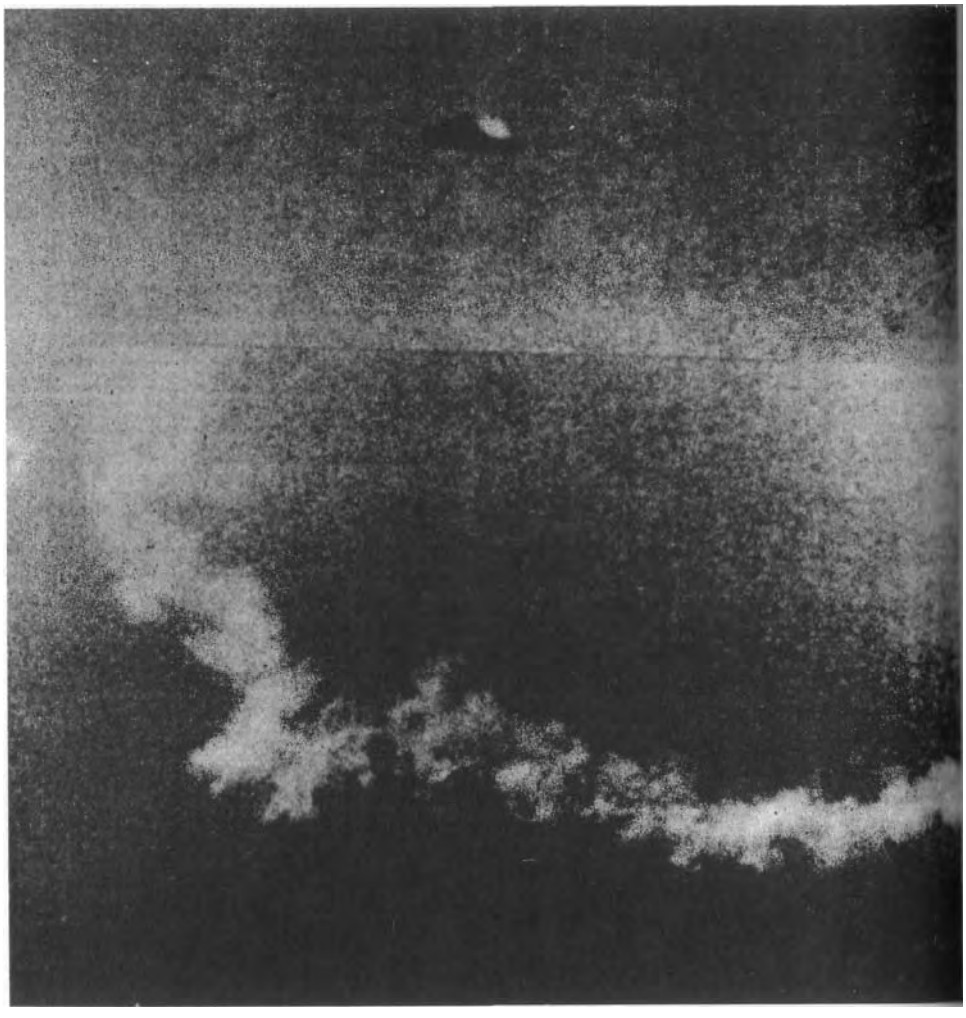


Victor Schauberger's vortex saucer models. Left: Victor Schauberger with a model of a home generator.





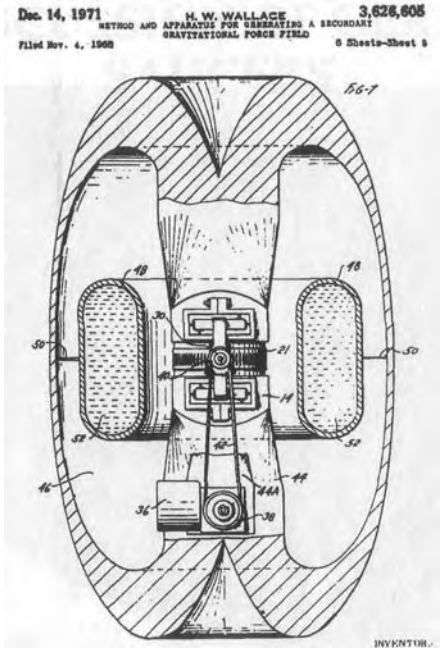
Above: Victor Schauberger's vortex saucer models, inspired by a kudu horn from Southern Africa. Below: Schauberger's two variations of an accelerator for nuclear fusion.



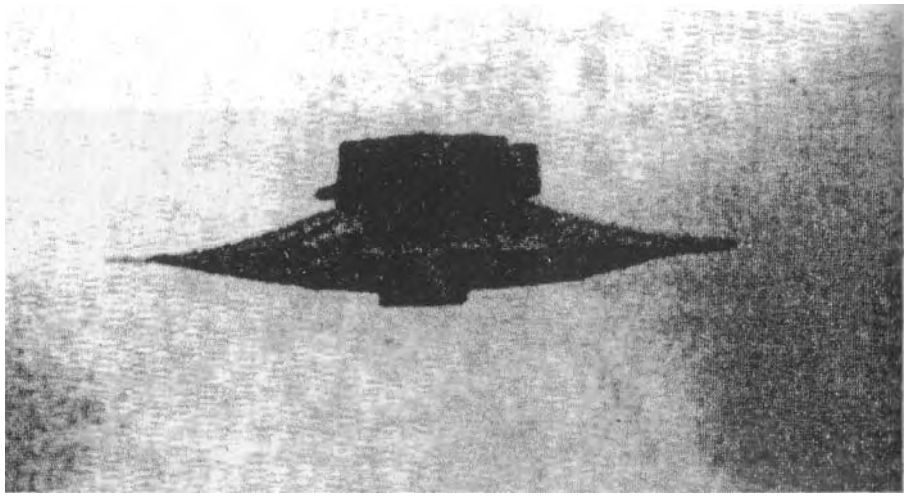
Above: One of a series of three photos taken by postman M. Muyldermans near Namur, Belgium, at about 7:30 PM on June 5, 1955. Project Blue Book showed little interest in these clear, daylight photos, despite the fame that they achieved.

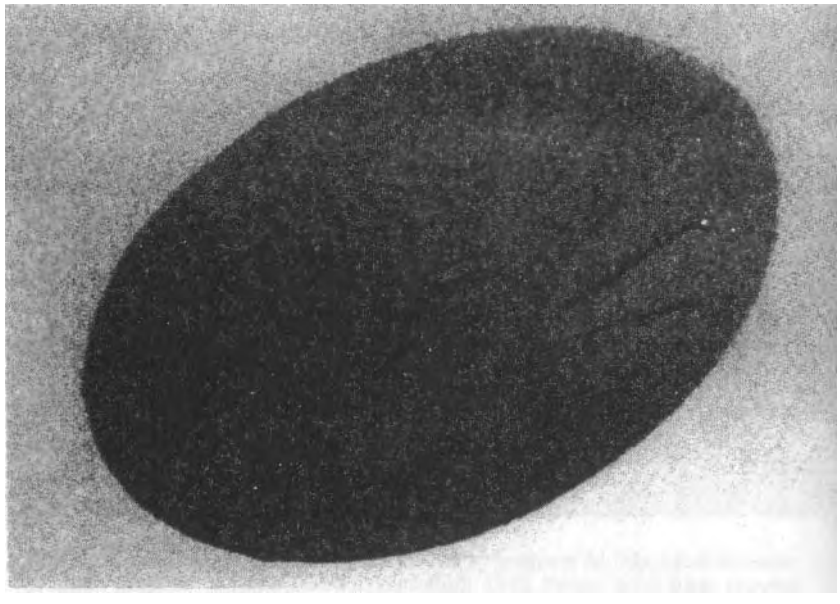


Above: A cylindrical-appearing UFO photographed over Torrance, California in 1967. Possibly part of the southern California testing of US military modifications of German designs?


Dec. 14, 1971 H. W. WALLACE 3,626,605
METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR GENERATING A SECONDARY GRAVITATIONAL FORCE FIELD
Filed Nov. 4, 1968 6 Sheets-Sheet 5
FIG-7
INVENTOR.

Above: A 1968 patent granted to H. W. Wallace for a "method and appartus for generating a secondary gravitational force field," exactly the kind of engine that the Germans were allegedly developing during WWII.





Above: Two photos of a "Vril-7" saucer in flight, according to Polish historian Igor Witkowski.

CHAPTER FIVE:

LORE AND LOOSE ENDS: A DISCUSSION OF GERMAN SAUCERS

CHAPTER FIVE

Lore And Loose Ends: A Discussion Of German Saucers

Some of the historical context for German flying discs has been discussed in the preliminary section of this presentation, "The Situation Within Nazi Germany". German saucers were not designed to generate the flying saucer mystery in the second half of the Twentieth Century. They were designed as a weapons system to do a specific job. The fast-moving wartime mind-set was a time when new aircraft designs and new propulsion technologies were coming on line with increasing frequency. The insertion of these saucer-craft into the wartime fabric did not seem as culture altering as the disclosure of these same craft might be to us today. But a simple recitation of the facts is not enough. Some things need to be said about the ideas on German saucers in order to put their study in a better context. Also, some strings have been left untied and some ideas need to be mentioned in order to round out the discussion on this topic.

No better place to start exists than with Renato Vesco. Vesco's insights for the reasons for German saucers were right on the money as were his descriptions of cultural conditions within wartime Germany with prompted this response. Vesco elucidated the foo fighter mystery as nobody else did. But he went on to describe another mystery craft which he called the "Kugleblitz" or "ball lightning" in English (1). This craft is not the same as the Schriever, Habermohl, Miethe or any other saucer design so far disclosed. Indeed, Vesco seems to know nothing of these other projects. His only descriptions were of the Feuerball (foo fighter) and the Kugelblitz.

Vesco described Kugelblitz as the big brother of the Feuerball, meaning that it was a further development of the Feuerball or foo fighter. A central cupola or cabin was surrounded by a free-spinning body or saucer which was turbine driven. Further stabilization was probably provided by a small but rapidly spinning centrally positioned flywheel, a gyroscope, set at ninety degrees from the axis of the saucer. The Kugelblitz was able to take-off vertically. Its method of destroying enemy aircraft was probably that described by Vesco (2) and confirmed in new U.S. government documents which included the description of the "Phoo Bomb" (3) under item six, "Gases Applicable To

Aircraft". In this system the Kugelblitz approached an enemy bomber formation and ejected one of two types of gas ahead of that formation. The engines of the bombers inhaled the gas and were either destroy by pre-ignition or engine seizure caused by loss of motor oil viscosity. It is not know if one or both methods were used.

The Kugelblitz was guided to the bomber formation by a homing device whose name may have caused Vesco and later UFO researchers some confusion. This is because there existed a homing device whose name was "Kuglelblitz". This may have caused Vesco to assume the entire project bore its name. This device was manufactured by the Patent Verwertungs Gesellschaft of Salzburg and we know quite a bit about it through a Freedom Of Information Act response (4).

Curiously enough, and for a second time, the file comes to us from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a domestic spy agency which theoretically had no business investigating foreign technology in foreign lands.

The Kugelblitz homing device was a proximity fuse which measured radio frequency waves bounced back from the target, reconciling the Doppler shift with measurement of standing waves to find the exact distance to the target. This homing device was the best of any produced by the Germans, according to the report, as was to be used on all varieties of flak rockets including the Schmettlerling and the Rheintochter. Examples were built at the Patent Verwertungs Gesellschaft plant but it never reached full assembly line production.

There are two interesting asides to this story. The first is that on May 1, 1945, one day after Hitler shot himself in the bunker and six days before Germany surrendered, two officers of the Reichsministerium fuer Rustungs und Kriegsproduktion (Albert Speer's ministry) arrived at the plant and took all existing examples of the Kugelbitz devices and the plans. Neither the two officers, the devices, nor the plans were ever seen again (5). Why was this done? Realistically, these officers must have had some post-war aspirations for this device. It must be added that at this point in the war, Speer's ministry, the Reichs Ministry for Armament and War Production referred to above was in fact being administered and run by the SS.

The second aside is another device in the conceptual stages at the Patent Verwertungs Gesellschaft called "Phantoscope". Phantoscope was to employ high frequency waves beamed to the ground then reflected and picked up on board a moving aircraft to image, in three dimensions, the contours of the earth's surface using a glass case filled with gas and tiny vertical wires. This could be done in any weather, day or night (6). One wonders if the German officers plucked this jewel also? If so, was this to be used on a manned saucer?

Vesco says the Kugelblitz saucer was flown once against enemy aircraft (7). It was destroyed by technical detachments of the SS after "a single lucky wartime mission" (8) in late March or April of 1945 (9) .

Another mystery is the post-war activities of Dr. Richard Miethe. Most all sources state that Dr. Miethe went to Canada after the war and worked on a joint Canadian-American saucer project at an aircraft facility near Toronto, Ontario. Unfortunately, all Freedom Of Information Act inquiries concerning Dr. Miethe run into the solid wall of "no record". Only one researcher ever claimed to have a document naming Dr. Miethe in association with this Avro Aircraft, Limited project, (also known as A.V. Roe, Limited), and that one researcher later admitted to being "a government asset" which throws a cloud of doubt on all his work (10).

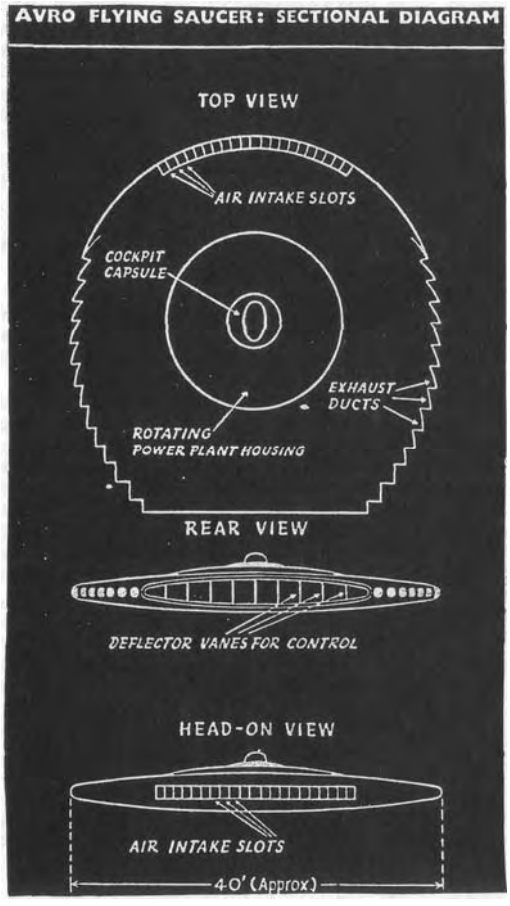
There is no doubt, however, that by early 1955, work was commenced by Avro to build a mach 3 flying saucer which is reminiscent of some of the designs attributed to Dr. Miethe. Two designs were proposed, the difference being the engine used to power the saucer. One proposal was to use several axial-flow jet engines. The second and preferred proposal was to use one large radial-flow jet engine. The axial type is the type most commonly used in jet aircraft today. The radial type was similar to the first jet engine flown by the Germans in 1937. In fact, the radial engine actually under study in Canada may have had some similarities with the Rene Leduc engine used by Dr. Miethe.

Work continued until the early 1960s under various names including Project Silver Bug and Project 1794. Finally, a small hover-craft was unveiled by Avro as the final outcome of their saucer experimentation. This "Avrocar" had nothing to do with either Dr. Miethe's work or a mach three interceptor. The Avrocar was probably a cover project for something else. This "something else" was more advanced.

The Avro Aircraft, Limited experimentation with saucer-craft was always an open secret which was at times exploited by the government. Information regarding this project has been obtained via Freedom Of Information Act using their American partner, the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, by this researcher as well as other researchers.

There exists a sub-story to the Canadian involvement which should be mentioned. In an article in a British UFO magazine, writer Palmiro Campagna revealed a previously unknown connection between the Canadian government and the history of German saucers (11). It seems that an SS technical liaison officer, Count Rudolf von Meerscheidt-Huellessem, (erroneously spelled "Hullessem" in the article), contacted the Canadian government in March of 1952, offering technical information about a German saucer which could attain speeds "limited only by the strength of the metals used in the saucer's construction". According to the article, von

Avro Flying Saucer



This is a general diagram of the exterior of an Avro saucer. It is representative of how the Avro radial engine saucers worked. Within this outer hull an inner, flat radial-type engine of was situated. This is exactly the scheme designed by Dr. Richard Miethe it and has been copied from his designs. Dr. Frost and his engine designs were overblown, heavy, complicated frauds.

Meerscheidt-Huellessem wanted a large sum of money as down payment, a monthly salary and Canadian citizenship and police protection in exchange. Support for this claim comes in the form of copies of Canadian government documents describing this offer. Mr. Campagna states in the article that the Canadian government ultimately declined the offer but that the American government may have taken over negotiations and accepted.

Contact was made by this researcher with a daughter of Count Rudolf von Meerscheidt-Huellessem's who verified that her father was a technical liaison officer. She had little contact with her father since she was two years old since he had remarried and moved to Canada. She was able, however, to provide the address of another relative, Countess von Huellessem, who was Count Rudolf von Meerscheidt-Huellessem's widow.

Contact was made with Countess von Huellessem. Count von Meerscheidt-Huellessem died in 1988. But the Countess did know a little something about the story in question. Her late husband did discuss the flying saucer with her but only once. He told her that the "drawings" had been given to a representative of the Canadian government in 1952. After review of the drawings, the only comment from the representative was that they were "outdated". The drawings were never returned. The Canadians had succeeded in obtaining hard information concerning a real flying saucer and in paying for it with an insult. Count von Meerscheidt-Huellessem was somewhat despondent over the rejection. He never mentioned the subject to his wife again. At the time they were both making new lives for themselves in Canada and the subject never resurfaced.

In discussing these events with the Countess over the telephone, she told me that she herself had seen these drawings. She was asked if these were drawings or technical plans. She said they were technical drawings on rolls of paper. I said the word "blueprint" and she said "yes". She stated again that these drawings were given only to the Canadians and not to the Americans.

Countess von Huellessem was sent a copy of the aforementioned article. Her only comment was that her husband would not have asked for a large sum of money in exchange for this information. They already had means. He might have asked for a position, she said, since her husband would have enjoyed working on this project.

Returning to the Avro Aircraft, Limited - U. S. Air Force saucer project, we have to ask ourselves some questions. First, was this information, these plans, the real basis of the Avro saucer project? This would certainly explain the reason for the partnership between the two governments involved since the Americans would have needed the Canadians at that point and the Canadians would have insisted upon control of the project on their home soil. Second, did the technology brought to the

Canadians by von Meerscheidt-Huellessen have anything to do with the jet technology obtained the under Freedom Of Information Act? It certainly had nothing to do with a hover-craft which was the outcome of this project according to the government. How could a floppy hover-craft barely capable of 300 miles per hour under the best of estimates have had anything to do with a saucer whose speed was "only limited by the strength of metals used in the saucer's construction"? Could Project Silver Bug, Project 1794, and some of the other patents of John Frost attributed to this collaboration all be nothing more than an elaborate cover story?

Another point is that until recently, the only connection linking the German saucer projects to the Avro Project and to the Americans was the involvement of Dr. Richard Miethe. With the new evidence of the Peenemuende Project's connection to the American saucer projects run out of Wright Field, Ohio and the Count von Meerscheidt-Huellessem connections to the Canadians, the weak linkage of Dr. Miethe to these projects is superfluous. There is now more than enough evidence to make these connections with or without Dr. Miethe. Further, considering the Count von Meerscheidt-Huellessem evidence, there is now a direct link between German saucer technology and the Canadian government's saucer project at A.V., Roe Limited. That link turns out to be the SS in the form of an SS technical liaison officer.

There are differing opinions as to how known saucer-types were actually powered. Every researcher seems to have his own ideas about this subject. Could the answer to this dilemma be that there are more types of German saucers than we know about? For instance a device is depicted in a 1975 issue of Luftfahrt International, a well respected German aeronautical magazine, which shows a drawing of a "Flakmine" (12). Depicted are several rotor blades, some powered by ram-jets, making it essentially a jet-powered helicopter. This device may have been derived from design work done in Italy in which the propellant and the explosive were the same substance. This device was called the "Turboproietto" meaning in English, "turbine projectile" (13). It would have been able to carry large quantities of explosive to the altitude of a bomber formation. The device would have rotored up, vertically, to the level of a formation of bombers and then detonated, using the remaining fuel as a bomb, presumably inflicting heavy losses. Klaus-Peter Rothkugel refers to this very device as a "Drehfluegel" and will detail its development in his upcoming book.

In another instance of a possible saucer type, saucers shown to Bill Lyne in a movie clip while he was in Air Force Intelligence were described by him as "flying turtles" (14). This film was taken by B-17 flight personnel during World War Two as the two German saucers attacked a squadron of bombers. other writers including Michael X. Barton and Norbert Juergen-Ratthofer used these same descriptive words. Vesco describes the "Feuerball", the foo fighter, as "circular and armored, more or less resembling the shell of a tortoise". This description also

applies to his Kugelblitz (15). Turtle or tortoise is "Schildkroete" in German. Sometimes this device is referred to as a "flying turtle" in both languages. With so many writers using this term for flying craft which are apparently not all similar, there exists a certain amount of confusion about this name, "Schildkroete". Therefore, this saucer does not seem to fit neatly into any previously described saucer type. Perhaps this flying turtle is only another name for the Fireball or foo-fighter which seems to be the consensus among German writers, other writers seem to associate this word with a larger craft so perhaps this type of saucer is closer to what Vesco described as the Kugelblitz. "Schildkroete" seemed so nebulous that for many years this writer refused to accept the term at all.

This all changed when it was uncovered that the Germans were actually developing a flying weapon code-named Schildkroete. This researcher as well as another researchers have found references to an offensive air weapon, called by the Germans, "Schildkroete", and known to American intelligence. The exact nature of this device is, however, still kept secret. The government is uncooperative, even when presented with their own words on the subject and copies of their own reports. For instance in a Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee interrogation of Albert Speer, Reichminister of Armaments And War Production, report 53(b), Speer is specifically asked about "Schildkroete". Only Speer's reply is retained in the record, not the actual question. Line number 20 of that interrogation quoted here as the document from microfilm is difficult to read:

" 20. Schildkroete he was not sure about, but he thought is might, conceivably be a jet fighter. "

By the time Schildkroete had come about, Speer had lost much of his standing and duties to officials of the SS. In this same set of interrogations Speer deferred a question concerning V-weapons to Dr. Hans Kammler as the one the Allies should seek as the expert. Speer was the only one raising Kammler's name. There was no follow-up questioning by the Allied interrogators. It was almost as if Speer had uttered an obscenity, invoking the "K" word, which was a word simply too hot to be touched in that setting.

The next Allied reference to Schildkroete comes from the Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee, Evaluation Report 40, titled "Sonderausschus A-4". Sonderausschus was an organization whose job it was to prioritize resources toward projects most needed to defend the Reich. These high priority programs were the Vierjahresplan, Vulkanprogramm, Jaegerprogramm, Lokprogramm, and the Notprogramm. Each had projects within these headings. Even though under pressure of law in the form of a request under the auspices of the Freedom Of Information Act, the Federal Government of the United States of America has responded with a "No Record" when asked for their files on some of these programs. This is true even when confronted with their own documents naming

Production and Layout

The Mittelwerk and Nordwerk tunnel system had been in reasonabl full production up to the cessation of hostilities, the main production being:-

V1 and V2 components and assembly
Taifun - flak rocket components
Schildkrote - flak rocket components
Junkers Engines - Jumo 004 components and assembly
Jumo 213 components and assembly

SECRET

KO-13489

5. Arbeitsausschuss Kontingents under Dir. Russo was charged with cooperating with the various plants throughout Germany to insure that required raw materials were received at the proper times and places. Interrogation of Russo revealed that he had been instrumental in and/or had certain knowledge regarding the following programs:

Name or Designation	Remarks
Vierjahresplan	4 years plan
Vulkanprogramm	
Jägerprogramm	
Lokprogramm	
Notprogramm	
8-103	Necessity program V-1. Also known under code name "Kirschkern" or "cherry pit" and as "Vu 1". Sometimes known also as "Libelle". Was manufactured or was to be manufactured by Henschel, Schönefeld/Berlin. Final assembly in Mittelwerke at Heidersschwerfen.
8-117	Also known as Hs. 117 and "Schmetterlin" or "Butterfly".
8-152	
8-162	Also known as "Schildkröte" and "Salamander". Manufactured by Heinkel in Rostock, Junkers in Dessau; motors from Mittelwerke in Heidersschwerfen, Bayrische Motorenwerke in Eisensch, Berlin-Spandau and Zuhladorf-Wandlitz/Mark, Klöckner in Brünn and Walter-Motoren in Prag.
8-246	

19. Mistel, he had explained yesterday as being pick-a-back aircraft.

20. Schildkröte he was not sure about, but he thought it might conceivably be a jet fighter.

21. Taiphun and Fiber he had not heard of.

Top: Combined Intelligence Objectives Subcommittee (CIOS) Report items 21, 22, 31, File# XXX111-38 Underground Factories In Germany, page 19. Middle: CIOS Report 40, Sonderausschus A-4, page 5. Bottom: CIOS Report 59(b) Interrogation Of Albert Speer Reich Minister Of Armaments And War, Page 3

these programs. One project, project 8-162, clearly names Schildkroete as the code-name of this project. It is listed in association with a known project, the "Salamander" project, which resulted in the He 162A Salamander or Volksjaeger jet fighter.

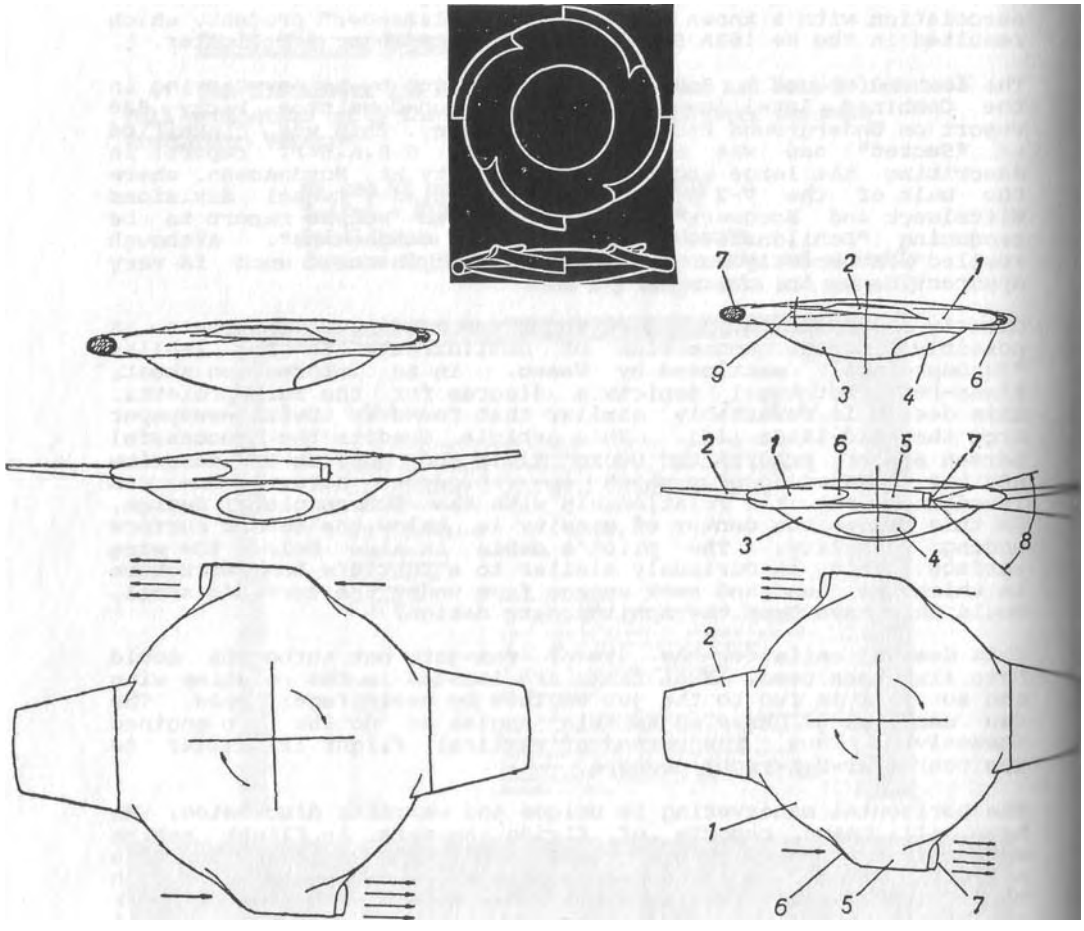
The last reference to Schildkroete was found by Heiner Gehring in the Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee Party 536 report on Underground Factories in Germany. This was classified as "Secret" and was a G-2 Division, S.H.A.E.F. report! In describing the large underground facility at Nordhausen, where the bulk of the V-2 production took place, tunnel divisions Mittelwerk and Nordwerk were said in this secret report to be producing "Schildhroete - flak rocket components". Although spelled incorrectly in the report, the intended word is very apparent.

Clearly something is going on under the heading Schildkroete. A possibly is the connection of Schildkroete to the Italian "Turboproietti" mentioned by Vesco. In an information sheet, Klaus-Peter Rothkugel depicts a diagram for the Turboproietti. This design is remarkably similar that found in Swiss newspaper from the mid-1950s (16). This article credits the successful German saucer program and Georg Klein and goes on to describe another related design which is reproduced here. One can immediately see the relationship with the Turboproietti design. In this design the center of gravity is below the saucer surface adding stability. The pilot's cabin is also below the wing surface. This is curiously similar to a turtle's bony structure in which the head and neck emerge from under the turtle's shell. Could this have been the Schildkroete design?

This design calls for the use of ram-jets but turbojets could have also been used. Fuel tanks are located in the rotating wing and so fuel is fed to the jet engines by centrifugal force. The two small wings have adjustable angles as do the jet engines themselves. Thus, the method of vertical flight is similar to the Schriever-Habermohl saucers.

The horizontal maneuvering is unique and warrants discussion. We have all heard reports of flying saucers in flight making seemingly non-aerodynamic turns instantaneously. In this article, Mr. Zollikofer proposes a simple method to accomplish this. It involves angular momentum. We all remember seeing a child's top spinning on a smooth floor. Perhaps the reader will recall that when the top nears a piece of furniture and hits it, the top shoots off instantly in the opposite direction. This happens because contact with the furniture caused a change in the top's angular momentum. The top's momentum was braked on one side. A sudden slow down on one side caused an imbalance whose force drove the top to the opposite direction.

In this same way the intentional slowing of one engine (on one side) on this saucer design would cause the rapidly spinning saucer to instantaneously change course, shooting to the other



Top: Italian designed "Turboproietti" an anti-aircraft design which used left-over fuel as its warhead. Bottom: Saucer design, 2/3/55, "Neue Zuercher Zeitung". 1. Hub of the rotating winged-wheel. 2. Adjustable wings 3. Non-rotating cabin. 4. Lookout for the pilots. 5. Ram-jets 6. Air intake. 7. Exhaust, direction changeable. 8. Angle of variation of the exhaust rudder. 9. Variable adjustment angle of the wings. Was this a Schildkroete? Kugelblitz?

side. Several of these course changes would resemble insect-like flight to the observer. The rapidity of the course changes is tied to the degree of slow-down or breaking of the saucer's angular momentum and to the degree (revolutions per minute) of that momentum. Even when stationary, increased spinning would serve as a "bank" of angular momentum to be drawn upon at a moment's notice.

Through out Vecso's Intercept UFO the words "circular wing" are mentioned. Looking at this design yields a possible new understanding to that term. It is possible that this basic design is to be found in the foo fighter, (Feuerball, Phoo Bomb), as well as the mysterious Kugelblitz. It was hinted above that this design may be the basis of the Schildkroete but it could also be the basis for other German saucer projects.

Many writer attribute field propulsion to the foo fighter. This is because of its luminosity, its flight pattern and its alleged disruption of ignition based aircraft engines. Another possibility is that it was a jet propelled flying machine but with one addition. It is possible that a T.T. Brown-type of flame-jet generator was attached to its exhaust nozzles and the appropriate insulation added on the surface of the craft. With this addition, the exhaust gasses would become enriched with negative ions. So would the air in the surrounding vicinity. This would have resulted in the short-circuiting of the target aircraft's engines should such variables as the wind have been just right. The fact that it apparently did not always work argues for the variables being in operation. More variables would have accompanied this means of disruption than a purely electromagnetic one since the electromagnetic field would have been present regardless of atmospheric conditions. It other words, the field propulsion vehicle should have always disrupted the bomber's engines.

Another item is submitted for your consideration under the heading of "loose ends". This is another F.B.I. report, Number 62-0-11328, which is reproduced here in total. A unique feature of this report is that it contains two "xerox" copies of a German saucer. These pictures were given to the F.B.I. but the negatives were retained by the informant whose name has been deleted. Also deleted is the last name of the German saucer designer. It is a remotely controlled device but the circular glass cockpit indicates a design ultimately intended for human pilots. Undulations on the saucer periphery resembling jet engines are noticeable in the picture. This report dates from July 8, 1967 but describes events from November, 1944. As with the other F.B.I. report, the fact that it was taken and kept so long attests to its worth.

There are some similarities between this report and Vesco's description of the Kugelblitz. The encounter described in the F.B.I. report resulting in the "downing" of a B-26. Vesco describes the same or a similar incident involving the Kugelblitz

A Second F.B.I. Report on German Flying Discs
(Three pages and best possible picture)

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: 6/8/67

FROM : SAC, MIAMI (62-0-11328)

SUBJECT: [redacted]
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Flying Saucers

A review of the Miami indices revealed information reflecting subject appeared at the Miami Office on July 24, 1959, and volunteered to return to Austria as an intelligence agent. His expressed motivation was to do something to repay the debt he felt he owed the United States. He was afforded the Washington, D. C. Headquarters address of the Central Intelligence Agency and told his inquiry should be directed there.

Also, on July 4, 1961, he appeared at the Miami Office and gave an incoherent story of recently meeting an individual who asked him to kill his mother. [redacted] appeared to be somewhat bewildered and continuously gazed away from the interviewing Agent.

During his most recent visit to the Miami Office, [redacted] seemed genuinely concerned about the existence of the object he allegedly photographed during November, 1944. He exhibited no emotional nor mental disorder and appeared to be rational.

In view of recent publicity afforded UFO sightings, some apparently by responsible sources, this information is submitted to the Bureau for consideration of transmittal to the U. S. Air Force.

REC 40
62-23704-460

14 JUN 12 1967

1 - Bureau (Enc. 4)
1 - Miami
LB/bab
(3)

JUN 27 1967

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No. 62-0-11328

Miami, Florida
June 8, 1967

RE: [redacted]
INFORMATION CONCERNING

On April 26, 1967, [redacted] Miami, Florida, appeared at the Miami Office and furnished the following information relating to an object, presently referred to as an unidentified flying object, he allegedly photographed during November, 1944:

Sometime during 1943, he graduated from the German Air Academy and was assigned as a member of the Luftwaffe on the Russian Front. Near the end of 1944, he was released from this duty and was assigned as a test pilot to a top secret project in the Black Forest of Austria. During this period he observed the aircraft described above. It was saucer shaped, about twenty-one feet in diameter, radio controlled, and mounted several jet engines around the exterior portion of the craft. He further described the exterior portion as revolving around the dome in the center which remained stationary. It was [redacted] responsibility to photograph the object while in flight. He asserted he was able to retain a negative of a photograph he made at 7,000 meters (20,000 feet). A Xerox copy of the negative, as furnished by [redacted], appears on the last page of this communication. Also, a still photograph he allegedly made "at the risk of my life", illustrating the object parked in a hanger, appears on the last page.

According to [redacted] the above aircraft was designed and engineered by (First Name Unknown) [redacted], a German engineer whose present whereabouts is unknown to him. He assumed [redacted] was taken into custody by Allied Forces upon the termination of hostilities. [redacted] stated [redacted] unsuccessfully attempted to avoid the German draft, but was apprehended by the Gestapo

RE: [redacted]
INFORMATION CONCERNING

in Vienna, Austria, sometime during late 1943 or early 1944. [redacted] also assumed the secrets pertaining to this aircraft were captured by Allied Forces. He said this type of aircraft was responsible for the downing of at least one American B-26 airplane. He furnished the following fuel and engine data:

"....Fuel mixture of N_2H_4O in Methyl Alcohol (CH_3OH) rather than 'oxygen-holding' mixture of hydrogen peroxide H_2O_2 in water. 7m 1,3m high two rocket motors; smooth flow, rotary drive over 2,000 meters per second...."

[redacted] said he copied this data from a board located in the hanger area.

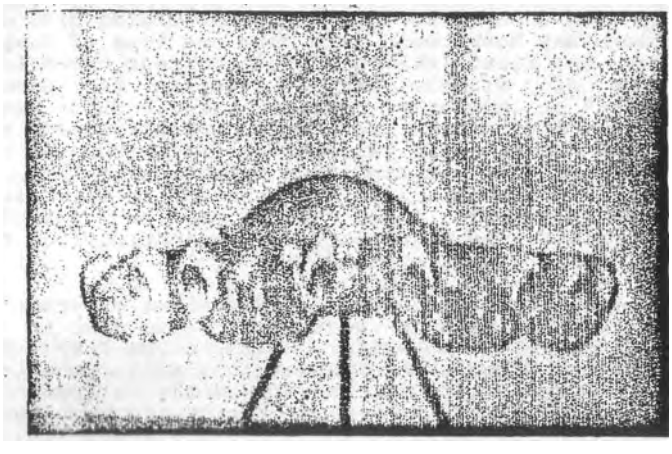
[redacted] asserted he was shot down by the British on March 14, 1945, after having been reassigned to the Western Front. He was held prisoner by the British in London and later in Brussels until his release in 1946. He departed for the United States from Bremerhaven, Germany, on December 26, 1951; entering the United States in New Jersey on January 7, 1952, and was subsequently naturalized in Miami during 1958. He is presently employed as a mechanic at Eastern Airlines, Miami, Florida. He related he was born May 3, 1924, in Austria.

[redacted] stated he has withheld this information because he assumed the United States possessed it. He has become increasingly concerned because of the unconfirmed reports concerning a similar object and denials the United States has such an aircraft. He feels such a weapon would be beneficial in Vietnam and would prevent the further loss of American lives which was his paramount purpose in contacting the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

[redacted] reiterated he has the original negatives of both photographs. He said the shots were taken at a thirty second time exposure.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.





and an American "Liberator" (17). Both saucers are surprisingly identical in description. In the F.B.I. report this secret project was set in the "Black Forest of Austria". The Schwarzwald, the Black Forest, is in Southern Germany. Vesco says that toward the end of the war the Germans dispersed their remaining aircraft to improved air field hidden in thick pine forests (18).

Vesco specifically mentions the Schwaebischerwald and the BubesheimerwaId (19). Vesco goes on to say:

> "It was from one of these improved fields that the first Kugelblitz fighter took off on its fantastic flight" (20).

The general description of the airfield hidden in a forest does seem to correspond with what Vesco described. Finally, the fuel used on this saucer was unlike that of the Me-163 or any other fuel known. Is this a variant of the exotic fuels Vesco says were considered for German saucers? (21).

Is this report confirmation of Vesco? Is the informant in the F.B.I. report describing a Kugelblitz? Is this fuzzy "xerox" copy really a picture of the Kugelblitz? It is not proof positive, but it is intriguing.

A request was made to the F.B.I. for a clear picture. The Bureau responded on March 22, 2001 saying that the Miami Field Office may have had a clearer picture but that the file was destroyed.

Here we have a real X-File, yet nobody saved the picture? Fox Mulder, where are you when we need you most? The F.B.I. did provide a somewhat clearer picture which is reproduced here.

Sometimes blind luck in needed when dealing with the government. This has proven to be the case regarding a very special compass developed by the Germans to use in their flying disc program. Actually, there may have been more than one type of compass for this purpose. The first inkling of this compass comes to us from the writings of Wilhelm Landig wherein he describes a "Himmelskompass" or heavenly compass (22). This device was mounted upon a flying disc and could orient itself using the position of the sun even in twilight or if the sun was below the horizon. The method given for its operation is that sunlight striking the earth is polarized and that this direction has a stronger electromagnetic field which can be detected with instruments (ibid). The magnetic fields emanating from the north and south poles are a similar situation.

William Lyne discloses, pictures and describes a German compass which he states was used on a German flying disc in his book Pentagon Aliens, the first edition which circa 1990. He bought the device as junk from a New Mexican junk dealer who got it on an Air Force base after it had apparently slipped though a security check.

(e) Artificial horizon

A self regulating artificial horizon for use in aircraft was invented by Dr. Knappstein, who had a factory in Berlin-Schoneberg. He worked in collaboration with Henschel, Berlin-Konigswusterhausen. The horizon was not affected by any aerobatic manoeuvres.

PAGE NO. 2

NO.	TO	FROM	DATE	
				1174 - RESTRICTED - 9 June 1945 Subject: "Mother Horizon" Request received from Technical Data for one (1) "Mother Horizon", as the Germans called it. It's a remote indicating gyro horizon device. Equipment Lab seems to be the interested agency. D. L. PUTT, Colonel, A.C. Director of Technical Services.

"Mother Horizon" was possibly a device used on a German flying disc. Top: "Information Obtaind From Targets Of Opportunity In The Sonthofen Area" BIOS Report # 142. Bottom: Entry in microfilm obtained via FOIA.

Recently, mention of a German compass was encountered while searching for something else in a Freedom Of Information Act response. Called a "Mother Horizon", the device recalls and may confirm the device first described by Landig. On the other hand, it may simply be a device showing the pilot the attitude of the aircraft in relation to that of the horizon. Whether or not this is the same device in the possession of William Lyne is not known at this time.

Turning to field propulsion saucers and pictures of them, it should be pointed out that the saucer pictures of Ralf Ettl and Norbert Juergen-Ratthofer are unique to them, that is, no pictures of saucers specifically identified as "Haunebu", "Vril" exist outside of their presentation to my knowledge. As if preempting criticism, these writers counter with the proposal that all Adamski saucers are really German field propulsion saucers or originated from German wartime designs. Adamski saucers were photographed and witnessed world-wide in the early 1950s. In fairness, it should be pointed out that there also exists at least one source of confirmation of their thesis.

Confirmation of sorts comes from a new book by a conspiracy writer, George Piccard, who cites similar information to that of Ettl and Juergen-Ratthofer as coming from his informant, a man calling himself "Kilder" (24). Piccard states that he believed the name "Kilder" to be an alias. Kilder was a clerk working in British intelligence and allegedly came to Piccard through a mutual contact shortly before Kilder died of lung cancer. During his years of service, Kilder had allegedly filed away many classified documents which he committed to memory. This book is interesting reading, of that there is no doubt. It is too bad, though, that Piccard could not elicit the real name of the dying Kilder, because, as has already been pointed out, there is nothing reliable about an unnamed, secret government source and, hence, there is no reason to spill much ink in discussing the matter.

More evidence that the Germans produced something truly strange comes from the Polish researcher Igor Witkowski. Mr. Witkowski is considered by the Eastern European sources already cited, the engineer Mr. Robert Leiakiewicz and Dr. Milos Jesensky, to be the foremost authority on German saucers in Poland. This is no small title considering the mountains of research through which they have tunneled, both figuratively and in reality. According to his interviewer, Nick Cook, the Aviation Editor of "Janes Defense Weekly", Mr. Witkowski was shown classified Russian documents through an unnamed contact. In them it described German research on a device called "die Glocke" (the bell). This device was tested underground, at Der Riese, at the Wenceslas mine near Ludwigsdorf(25) under the German code-names of "Laternentraeger" ("lantern carrier") and "Chronos" which obviously refers to time. This was done under the auspices of a heretofore unknown SS organization, the Forschungen, Entwicklungen and Patente (Research, Development and Patents) or FEP. This was Kammler's

group according to Mr. Witkowski (26). Could this be the true name of what has been referred to up until now simply as the "Kammler Group"? Mr. Witkowski maintains that this group was independent of the Reichsforschungsrat, the Reich Research Council, which is significant. Heading the research on the Bell was none other than Professor Walther Gerlach (27) who was among the very top tier of German nuclear scientists. A metallic liquid, violet in color and resembling mercury, was stored within the bell in two cylinders. These cylinders were spun in opposite directions for test lasting for a minute. The effects included.a pale blue light emitted from the bell, electrical equipment failures, as well as deleterious effects on animals and people (28). To his credit, Mr. Witkowski did not try make more out of this than is in evidence. He is of the opinion, however, that the bell was a very powerful engine (29). Of course, we all can jump ahead of the facts slightly and wonder if this engine was not to be used on a very large German atomic saucer or field propulsion saucer, the very kind described by Mr. Norbert Juergen-Ratthofer.

Weighing into the German field propulsion controversy is Dr. Axel Stoll. Dr. Stoll is a Geophysicist, that is, a real scientist. Dr. Stoll names no sources in his book but states that they exist and must be protected for the common need as opposed to that of serving an individual purpose as a citation (25). Dr. Stoll supports the assertion that field propulsion vehicles were being developed during the Third Reich. But unlike what has transpired before. Dr. Stoll gives us the theory and the mathematics behind the theory, citing and translating Maxwell and Bearden. Besides the mathematical support for his thesis that the Germans built field propulsion vehicles, he states something about his suspicion concerning a spin-off of this technology which may have been further developed by the Germans (26). It is what was stated by Mr. Juergen-Ratthofer over ten years ago in his video films. It is what was indicated by circumstantial evidence at Jonastal and recognized as such for at least five years by some of the researchers there. It is that the Germans were interested in the manipulation space and time itself. It is said that time and space can be manipulated or time and space can be created or obliterated through the use of am electromagnetic longitudinal wave (32). Normal electromagnetic waves, such as light waves, are transverse. This brings us right back to the production of quadropolar waves (transverse and longitudinal waves in cycle) as discussed in connection with the Schappeller device. Could this lost technology provide us with a window into time or into another dimension? Would our scientists of today be able to unlock this technology given their restricted scientific outlook? Has the reconstruction and piecing together of this puzzle occupied our scientists since the end of the Second World War?

Turning aside for a moment, as stated, this book was written as a guide to German flying discs. As such, the reader should be cautioned about at least one pitfall. This pitfall consists of a series of technical diagrams of alleged German field propulsion

saucers, prominently displaying a date of November, 1944. In some of these drawings mention is made of a "Thule-Tachyonator". This word "Tachyonator" obviously has its origins in the word tachyon. This word bothered me for years but I loved those "old" drawings so much that my nagging doubts were put aside. What bothered me was the fact that this word never arose in my introductory physics course in the 1960s. This ate at me until I called the Physics Department at the University of California at Los Angeles for their opinion as to the origin of this word. An old physicist said from his memory the word was not even coined until the mid-1960s, thus casting doubt on the technical drawings. He gave me a reference and his memory proved correct. The word "tachyon" was coined by Dr. Gerald Feinberg in 1966 (33). This means that there was no word "Tachyonator" in 1944. Unless better evidence surfaces, the veracity of these documents must be questioned. It hurts to admit that I count myself as one of the people taken in by this deception.

CHAPTER FIVE

Lore And Loose Ends: A Discussion of German Saucers Sources

Sources and References

1. Vesco, Renato, 1976, page 158

2. Vesco, Renato, 1976, pages 137, 156-157

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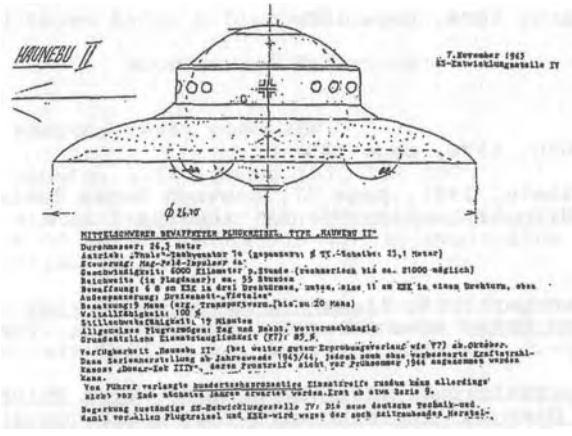
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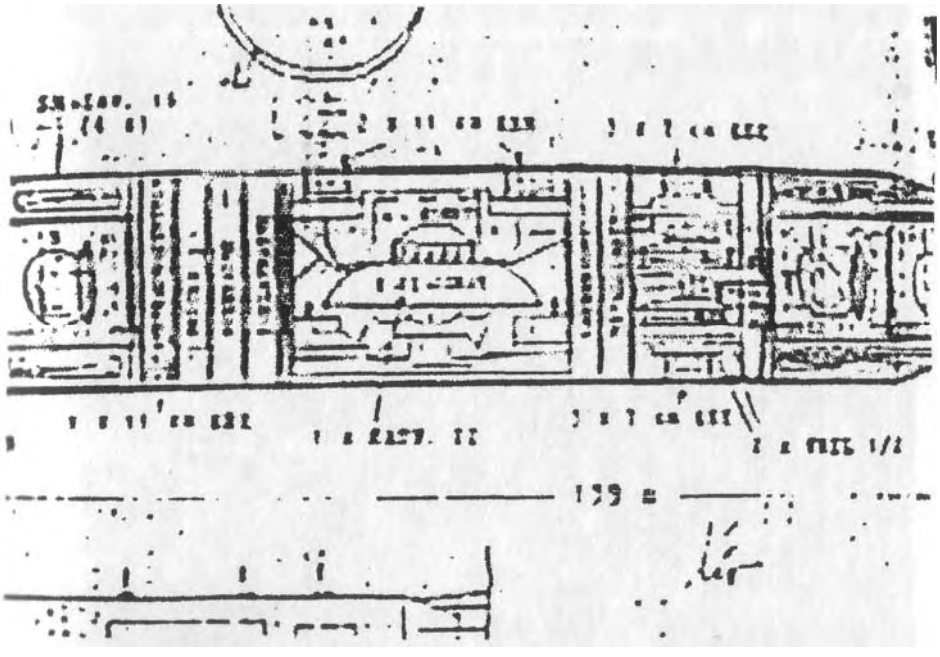
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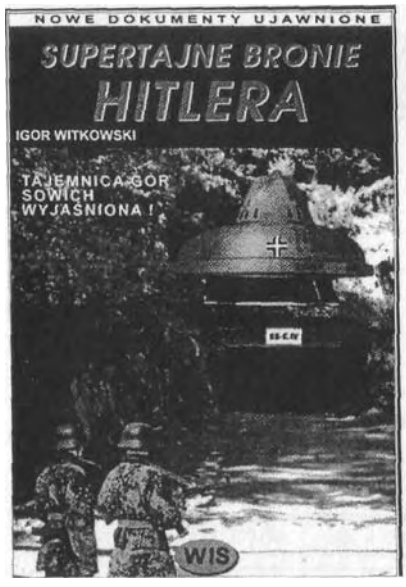
Alleged photocopy of SS plans for a Haunebu II being designed in 1943. From the German book Die Dunkle Seite Des Mondes (The Dark Side of the Moon) by Brad Harris (1996, Pandora Books, Germany).



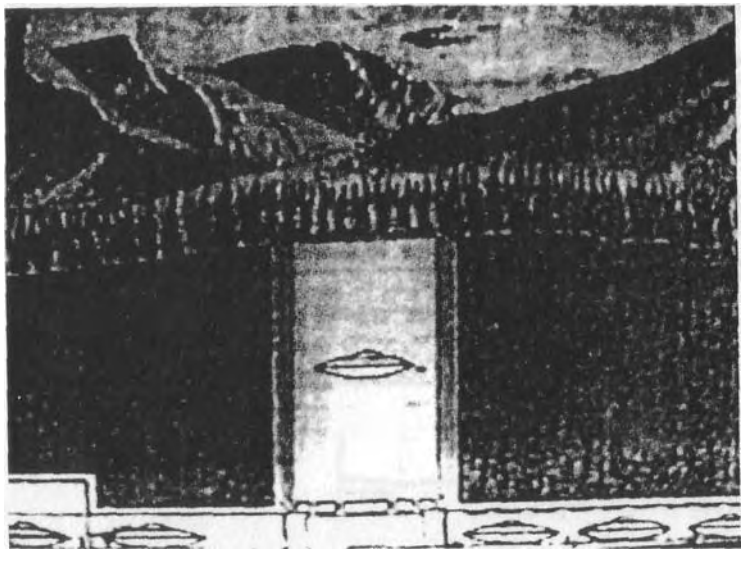
SS-Grupenfuhrer Hans Kammler circa 1944. He was alledgedly in charge of the Polish saucer bases.



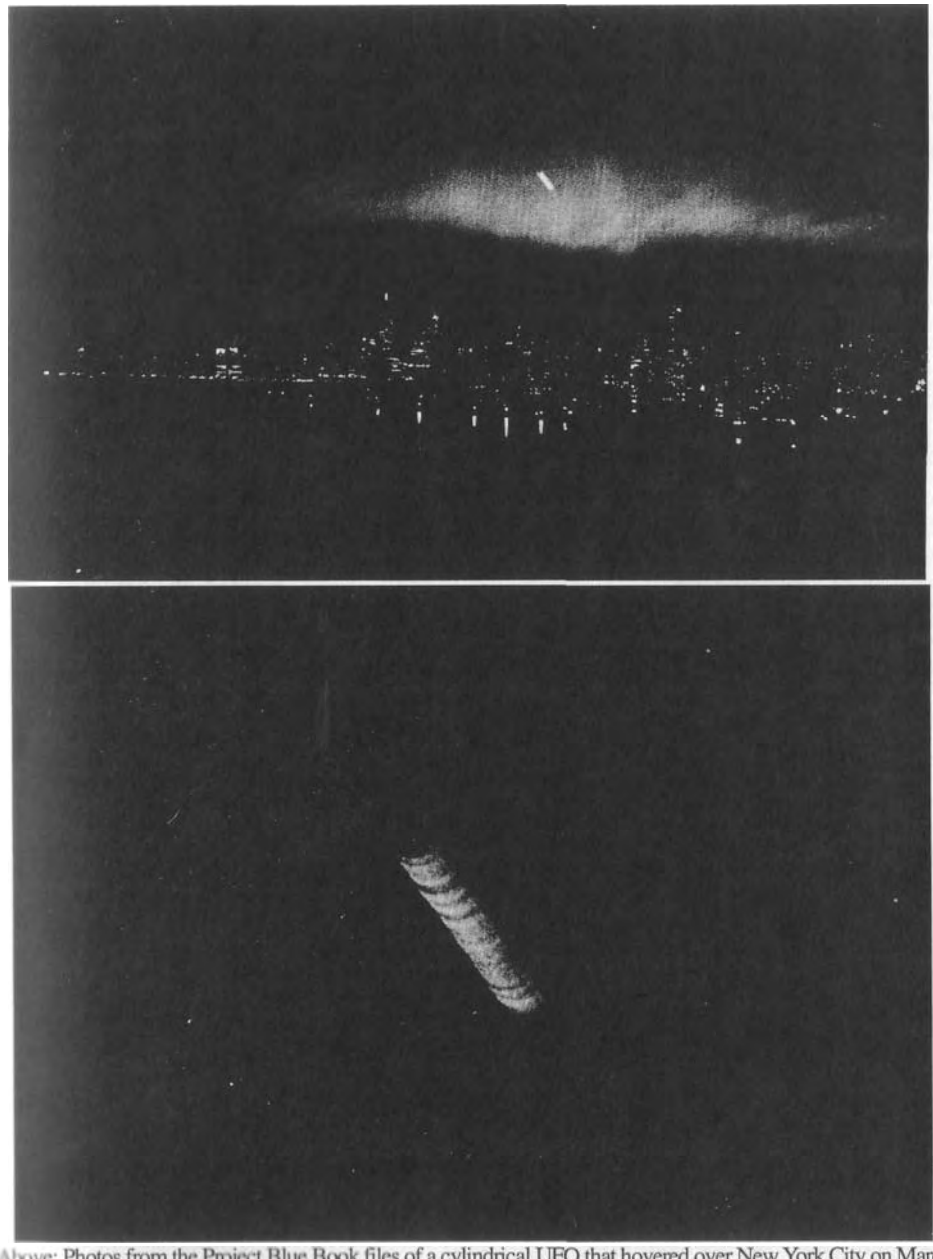
Internal plans for a "mothership" craft called "Andromeda," according to Polish historian Igor Witkowski.



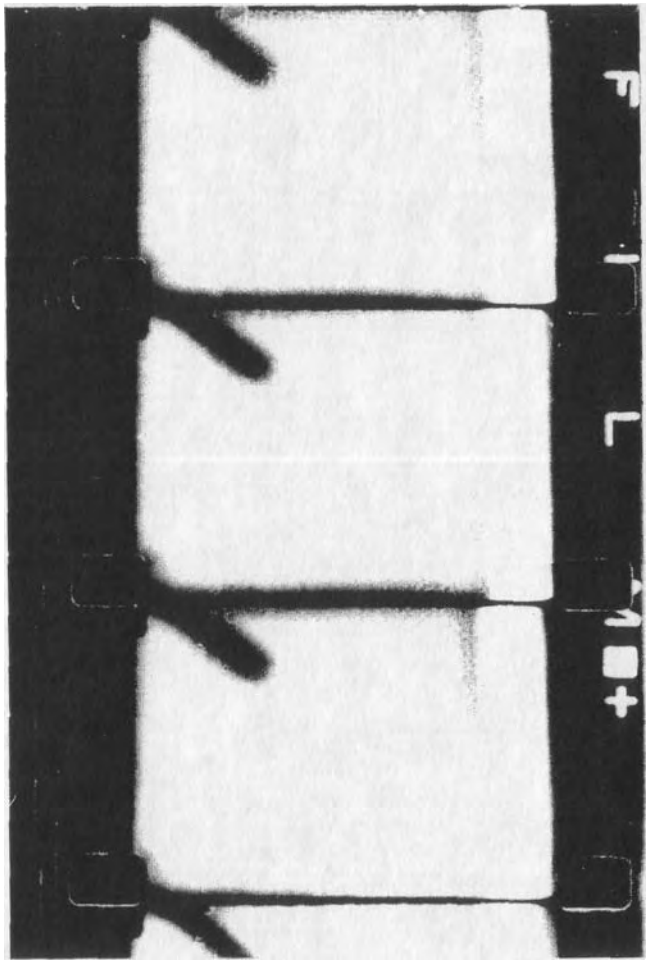
One of the books on "Hitler's Super Weapons" by Polish military historian Igor Witkowski.



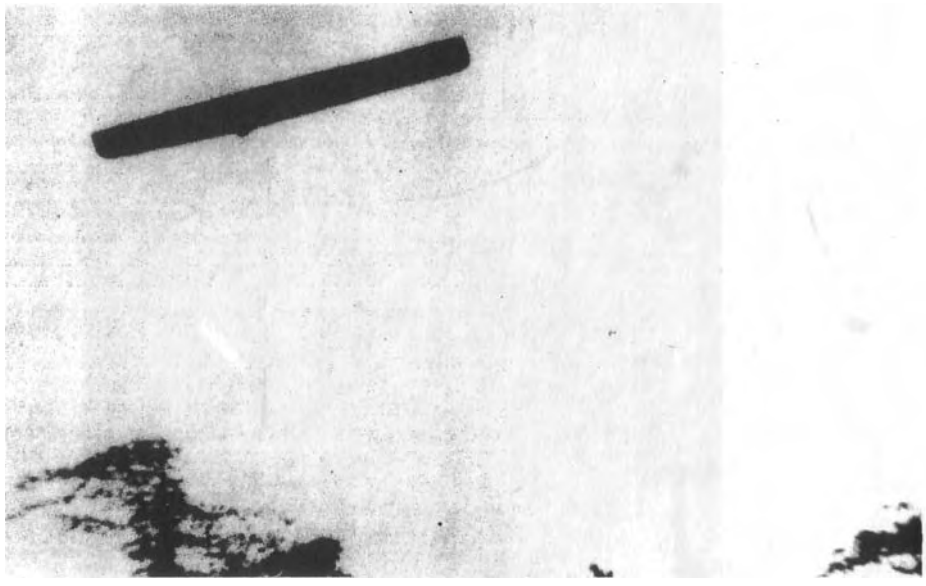
German plans for an underground saucer base, according to Polish historian Igor Witkowski.



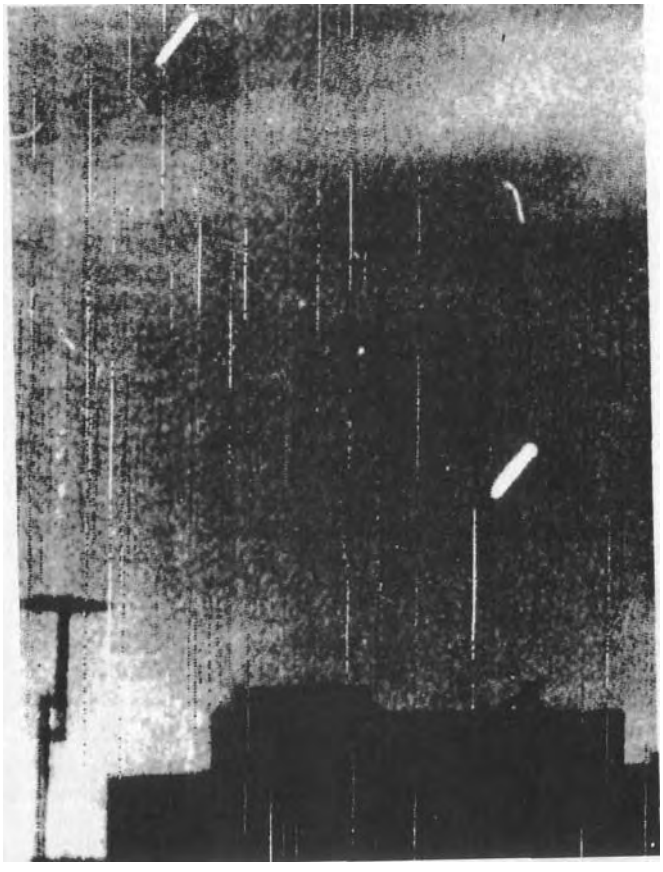
Above: Photos from the Project Blue Book files of a cylindrical UFO that hovered over New York City on March 20, 1950. The military suggested that it was possibly "the Moon." The photographer's name was deleted from the Project's files, as were most of the names when the material was finally declassified and released. These are some of the best photographs of a cylindrical UFO, thought to be a "Mothership" that would launch flying saucers.



Above: Project Blue Book examined this gun-camera film footage from Victorville, California taken on February 2, 1953. It apparently shows a cylindrical "Mothership" in flight.



A classic cigar-shaped UFO allegedly seen by Joe Ferriere near Woonsocket, Rhode Island in the early 1950s. Ferriere claimed that a dome-shaped object, which he also photographed, emerged from the creaft. Observers have pointed out that craft is remarkable for its ability to absorb light, being almost completely non-reflective.



Above: Two cylindrical objects were photographed in a one-minute exposure hovering over Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1965. They remained stationary over the city for 10 minutes and then departed at very high speed according to witnesses.

CHAPTER SIX:

"SONDERBUERO"

CHAPTER SIX

"Sonderbuero"

A topic worthy of discussion is the alleged German agency called "Sonderbuero" or Special Bureau. Sonderbuero is sometimes also referenced by a sub-bureau working within it called "Operation Uranus" or "U-13". In the past, debate has centered around the reality of Sonderbuero. Discussion of Sonderbuero or Sonderbuero-13 have been made recently by Juergen-Ratthofer (1), and Zunneck (2).

There is no real record of Sonderbuero in official sources. Searches have been made in Germany as well as in the U.S.A. under provisions of the Freedom Of Information Act. All inquiries came back with negative results. This, however, may not be the final word on the subject. German sources may be classified or buried within another designation. The American Freedom Of Information Act is something less than advertised as anyone ever attempting to use these provisions knows full well.

Rather than get "official" about Sonderbuero, please let me relate what is said about it, its relation to this story and to the history of UFOs as a whole. With this information the reader can make up his or her own mind about the subject.

It is said that in Germany during the war there was a quest to make Germany independent of outside energy sources. An organization was formed to investigate things we would now call "alternative energy". This included, among other things, the making of synthetic fuel and lubricants out of coal using a special process which was perfected by the Germans during the war. But it may have, and probably did, included other, more exotic, research encompassing into such topics as nuclear energy and possibly even "free energy" or "new energy".

A spin off of this research was said by Juergen-Ratthofer to have yielded field propulsion. Research toward this end was said to have been conducted by Sonderbuero. About this time strange things were taking to the skies in Germany. To keep a lid on publicity, the following scenario is cited by Juergen-Ratthofer to have been employed (3).

Germany was surrounded by enemies and their agents permeated much of the German war effort. The Germans needed to get control over what was accidently seen by spies. To do this they enlisted the help of an unwitting German civilian population. An attempt was consciously made by Sonderbuero to "spin" reports of these sightings as they came in from civilian sources. A sub-department was set up within Special Bureau which sent out orders, countrywide, that all sightings of unusual flying craft be reported directly to that office and not discussed or publicized.

So while a German governmental agency is doing research and testing on unconventional aircraft, at this same time the same agency is gathering reports from the citizenry on sightings of unconventional aircraft. In order to confuse and disguise real testing from the Allies or their agents in Germany, a spin could be put on those sightings describing them as something other than what they were. Of course, all this time, the German civilians are believing the point is to observe and report Allied secret spy aircraft or other Allied secret weaponry. The Allied intelligence agencies may have even bought into this ruse. Remember, this was a German operation to fool its own people and so envelope Allied intelligence gathering organizations in this deception. This was done very subtly and very cleverly.

But what evidence do we really have that this actually occurred? After all, there is no official mention on Sonderbuero. Perhaps there is an overall picture. Let us see if we can find a pattern. After cessation of hostilities the Allies, especially the Americans, seized every piece of German technology they could lay their hands on. They also seized every scientist, manager, and technician having anything to do with the German scientific community, military, or intelligence service. The hardware was analyzed and the personnel interviewed. In some cases both were taken to America for further study.

The technology was reconstructed and further developed. In America the latest German jet technology made its appearance five years later in the Korean War. America got its hands on the V-l which was further developed into the cruise missile. America got the v-2 which was further developed into intercontinental ballistic missiles and into our space program culminating in our landing on the moon. America got the V-3, the high pressure cannon, further developed by Dr. Gerald Bull into Iraq's super cannon, which, after being pointed at Israel was the real trigger for the Gulf War. And America got at least part of the German saucer program, the outcome of which was the Silver Bug Program, the Lenticular Reentry Vehicle project recently disclosed under pressure of the Freedom Of Information Act, and the UFO activity reported at Area 51. There are probably other examples which are, as of yet, undisclosed. Many other examples of technology transfer exist but the point need not be belabored.

America received more than just technical assistance from the

Germans. For example, they received the services of General Reinhard Gehlen, former intelligence chief of the German Army General Staff on the eastern front. Gehlen turned over to the Americans his entire spy apparatus, giving a then blinded America an eye into Soviet military objectives. Further, he set up and modernized our intelligence apparatus, culminating in the C.I.A., as a means to counter the Soviet threat. This spy effort was massive but please keep it in mind as we turn our attention to something smaller and seemingly less significant.

As mentioned, in the 1950s the United States Air Force was busy developing and testing flying saucers derived from captured German technology. Of course, the Air Force wanted it to remain a secret project, after all, we were involved in a Cold War. Given this problem might the Americans have asked the question as they always did: How did the Germans do this? If they did they would have formed, as an adjunct to the secret saucer programs, a program to gather material on all civilian sightings of strange unidentified flying objects, under the cover of national security, as if an external threat existed. This agency would have then been in a position to "explain" or spin the data so as not to alarm the populace while still maintaining secrecy concerning its own projects.

As the reader may have surmised by now, this is exactly what the united States Air Force did so successfully in the form of Project Blue Book and its predecessors. The Air Force experimented on flying saucers on one hand while gathering reported sightings from civilians on the other hand, spinning and manipulating the information according to dictates of their agenda.

When viewed in this perspective, the similarity between Sonderbuero and Project Blue Book is striking. Is not the greatest evidence for the existence of Sonderbuero the American pattern of imitation which infiltrated all post-war intelligence work? The only real guestion is whether the Germans originated the term "swamp gas" or if this was an American embellishment.

Although not central to our discussion, one might ask why, if it was successful, why was Project Blue Book suspended? Remember that the Americans tried to further develop German ideas. In this case the solution was so imaginative and uniquely American that the Pentagon must have resounded with the reverberation of back-slapping and belly laughs at its implementation.

Remember Mark Twain's tale of Tom Sawyer whitewashing the picket fence? Instead of being compelled to an afternoon of drudgery, Tom pretended to his friends that this work was play. Not only did he enlist them to do the painting, but his friends were so eanger to help paint that they paid Tom to do this work.

The United States Air Force followed this paradigm. They infiltrated an existing civilian intelligence gathering

organization researching UFOs. They did this at no cost to the United States Air Force or any other governmental intelligence service. There were no official records, and no accounting trail. And best of all those doing the work and volunteering the intelligence would pay for the privilege in the form of dues to maintain the organization. If there is any question in the reader's mind as to whether MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) has been co-opted, ask yourself this question: would the intelligence services of the United States government allow the largest civilian intelligence gathering agency in the world to operate within its purview without at least monitoring it? Of course the answer is a resounding "no". This is one reason why MUFON is allowed to remain in operation within the USA without attempts to discredit it.

Given this sophisticated government intervention, would it not be a simple matter not only to manipulate the incoming sightings data, but to spin and confuse the debate concerning the origins of UFOs, even setting the agenda for the entire inquiry? Perhaps this is the reason MUFON has taken such a negative view of terrestrially originating UFOs and of the German origin of UFOs in particular. In the early 1990s, this writer was told via telephone from his home in Texas by the head man of MUFON himself that: "We investigated that a long time ago and found nothing to it". The "that" referred to was German saucers.

As an aside, he further went on to say that the idea of a German origin would for UFOs would not even be on the table for discussion if it were not for one, Vladimir Terziski, who, "is the guy pushing it", to directly quote this individual. Mr. Terziski has formed his own ideas about German saucers which he has never been afraid to share, and, to his undying credit, he stood up and lectured on this topic to the faces of MUFON in the very temples of the alien world, UFO conferences, worldwide. Mr. Terziski, almost alone, forced these facts into those conferences and subsequently forced all those UFO magazines to deal with the subject of German flying discs. And although he never got credit for it, he also supplied the technical assistance for a world famous Japanese television producer to bring an hour of this German saucer story to Japan in prime-time. Mr. Terziski, almost single-handedly, opened up two continents to this UFO reality.

MUFON's successful existence is tied to their implicit and explicit assumptions of UFOs as alien machines. The greatest appeal the extraterrestrial hypothesis has for the government is that this hypothesis is simply not testable. MUFON does not even try to test anything. Instead, they chase sightings. They train their followers to take meaningless celestial measurements accompanying these sightings and then analyze this "data" into gibberish. MUFON then lends itself to endless rambling speculation involving increasingly more exotic alien scenarios.

It is not MUFON's rank and file membership which is to blame. The individuals I have met are honest and sincere as are 99% of

all the participants in the quest to understand these mysterious flying objects. Their methods may stimulate UFO interest and UFO enthusiasts but it utterly fails to advance our quest for knowledge about these devices. This is perfectly alright with the behind the scenes government manipulators, however, since this result is their real goal. It is unknown to what extent the Americans have succeeded in improving and further developing the original German saucers. The extent to which they have succeeded in further developing Sonderbuero, however, should be apparent to all.

CHAPTER SIX

"Sonderbuero"

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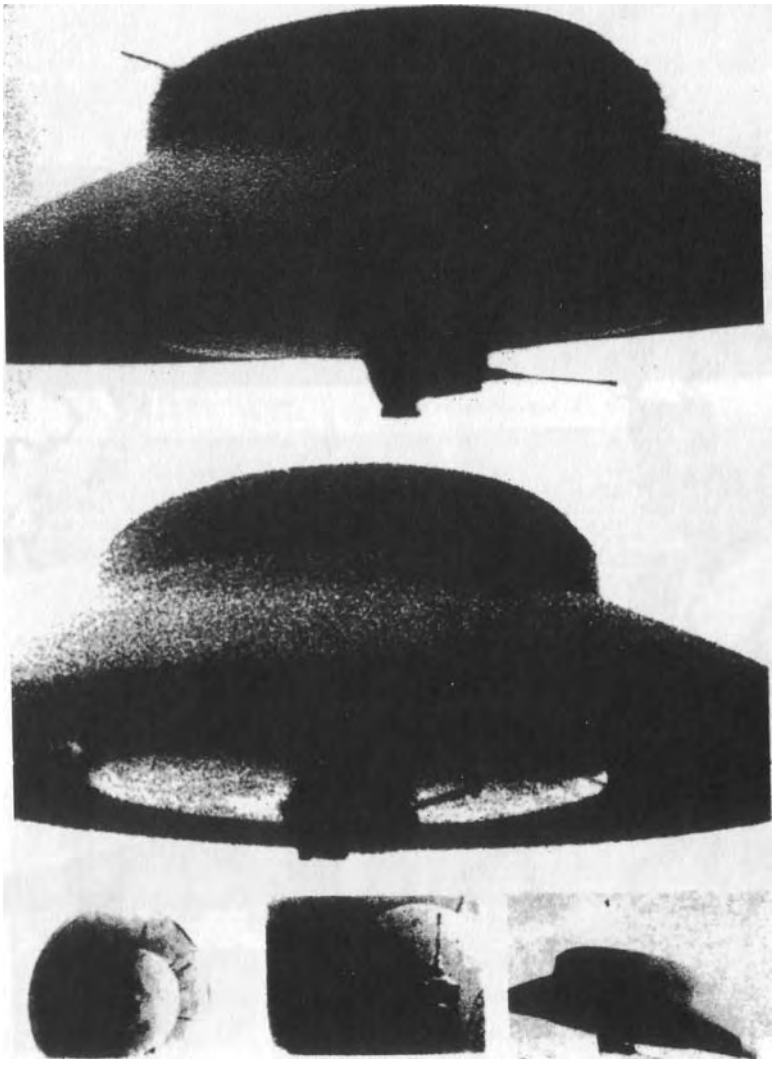
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Two photos taken by a barber named Ralph Ditter, in Zanesville, Ohio on November 13, 1966. Ditter was leaving home with his camera when he chanced to look back and saw the UFO over his house. He took two exposures within a short period of time of the helmet-like craft, with an apparent "canon" on the underside of the craft. Ditter did not seek publicity but put them in his shop window to stimulate business. Eventually a news service bought them and they were widely published. The object is similar to the "Heflin UFO" and is said to be an original German design with a Panzer Tank canon mounted beneath it. Such a craft at such a late date would tend to indicate that this was not a captured test craft but rather a "renegade craft" possibly from South America as late as 1966.



Above: Aerospace expert Stuart Nixon, executive director of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), which was founded in Washington, DC, in 1956 to conduct a civilian study of UFOs. Note the apparent "cannon barrel" beneath the craft.



Alleged photos from SS files of a Haunebu II in flight circa 1944. Note the Panzer tank canon mounted underneath the craft. From the German book Die Dunkle Seite Des Mondes (The Dark Side of the Moon) by Brad Harris (1996, Pandora Books, Germany).

CHAPTER SEVEN:

DISPOSITION OF GERMAN SAUCER TECHNOLOGY AFTER THE WAR

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Disposition of German Saucer Technology After the War

The question arises as to what ever became of the saucer designs and saucer designers referred to in this discussion? For some there are easy answers. For others, there whereabouts after the war is more clouded.

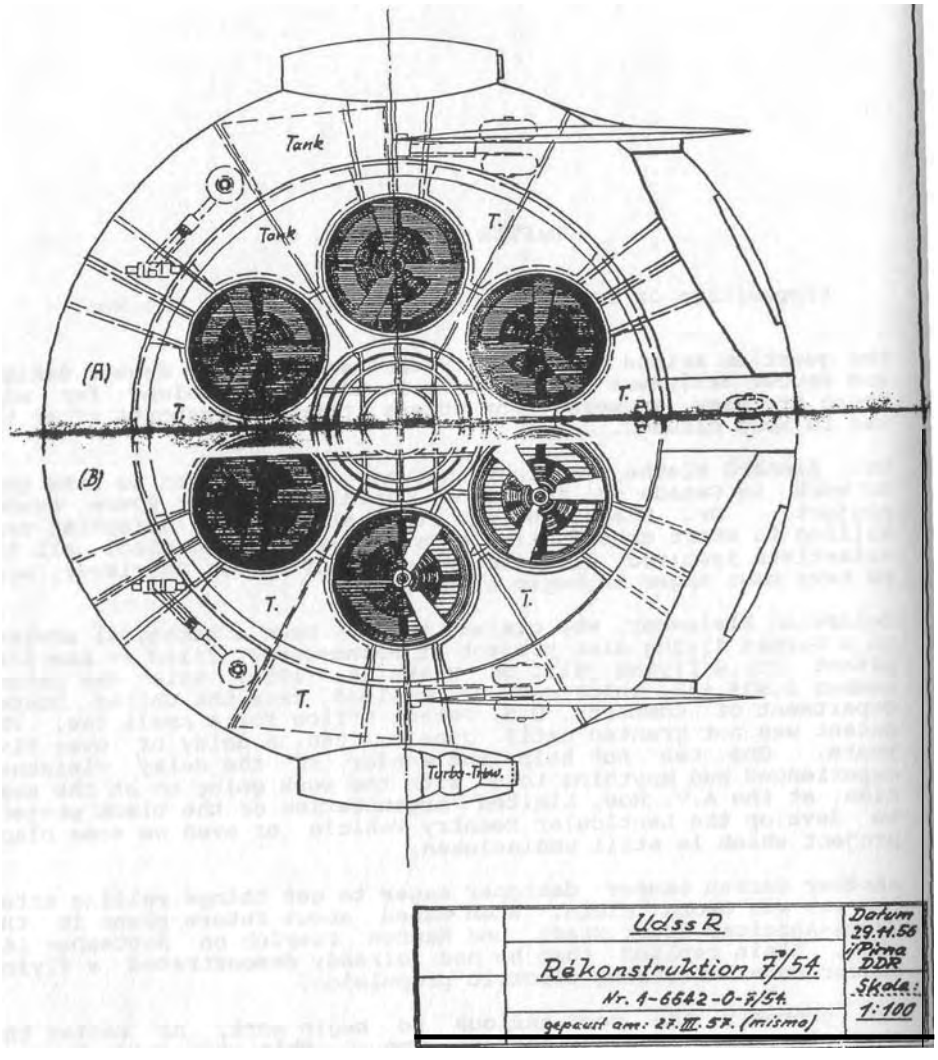
Dr. Richard Miethe, for instance, has been rumored to have gone to work in Canada on the joint Canadian-U.S. Air Force saucer project. Dr. Miethe is not the only German scientist very willing to start construction on a post-war flying disc. All the scientists involved, with the exception of Rudolf Schriever, seem to have been eager to begin at once.

Heinreich Fleissner, who claimed to have been a technical advisor on a German flying disc project at Peenemuende, filed an American patent for a flying disc on March 28, 1955. This was patent number 2,939,648 which can be obtained from the United States Department of Commerce, U.S. Patent Office for a small fee. The patent was not granted until June 7, 1960, a delay of over five years. One can not help but wonder if the delay Fleissner experienced had anything to do with the work going on at the same time at the A.V. Roe, Limited organization or the black project to develop the Lenticular Reentry Vehicle or even on some black project which is still undisclosed.

Another German saucer designer eager to get things rolling after the war was Georg Klein. When asked about future plans in the Tages-Anzeiger fuer Stadt und Kanton Zuerich on September 18, 1954, Klein replied that he had already demonstrated a flying saucer model utilizing electric propulsion.

But probably the most anxious to begin work, no matter the obstacles, was Joseph Andreas Epp. This is said because according to government files, which were first located by researcher Mark Kneipp, Epp went so far as to enlist in the Soviet flying saucer project which began immediately after the war in East Germany using former German scientists (1).

Post-War Soviet "German" Saucer



After the war J. Andreas Epp worked briefly for the Soviets along with other German experts on a flying saucer. This is a drawing he made of the Soviet saucer. It was to be used in the polar regions.

According to this F.B.I. file which was secluded by the National Archives, Epp became disenchanted with the Soviets after working for them for about a year. He then defected to the West. Epp re-drew their designs from his seemingly photographic memory. He provided detailed test and technical specifications, including his apparent area of specialty, the steering linkage system. His comments were that the type of flying craft being built for the Soviets was especially designed for polar conditions.

After settling in Bavaria, Epp continued design work on flying discs himself. He designed the "Omega Disc" which is remarkably similar to the Soviet design. Epp was very interested in working for Bell Aircraft, builders of the X-l which broke the sound barrier in 1947. Epp sent me copies of correspondence with Dr. Walter Dornberger, at this time executive of Bell Aircraft, who, at one time was Dr. Wernher von Braun's boss at Peenemuende. Epp did mention the flying saucer in this correspondence. Nothing came of it, however. To his death in 1997, Andreas Epp was still trying to realize this dream of building a flying saucer.

These are the stories of saucer designers of which we know something. There were others of which we have completely lost track. Otto Habermohl is one of these. Habermohl was presumed captured by the Soviets. This presumption seems to be solely based on the fact that he disappeared after the capture of Prag.

What about the post-war disposition of the flying saucers themselves? We know, for instance, that examples were destroyed by the Germans so the advancing Allies would not benefit from them. This very thing happened to saucers designed by the Schrlever-Habermohl team at Prag. The scorched earth policy was a standing solution and ruthlessly imposed by the SS, especially concerning German high technology. Yet we all know flying saucers did not disappear after the collapse of Germany, as a matter of fact quite the contrary. Michael X. Barton tells us that their earliest appearance was not over the State of Washington in 1947 as usually given but in South America. In fact, there were many sightings of UFOs in South America during this post-war time frame. Latin American sightings continue to this day.

South America is a long way from the USA. Even if the Americans were experimenting with captured German technology at that time, the sightings from other parts of the world can not be explained as originating from the USA. There must be more at work here.

Could die-hard Nazis have exported this technology to a stronghold in the Antarctic or Andes as some often claim? Or did these craft appear from "Beaver Dam", a secret German base on the east coast of Greenland as disclosed by Dr. Jesensky and Mr. Lesniakiewicz (2). Was part of this technology appropriated by the British and further developed in Canada as stated by Renato Vesco? Or was this technology completely absorbed by the USA in a secret deal with Admiral Karl Doenitz after Hitler's death as

stated by Bill Lyne (3)?

In the first of the aforementioned possibilities, these die-hard Nazis and their technology, including saucers, are sometimes called the "Third Power" by German writers on the subject. The Third Power is meant to signify a power besides the West (the First Power) or the East (the Second Power). The Third Power allegedly operates in secret as regards the general population of this planet but is very well known to the First and Second Powers. The sole reason the Third Power has survived is their high technology and high finance both of with resulted from picking clean the bones of the Third Reich. The story is as follows and at least some of it is factual.

It is known that the Germans made contingency plans for the war's loss. On August 10, 1944, nine months before the war in Europe ended, a meeting was called at the hotel Rotes Haus in Strassbourg. In attendance were representatives of all the major German industrial concerns including I.G. Farben, Thyssen, Siemens, Krupp, Daimler-Benz, Rheinmetall-Borsig, as well as representatives of the major German banks. Meeting with them were members of the SS. They were planning measures which would insure their survival after the coming German defeat (4).

Scientists, scientific plans, strategic materials, and money were to be taken from Germany and secured in secret hiding places. Long range cargo aircraft were to fly from Germany to Spain carrying the goods. From here items were to be loaded on to U-boats bound for South America. It is possible that other destinations were also planned such as Japan and the Antarctic base original established in 1938-1939 by the Ritcher Antarctic Expedition.

Surprisingly, the Ritcher Antarctic Expedition (1037-38) was set up and funded by Hermann Goering, head of the German Air Force. The ship Schwabenland, equipped with amphibious aircraft which could be launched via catapult explored, mapped and claimed a large portion of the Antarctic Continent for Germany during this expedition. Weighted metal flags were dropped from these aircraft clearly delineating the territory in which Germany was claiming. The territory included ice-free lakes which were naturally heated from below by geothermal means (5). Along the line of these lakes a huge fault line bisects "Neuschwabenland", as it was called, so presumably a permanent heat source was built into this new territory. One German writer has perused reports of Neuschwabenland and states that during the war repeated trips were made to this vicinity at which time a permanent base was established there (6). Another writer, Wilhelm Landig, in novel form, describes this and other secret post-war German bases in Antarctica, the Andes as well as a secret polar base near the North Pole (7). Mr. Landig recently died and it is now known that he was a Third Reich insider and knew of which he wrote. As mentioned earlier, it is now known that Landig was a member of the Waffen SS and at one time was responsible for security for

the development of German saucers (8). He knew that of which he spoke. His books each bore the sub-title "Ein Roman voller Wirklichkeiten" or "a novel filled with realities" as this novel treatment was an easy avenue in avoiding post-war legal entanglements.

Through the descriptions of the writers mentioned and other records it is possible to pinpoint the location of these secret German bases in Antarctica as well as a large Andean base in Chile. Bill Lyne as well as Mr. Robert Lesniakiewicz and Dr. Milos Jesensky state that a mysterious polar base existed in Greenland (9) (10). The latter writers cite the coast of eastern Greenland and cite a code-name which translates into "Beaver Dam", complete with underwater U-boat entrances.

The Antarctic base was first attacked by forces of many nations, led by the United States, in a 1946 military action code-named "Operation High Jump". This operation involved a fleet of ships, including an aircraft carrier, submarines and support craft. It also involved aircraft and four thousand armed troops under the command of Admiral Richard Byrd. Immediately four aircraft were mysteriously lost and the whole operation, scheduled for six months duration, was canceled after less than six weeks (11) (12).

The Antarctic base, Landig's Point 211 (13), was in operation until the late 1950s when it became the subject of an American nuclear "test". In this test three bombs were detonated under cover of the International Geophysical Year 1957-58 (14). Landig claims the type of rockets used in the "test" to attack Point 211 were prototypes of the American Polaris missile, a solid-fuel rocket which was used later operationally, the final design being fired from submarines underwater (15). Detonation of these atomic weapons over the base generated electromagnetic shock waves which, it was hoped, would destroy apparatus in the base used for defensive purposes (16). Landig claims this tactic failed. The electromagnetic pulse attack was insufficient to destroy the improved apparatus (17). Both "High Jump" and this 1957-58 attack turned out not only to be a fiasco, but to be superfluous. The greater part of the German forces had already abandon the Antarctic base in favor of a base in the South American Andes.

Landig claims that the reason for its abandonment was the purity of the atmosphere in the Antarctic which is almost germ-free (18). It seems that the human immune system needs constant challenge to remain healthy even if this challenge does not always result in illness. Without a constant influx of visitors supplying this challenge, the staff on-hand lost almost all immunity to infection after a few years. The common cold became a serious matter.

As mentioned earlier, writers Dr. Milos Jesensky and Robert Lesniakiewicz see the origin of flying saucers over the USA

during the late 1950s as coming from a forgotten German facility called "Beaver Dam" in Eastern Greenland. According to these writers, this base did not surrender with the fall of Germany but continued to function. It was from this base that flying saucers were directed to the USA on spy missions, especially toward our nuclear facilities in New Mexico. Additionally, one wonders if this base was the real origin of the ghost rockets seen moving south from Northwestern Europe immediately after the war. The status of this base today is unknown.

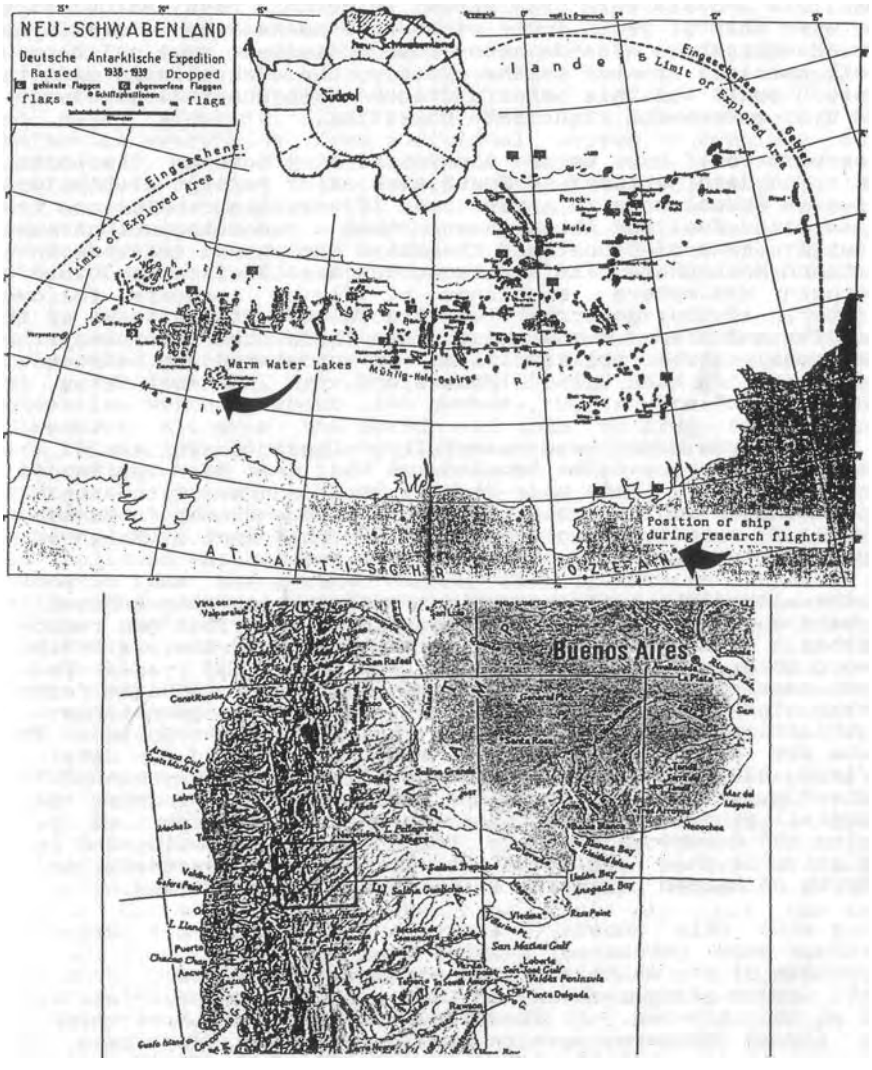
There is no doubt that the Germans had bases in the Arctic. German bases were located on Soviet soil, as well as the soil of Greenland which belonged to Denmark. Denmark had been overrun by the Germans early in the war. What is most surprising is that Landig's claim that the Germans maintained a base in the high Canadian arctic right under the noses of Canada and the USA (19).

Is this all fantasy? Is there any hard evidence for secret post-war German bases? Has a post-war German base ever been discovered? Yes, one has. New evidence for this exodus theory comes to us from the discovery of a German U-boat way-station in the Atlantic which had a hand in moving this clandestine cargo from Europe to the austral world well after the war, right into the 1950s. This information is revealed in an article in the July, 1984 issue of Nugget magazine titled "Der U-Boot Bunker von Fuerteventura" (20). Fuerteventura is the eastern most island of the Canary Island chain and lies just out of sight off the west coast of North Africa.

Geologically, the base was formed by an huge, ancient volcanic bubble around which the molten rock solidified in the center of the island. According to the article, the Germans brought in excavation equipment and bored out three tunnels for underwater access by U-boats. On top of the island, directly over the bubble and the military facility rested a villa with a stairway leading down to the base from the cellar. The villa was owed by a respectable German family, named Winter. This base functioned during the war as a secret U-boat base for the Germans. It continued this function after the war as a way-station for transport U-boats.

In our modern world of science and academic history this claim of lost islands and hidden bases sounds like something out of a Jules Verne fantasy. If such a base really existed, would we all not be aware of its existence above and beyond an obscure reference in a publication which mainly deals with treasure hunting?

Actually, most readers are already quite familiar with this particular base. This base was the truth behind the visual images of the German U-boat base situated in the volcanic island off the coast of Africa in the movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark". In fact, this aspect of the story was the only part of the movie which was factual.



Top: Neuschwabenland (Antarctica). Bottom: "Colonia Dignedad" in Argentina near Chilean border comprising 25,000 quadratkilometers (over half as large as Switzerland)

The subterranean island base was actually visited by two eyewitnesses, according to the Nugget report. There, two derelict U-boats were discovered which had remained undetected for over thirty years. One of these U-boats was entered by the two adventurers. Inside they found detailed nautical maps of South America. To add to the mystery, the assertion is made that these U-boats and this base functioned with the full knowledge of the U.S. government right into the 1950s.

This base would have formed a physical link between the ports of Spain and destinations in South America. Perhaps even bridging bases in Greenland with Antarctica, if certain reports are true. It is also fuel for the argument that a technological transfer actually took place between the Third Reich and entities in the Southern Hemisphere. As surely as die-hard Nazis spread into the Southern Hemisphere sightings of flying saucers followed. Further, if the government of the United States knew of this transfer and these U-boat bases then there then there may have been some actual political link or understanding between the government of the United States and the post-war Nazis, the "Third Power".

If his words are read carefully, Landig's Point 211, the Antarctic base, can be located on the maps he supplies (21). Until, however, this base is visited and excavated and the evidence made public, this base along with the ones in Canada and Greenland constitute more speculation than fact. This is not true, however, in the South American situation.

In the immediate post-war world South America was a haven for Germans who could not stomach Occupied Germany for one reason or another. The political climate in these countries was favorable toward these refugees. Nazi gold and money was transferred to South America, particularly Argentina. Hunted Nazis found a market for their services in a variety of occupations. SS organizations set up shop as they had in Franco's Spain. These facts are hardly in dispute. They are covered in detail by Infield (22) as well as by Farago (23) a whole genre of "Nazi Hunter" writers. What is less often mentioned is that German technical people infused these countries with expertise gained during the Second World War. For instance, Argentina and Brazil had state-of-the- art jet fighters in the 1950s thanks to the efforts of German immigrant scientists and technicians.

Along with this monetary and technical transfer, large land holdings were purchased, secured and set aside with the full knowledge of the South American governments in power. From these vast secure areas members of these German organizations simply did as they pleased. It is not out of the question to think that the flying saucers seen in the late 1940s and 1950, both conventional and field propulsion, were built and flown from these bases. One of these Andean bases, referred to as "Colonia Dignidad" consisted a land area half the size of Switzerland (24). This is certainly more than enough room to develop hide

anything.

The South American industrial base during these times was more than adequate to make these saucers. But even if this were not true, this is no argument against construction of flying saucers in South America. Parts could have been ordered from suppliers in other countries as are done by major aircraft firms today. Each major aircraft firm has a host of sub-contractors who manufacture everything from individual screws to complete sub-assemblies. Many if not most of these sub-contractors are accustomed to filling these orders without ever knowing what the final assembled product will be. This is part of the security system and unquestioned. Germans working in South America would have no trouble using this system. They could have even ordered parts and sub-assemblies from companies in Europe and the USA.

This is exactly what Dr. Gerald Bull did in Iraq when he built the largest of his high-pressure cannons for that country. This nearly mile long fixed gun was built resting on the slope of a hill pointed at Tel Aviv. It would have been able to shoot projectiles weighing about 1800 pounds. Parts were built by sub-contractors all over the world and sent to Iraq for assembly where it was nearly completed. The sub-contractors were lied to or otherwise kept in the dark as to the purpose of their components. It was only by chance that word of this project reached the hands of opposing intelligence services. The result was near panic in the intelligence services of these countries. What followed was the assassination of Dr. Gerald Bull and a diplomatic ruse which bated Saddam Hussein into an invasion of Kuwait. This invasion facilitated the entry of the Americans into the conflict. The high pressure cannon was destroyed immediately, even though it was pointed in the opposite direction from Kuwait. If this risky, bulky weapon's system could be almost completed using a system of unwitting sub-contractors world-wide, imagine how easily a one-off flying vehicle could be built using the same system.

Richard Ross, a UFO researcher based in Austin, Texas, reports to me that even today vast tracts of land in South America are avoided by airline pilots there because of UFO activity in these areas. He obtained this information by interviewing the South American airline pilots themselves. He goes on to make the point that Latin America is a hotbed of UFO activity. Reports of this activity for some reason never find their way into the main stream American news media.

There still remains one possible hiding place on European soil. There remains the possibility that German flying discs were flown to Switzerland during the last moments of the 3rd Reich and hidden there in the vast system of caves built there for defensive purposes by the Swiss. This would imply a limited partnership with the Swiss concerning a technology that neither country wanted to loose. In modern times we have witnessed something similar when Iraq flew its jet aircraft to Iran for

safe keeping during the Gulf War. Iraq and Iran had been bitter enemies only a few years before but put these differences aside in order to save technology. If they could do it certainly the Germans and Swiss could do it also. One eye witness claims that he saw an experimental aircraft crossing the German border into Switzerland on the morning of May 9, 1945, the day after the surrender of the 3rd Reich (25). This same procedure could have taken place with even more exotic flying craft.

One of our most trusted sources, Renato Vesco believes that Canada was strongly involved in further developing captured German saucer technology. Vesco's belief seems to be that the British kept this information to themselves. That is, they did not share it with the United States. They did this in response to the latter's refusal to share atomic secrets with Great Britain. The British hid this research in the Canadian forests where they spent time and money developing it into the flying saucers of the 1950s. Somewhat related to this idea, the German researcher Klaus-Peter Rothkugel also believes post-war saucer research was the product of a massive and still-secret Anglo-American effort. Jim Wilson adds fuel to this fire in that there was apparently joint British-American-Australian involvement in the Lenticular Reentry Vehicle project (26).

Bill Lyne has another opinion. He believes all German saucer data was transferred to the government of the United States in a deal done with Admiral Karl Doenitz who was acting head of Germany for the week or so between the time Hitler shot himself in the bunker and Germany surrendered. Recently, Mark Kneipp has found some very interesting evidence which seems to support Mr. Lyne's sequence of events in this deal with Admiral Doenitz. This is one surprise I do not want to spoil so it will be left to Mr. Kneipp to reveal his research.

One real mystery remains absolutely untouched. This concerns the man who did know everything about Germany's saucer development and all its V-weaponry and other high technology for that matter. This was SS General and Doctor of Engineering Hans Kammler. Kammler first came to prominence because of his expertise in building extensive underground installations. Soon his high intelligence and "can do" attitude were recognized, resulting in a meteoric rise in rank and influence within the Third Reich. Kammler assembled the best of the best as far as weaponry was concerned and kept it close to him in the form of the Kammler Group, based at the Skoda industrial complexes near Prag. By war's end he was among the top five most powerful people in Germany. He had the entire SS technical organization to do his bidding. He was in charge of Peenemuende, "Der Riese" in modern Poland, Kordhausen, Kahla, the many facilities at the Jonas Valley in Thuringia, as well as the huge underground facility he built for himself in Austria. The Kammler Group was everywhere on the cutting edge of the cutting edge of applied technology. For instance it was the Kammler Group which was in the process of applying nuclear energy toward missile and aircraft propulsion

(27).

What happened to Kammler? This was the most knowledgeable of all the German technical people. Even Albert Speer, German Minister of Munitions, admitted under Allied interrogation, that Kammler was the expert in the area of V-weapons development. This was no small admission for Speer. With the cessation of hostilities in Europe, Kammler simply waltzed off the pages of history, never to be seen or heard from again. Why, then, was there no post-war manhunt for Kammler? What are we missing here?

Tom Agoston recounts the stories of Kammler's death (28). There are five in all. They all read like pulp fiction. None are even remotely believable. As proof of this, no serious investigation was ever done into any of these stories by any of the Allied Powers. But equally shocking is the fact that Kammler was ignored by the "Nazi Hunter" aficionados. A quick call to the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles revealed that they were not looking for Kammler and have never looked for Kammler even though they fully agreed that the stories of his death stretched credulity. This, in spite of the fact that it was Kammler who was responsible for the many slave-labor camps, including Dora and S-3, where many inmates died working for the SS.

There is a sixth possible story for Kammler's demise. Could not the answer to this enigma be found in a practice commonly given to criminals in the USA, that of the "witness protection program"? Was Kammler given a new identity in exchange for his knowledge and knowledge of where the treasure-trove of SS technical information was stored? Actually, any country in the world at the time would have made Kammler this deal in a second. He was simply too technologically valuable to loose or to involve in a showcase criminal trial. A new identity was the best way out of his problems.

One thing is striking concerning the technological history of the Twentieth Century. The preponderance of that century's technology has its roots in the 1940s. The technology we use and take for granted today was invented or developed to the utilitarian degree during this time frame. These technological roots sink most deeply into Nazi Germany. In support of this argument, there is a laundry list too long to fully recount. It ranges from synthetic materials such as plastics and artificial rubber to metallurgy. It included the host of technologies which gave us the jet engine, rockets and so access to space travel. It includes atomic power. It also includes early semi-conductor research upon which our modern computer-based research, economy and communications are built. Technically speaking, we are still living off the Caracas of the Third Reich. Yet, still, to this day, much of that German technology remains veiled. Counted among this still-veiled technology are the German flying discs.

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TOP SECRET / MAJIC

EYES ONLY

* TOP SECRET *

EYES ONLY

COPY ONE OF ONE.

SUBJECT: OPERATION MAJESTIC-12 PRELIMINARY BRIEFING FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT EISENHOWER.

DOCUMENT PREPARED 18 NOVEMBER, 1952.

BRIEFING OFFICER: ADM. ROSCOE H. HILLENKOETTER (MJ-1)

NOTE: This document has been prepared as a preliminary briefing only. It should be regarded as introductory to a full operations briefing intended to follow.

* * * * * *

OPERATION MAJESTIC-12 is a TOP SECRET Research and Development/ Intelligence operation responsible directly and only to the President of the United States. Operations of the project are carried out under control of the Majestic-12 (Majic-12) Group which was established by special classified executive order of President Truman on 24 September, 1947, upon recommendation by Dr. Vannevar Bush and Secretary James Forrestal. (See Attachment "A".) Members of the Majestic-12 Group were designated as follows:

Adm. Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter
Dr. Vannevar Bush
Secy. James V. Forrestal
Gen. Nathan F. Twining
Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg
Dr. Detlev Bronk
Dr. Jerome Hunsaker
Mr. Sidney W. Souers
Mr. Gordon Gray
Dr. Donald Menzel
Gen. Robert M. Montague
Dr. Lloyd V. Berkner

The death of Secretary Forrestal on 22 May, 1949, created a vacancy which remained unfilled until 01 August, 1950, upon which date Gen. Walter B. Smith was designated as permanent replacement.

On 24 June, 1947, a civilian pilot flying over the Cascade Mountains in the State of Washington observed nine flying disc-shaped aircraft traveling in formation at a high rate of speed. Although this was not the first known sighting of such objects, it was the first to gain widespread attention in the public media. Hundreds of reports of sightings of similar objects followed. Many of these came from highly credible military and civilian sources. These reports resulted in independent efforts by several different elements of the military to ascertain the nature and purpose of these objects in the interests of national defense. A number of witnesses were interviewed and there were several unsuccessful attempts to utilize aircraft in efforts to pursue reported discs in flight. Public reaction bordered on near hysteria at times.

In spite of these efforts, little of substance was learned about the objects until a local rancher reported that one had crashed in a remote region of New Mexico located approximately seventy-five miles northwest of Roswell Army Air Base (now Walker Field).

On 07 July, 1947, a secret operation was begun to assure recovery of the wreckage of this object for scientific study. During the course of this operation, aerial reconnaissance discovered that four small human-like beings had apparently ejected from the craft at some point before it exploded. These had fallen to earth about two miles east of the wreckage site. All four were dead and badly decomposed due to action by predators and exposure to the elements during the approximately one week time period which had elapsed before their discovery. A special scientific team took charge of removing these bodies for study. (See Attachment "C".) The wreckage of the craft was also removed to several different locations. (See Attachment "B".) Civilian and military witnesses in the area were debriefed, and news reporters were given the effective cover story that the object had been a misguided weather research balloon.

* TOP SECRET *

c. There is a possibility that some of the incidents may be caused by natural phenomena, such as meteors.

d. The reported operating characteristics such as extreme rates of climb, maneuverability (particularly in roll), and action which must be considered evasive when sighted or contacted by friendly aircraft and radar, lend belief to the possibility that some of the objects are controlled either manually, automatically or remotely.

e. The apparent common description of the objects is as follows:-

(1) Metallic or light reflecting surface.

Basic Ltr fr CG, AMC, WF to CG, AAF, Wash. D. C. subj "AMC Opinion Concerning "Flying Discs".

(2) Absence of trail, except in a few instances when the object apparently was operating under high performance conditions.

(3) Circular or elliptical in shape, flat on bottom and domed on top.

(4) Several reports of well kept formation flights varying from three to nine objects.

(5) Normally no associated sound, except in three instances a substantial rumbling roar was noted.

(6) Level flight speeds normally above 300 knots are estimated.

f. It is possible within the present U. S. knowledge — provided extensive detailed development is undertaken — to construct a piloted aircraft which has the general description of the object in subparagraph (e) above which would be capable of an approximate range of 7000 miles at subsonic speeds.

g. Any developments in this country along the lines indicated would be extremely expensive, time consuming and at the considerable expense of current projects and therefore, if directed, should be set up independently of existing projects.

h. Due consideration must be given the following:-

(1) The possibility that these objects are of domestic origin - the product of some high security project not known to AC/AS-2 or this Command.

(2) The lack of physical evidence in the shape of crash recovered exhibits which would undeniably prove the existence of these objects.

(3) The possibility that some foreign nation has a form of propulsion possibly nuclear, which is outside of our domestic knowledge.

3. It is recommended that:

a. Headquarters, Army Air Forces issue a directive assigning a priority, security classification and Code Name for a detailed study of this matter to include the preparation of complete sets of all available and pertinent data which will then be made available to the Army, Navy, Atomic Energy Commission, JRDB, the Air Force Scientific Advisory Group, NACA, and the RAND and NEPA projects for comments and recommendations, with a preliminary report to be forwarded within 15 days of receipt of the data and a detailed report thereafter every 30 days as the investi-

Basic Ltr fr CG, AMC, WF to CG, AAF, Wash. D.C. subj "AMC Opinion Concerning "Flying Discs"

gation develops. A complete interchange of data should be effected.

4. Awaiting a specific directive AMC will continue the investigation within its current resources in order to more closely define the nature of the phenomenon. Detailed Essential Elements of Information will be formulated immediately for transmittal thru channels.

N. F. TWINING
Lieutenant General, U.S.A.
Commanding

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from
THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
Record Group No. _____



APolish-language map of Nazi enclaves in South America, particularly Argentina. It is thought that some of the UFO activity in South America came from German saucers relocated to remote parts of that continent.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

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Concluding Thoughts

What can be concluded from this glimpse into the world of German flying discs? Certainly, it can be said that some of these projects were realized. This being true, it can be said that these were the first "flying saucers". It is also certainly true that German flying discs were re-created and perhaps further developed by countries comprising the former Allied Powers. It can be said that in all probability, Germans immigrated to places outside Europe after the war and also built these flying craft. It is also a certainty that the exact nature and real history of these flying devices has remained a closely guarded secret in all these countries. Not only has a secret been kept but an active effort, a conspiracy, has been made to keep it that way. This means that their exists an effort to keep the exact knowledge of these devices from the general populace for the foreseeable future. This effort extends back into time, into the origins of these projects in Germany and extends into the present. The victors wrote history. The victors omitted German flying discs and the victors are keeping quite now.

The exact methods of propulsion of the exotic versions of these discs still remains a mystery. Jet and rocket engines were used but there is still debate as to which models used which engine at what time. There is no doubt in my mind that field propulsion techniques were at least experimented upon during the 3rd Reich. This is established in my mind, if for no other reason, by the series of F.B.I. reports dealing with the witness who saw such a device while a prisoner of war near Gut Alte Gossen. The F.B.I. took these reports seriously enough to take them and save them all these years. Maybe we should also.

One overriding question concerning UFOs is why are they so, so secret? Dr. Milos Jesensky and engineer Robert Lesmakiewicz propose an atomic saucer in their book "Wunderland" Mimozemske Technoloaie Treti Rise. This conclusion is seconded by Klaus-Peter Rothkugel and Jim Wilson. This assertion should be taken very seriously.

The UFO-atomic connection fits the historical facts concerning both atomic energy and UFOs. UFOs have always been and are today

associated with atomic energy facilities. Los Alamos, Hanford and Area 51 are examples of nuclear facilities at which or very near to which UFOs are or were regularly seen. If we suppose atomic energy as a power source it might explain this association. But that can not be all there is to this matter. Methods of propulsion involving atomic energy seem to be known to us. Indeed, some were reviewed in this book. Why the extreme secrecy then? Might it be that there is some other arrangement involving nuclear energy of which we know nothing? Might the Germans have stumbled on to something really exciting during those war years, perhaps coupling field propulsion with atomic energy ? If this is so then not only would the association of UFO activity over and near nuclear facilities be explained but some of the extreme secrecy and conspiracy to cover-up the matter might also be explained.

At this point the reader may smiling and shaking his or her head in disbelief, perhaps even making comments involving the words "fantasy" or "science fiction". The German watch-word of those times was "nothing is impossible" and it is clear that within the Reich scientists took this saying to heart. Those scientists were not surprised by breakthroughs, they expected them. Please let me remind the reader that the alternative explanation is the real science fiction or fantasy. In this origin of UFOs a multitude of alien beings seemingly travel to earth from intergalactic space not to exchange ideas, exploit earth's resources or conquer the planet, but to abduct and inseminate our females. And above all, if we buy into this reasoning, these aliens seem particularly attracted to American women.

The story goes on from here to describe genetic experiments, mixing the DNA of humans and aliens to produce a hybrid human-alien. Anybody who entertains such nonsense has absolutely no understanding of the species concept in biology. Unfortunately, many individuals subscribing to the alien hypothesis fall into this category, even some with advanced degrees. Only one of two possibilities are within reason. The first is that these hominids are manifiested in the minds of the witnesses as the result of some black mind control project sponsored by the government. The second possibility is that they are the result of experimentation by the government involving human, hominoid or hominid genes. Either option is possible but both options are beyond the scope of this book. Both discussions are superfluous, however, since the topic of this book is UFOs, not aliens. "Aliens" have been used by the media and the government long enough to misdirect the inquiry into UFOs. Aliens are the ultimate "red herring".

In trying to crystallize these thoughts on the origin of UFOs, we are presented with two mutually exclusive hypotheses for the origin of flying saucers. The first is that they are a man-made technology. The second is that they are a non-man-made technology. In view of the fact that we now know the first senecio is true, why are we even considering holding on to the

second hypothesis? There is no reason for a duplicity of theory. If a failure to explain the facts is ever encountered in the "UFOs are man-made theory", then and only then are we justified in moving to another hypothesis.

Before signing off it is felt that an obligation exists to discuss another reason for the suppression of the German connection in the history of UFOs. English speakers sometimes recognize this as an unuttered truth once it is out in the open but many German speakers and others are usually well ahead of the curve on this one. Unfortunately, this is not going to be pleasant.

In some circles, the flying discs built by the Germans during the war are called "Nazi UFOs". Some may do this as a way to quickly name a concept but some others do this for an entirely different reason. The point that is being made is that technology usually does not adopt a political name. The atomic bomb dropped on the Japanese by the Americans was not called the "Democrat Bomb", for example, even though a Democrat was in power in the United States at the time. The Nazis are a special case, however, and this is a central problem and roadblock we encounter in researching their innovations.

The Nazis were defeated militarily by the Allies. Yet some in the media elite continue to fight this war. Of course, the Allies always win but that is not the purpose of their fight. The purpose is the nature of the Nazis themselves. The Nazis were not just a military machine. Hitler and his supporters brought other ideas with them into power. These ideas were historical, social, artistic, economic and scientific. In other words, the Nazis brought a completely new culture into prominence almost overnight and with at least the passive acceptance of most of the general populace.

It is sometimes said by these media people in question that America defines itself as what the Nazis were not. The fascination that the mass media, especially in Hollywood, has for the Nazis is evidenced in their ongoing campaign to insure that these cultural ideas are as thoroughly defeated as the Nazi military. In defeating the Nazis militarily on the silver screen they believe they also defeat the cultural ideas associated with the Nazis. They take every opportunity to do this. The media fight this propaganda war over and over again, as if the war was still going on, while attempting to link the military defeat of the Nazis with the cultural defeat of their ideas.

For a moment I want to digress in order to illustrate an example of exactly what I am talking about. This example is both germane to our discussion of UFOs as well as cutting to the very heart of this cultural conflict. It has to do with Hitler's myrmidons, the SS.

Historians tell us that the abbreviation "SS" stands for

"Schutzstaffel". "Schutzstaffel" could be thought of as "bodyguard" and in the early days of the Nazi movement members of this order dressed in black and were Hitler's personal bodyguard. As it developed, this order changed into many things.

Portrayal of the SS in the media has degenerated simply into a negative caricature to which we are all supposed to respond immediately with a politically correct, knee-jerk type of condemnation formula. As far as the media is concerned, this is all the SS was. Their point is that we now know enough about the SS and are supposed to drop further inquiry. This first unwritten law has already been violated in this book. In this discussion we have focussed on the SS as the organizational and in some cases the research and development framework behind German super-weapon's technology. But the SS was more than this. To insiders, initiates within the 3rd Reich, the abbreviation "SS" did not stand for "Schutzstaffel" at all but for the words "Schwarze Sonne".

"Schwarze Sonne" means "Black Sun" in English. The Black Sun to these initiated individuals was a physical body like our visible sun except that the Black Sun was not visible to the naked eye. This Black Sun radiated light which was invisible to the human eye. The concept of the Black Sun seems to have bordered upon the religious. It was said to be located at the center of our galaxy. The earth along with every other cellestial body in the gallaxy rotate around this Black Sun.

The Black Sun is sometimes represented symbolically as a black sphere out of which eight arms extend. Such is its most famous rendition on the mosaic floor at Wewelsburg Castle which served as the spiritual home of the SS. The number of arms are unimportant. There could be eight or six or only four. The more astute reader will recognize at this point that the swastika, the very icon of the Nazi Party, was itself is a Black Sun symbol.

The point is that concept of the Black Sun is not just Nazi mumbo-jumbo. The Black Sun is in reality a cold, collapsing implosive vortex as described by Viktor Schauberger or Karl Schappeller. It gathers and densities yet is as cold as interstellar space. It does generate unseen radiation in the form of cosmic, gamma and x-ray radiation. This is possible because in spite of what was said about those crazy "Nazi madmen", the Black Sun is very real. In fact, the Black Sun is the most powerful force yet observed in our universe.

Forty or so years after the demise of the SS, scientists, in this case astronomers, have located the Black Sun at the very center of our galaxy. In fact, we are all familiar with it by another name. Today, we call it a "black hole". It is the center of a great spiral vortex of stars which draws in matter and energy and generates the aforementioned radiations near it periphery. The Black Sun is, in reality, a huge system or perhaps it could even be called a huge machine. We and our entire galaxy are all part

of this machine whirling through space. All the matter it contains, the stars, planets, asteroids, comets, meteors and so forth, are all bound in a context of energy. Our galaxy, with the Black Sun as its heart, operates as a vast machine using all the matter and energy contained therein and using every law of physics at once in its operation. Its counterpart, the centrifugal vortex which remains unseen, may even be a doorway into another dimension into which this matter and energy from our dimension spew forth like a fountain. It is the same kind of implosive vortex from which the Germans were about to build a "new science" based upon creative, living energy as we have discussed. It may have been the same force which was to propel their flying discs.

Yet who in the media would dare give credit to those associated with the 3rd Reich for making these connections so long ago? In fact, who in the media would even point out this connection today? None. As far as they are concerned, one is politically incorrect to ever say or imply that the Nazis thought of or developed anything of value. To do so would be to commit professional suicide. To do so would mean the end of one's carrier whether in the business or the academic world. Even if one wanted to make this connection in print or film form, no politically correct publisher or producer would touch it, at least in English.

Not only does the media fail to give credit where credit is due, or to even mention or explain this concept, but anyone seeking to look into such concepts runs the real risk of being branded a neo-Nazi. This threat clearly extends into the UFO world. As a result, this threat has had a chilling effect on real UFO inquiry for over fifty years.

How should the media be treated in this case? How are we going to handle institutions within our culture which actively seek to stymie knowledge? Regardless of one's personal opinion of the Nazis, should we and are we going to allow these " open-minded champions of truth" the right to omit the history of UFOs, let alone the new science of this force of nature, simply because "they" find its origin politically offensive?

Returning from this example to our broader discussion of the media, in American culture it is sometimes said that the media's power rivals or exceeds that of the three branches of American government. With power such as this, the media believes itself up to any propaganda challenge. They are correct in this belief. As any thoughtful person realizes, the mass media's power has been used frequently in the last forty years to radically alter the course of those three branches of government.

In addition to the above referenced dilemma regarding media bias, we face a second obstacle in any effort to arrive at the truth. It is a culture of secrecy within the government itself. Vesco recognized this immediately. According to this "Vesco Doctrine"

no German secret was acknowledged publicly unless that secret fell into the hands of more than one of the four occupying powers, (USA, Soviet Union, Great Britain, France). He says:

> "In fact, of the numerous revolutionary "new weapons" that the Germans developed in that period, we know only those- fortunately, they comprise the majority-that fell into the hands of all, or at least more than one, of the four occupying powers"(1).

These governments seem to keep secrets for the sake of keeping secrets. In any event, they operate on a "need to know" basis in dispensing these secrets. We simply have no need to know in their eyes.

The differences between the media and the government itself are becoming more and more blurred. Politicians rely of instant polls, conducted the night before by the media, to plot today's public policy. The results of these polls are whatever the media says they are. In the meantime, the media itself is doing everything it can through "news", through entertainment and through movies to influence the results of those polls. The media and the government are so closely intertwined that for all practical purposes they can be considered as one. The C.I.A. spends a large portion of its budget in an effort to frame public discussion on issues it deems sensitive. The point here is that "truth" is not the goal of the government and in accomplishing their ends they use the methods of the mass media if they are not in partnership with the mass media itself.

For almost sixty years this government/media has been telling us through their propaganda machine, "Hollywood", that all the ideas of the Nazis were meritless, if not dangerous. "The Nazis never had a good idea" seems to be their simplistic mantra. Of course government, at some level, know what you now know about the origins of UFOs. In fact, they know that there is much more to this still-secret high technology than just UFOs. In the past, they have no trouble using captured German scientists when it is in their interest to do so, but they hate to admit it. The problem they face is that they have boxed themselves in a corner. They can not admit the origins of UFO technology without a re-appraisal of other ideas which they have succeeded in putting to bed. If they were to admit one good "Nazi" idea, the question might arise as to if there is another good idea. The elite media has already preempted this question rhetorically, calling any re-appraisal of the Second World War "Revisionism". They use this word disparagingly. Using a sort of "new-speak" they have kept the genie bottled up for almost sixty years.

What does this all mean to the researcher or truth seeker? With enough evidence could this information ever be acknowledged officially? With what level of proof could this elite media/government power axis acknowledge the fact that Germans working for Hitler built experimental flying craft that we could

not even touch? The simple answer is that they can not do so, period. Not with "all the proof in the world". Why should they? What is the upside for them? There are no good Nazi ideas. There is no need to know. There is perhaps a technological breakthrough behind the mystery. This is a loose-loose-loose situation for them by any reckoning.

Perhaps we can crystalize this nightmare for the power elite in an image. Suppose that tomorrow a highly technically advanced flying saucer landed on the White House steps in front of full, live, media coverage. Their nightmare would not be a little grey alien emerging from the saucer saying: "Take me to your leader". Their nightmare would be a former SS scientist emerging from the flying saucer saying: "I have an appointment".

The implications are obvious. For over forty years the UFO community has been saying that we are on the verge of full government UFO disclosure. For the reasons outlined above, we are not now nor will we ever be on the verge of full UFO disclosure by the government.

This means that it is up to us to do the "disclosure". Anyone interested in doing research along these lines will be encouraged to know that there is plenty of room in this field. It is not necessary to be a scientist. It is not necessary to live in Europe. It is not necessary to read German. The most important ingredient in this research is interest. If you are interested, there are mountains of government files which remain unexplored. The censors did not edit-out everything. They made mistakes which can be caught and pieced together. If each researcher could contribute just one fact to this growing body of knowledge, our trouble would be over quickly. In short, "Disclosure" isn't going to happen unless we make it happen.

These scientists and technicians who built these early flying sauces may have been the very best and brightest of their time but they got up each rooming and put their pants on just like the rest of us. In fact, they are us. Now that we know that we earthlings are capable of manufacturing objects we call UFOs, should we not use these facts we possess in explaining this phenomena rather than ignoring this information altogether? Should we not cease creating a new and superfluous mythology, if not an outright religion, to explain this phenomena which is completely devoid of a factual basis? Real truth is usually quite simple. In this case the real truth is that the origin of UFOs and many more technological secrets are resting in the grave of Nazi Germany, simply awaiting our re-discovery.

This has not been "The Complete Book of UFOs" or even "The Complete Book of German Flying Discs". Within each topic touched upon in this book lie worlds within worlds of details and

additional information. It is for the reader to use the references cited as a starting point to root out what is of interest. This book was designed to get you started. It was only a guide.

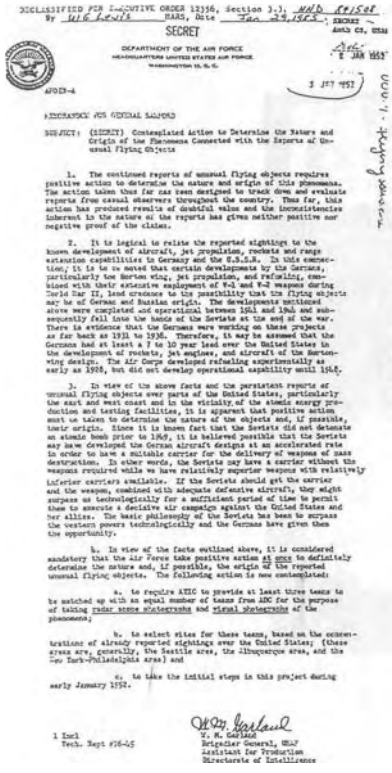
Concluding Thoughts-References

Vesco, Renato, 1976, Intercept UFO, page 96, Pinnacle Books, New York, NY.

THANKS

Most everyone who has ever looked in to the matter of German flying discs has come to the conclusion that there is at least some truth to it. Still, opinions and interpretations within this group differ with the individual doing the research. Nobody can know or find everything. This certainly is true of the study of German flying discs. Many researchers in this field have set up a circle of correspondence or exchange with others interested in this topic. Even the brightest, most hard working individuals have benefitted from an exchange of information.

I have written up this book by doing some research and receiving a great deal of help, input and information sent to me by my friends. My deepest thanks and appreciation" go out to those individuals who have shared their findings with me, explained their research to me and/or shared the counsel of their wisdom. This is true even in cases of disagreement or in cases of differing interpretations. In all cases, they have gone much beyond their published material. These include: Michael Blaeser, Rainer Daehnhardt, the late Joseph Andreas Epp, Dr. Gordon Freeman, Heiner Gehring, Friedrich Georg, Dr. Milos Jesensky, Kadmon, Mark Kneipp, Robert Lesniakiewicz, William Lyne, Thomas Mehner, Theo Paymans, Richard Ross, Klaus-Peter Rothkugel, Horst Schuppmann, Vladimir Terziski, Milos Vnenk and Michael Watson. I would also like to thank my daughter, Lisa Stevens, for her work in proof reading and editing this text.



DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, Section 3.3; NND 84508
By WLG Lewis NARS, Date Jan 29,1985

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

1 JAN 1952

3 JAN 1952

AFOIN-4

AIRMAIL/SPECIAL DELIVERY

SUBJECT: (SECRET) Contemplated Action to Determine the Nature and Origin of the Phenomena Connected with the Reports of Unusual Flying Objects

1. The continued reports of unusual flying objects requires positive action to determine the nature and origin of this phenomena. The action taken thus far has been designed to track down and evaluate reports from casual observers throughout the country. Thus far, this action has produced results of doubtful value and the inconsistencies inherent in the nature of the reports has given neither positive nor negative proof of the claims.

2. It is logical to relate the reported sightings to the known development of aircraft, jet propulsion, rockets and range extension capabilities in Germany and the U.S.S.R. In this connection, it is to be noted that certain developments by the Germans, particularly the Horton wing, jet propulsion, and refueling, combined with their extensive employment of V-1 and V-2 weapons during World War II, lend credence to the possibility that the flying objects may be of German and Russian origin. The developments mentioned above were completed and operational between 1941 and 1944 and subsequently fell into the hands of the Soviets at the end of the war. There is evidence that the Germans were working on these projects as far back as 1931 to 1938. Therefore, it may be assumed that the Germans had at least a 7 to 10 year lead over the United States in the development of rockets, jet engines, and aircraft of the Horton-wing design. The Air Corps developed refueling experimentally as early as 1928, but did not develop operational capability until 1948.

3. In view of the above facts and the persistent reports of unusual flying objects over parts of the United States, particularly the east and west coast and in the vicinity of the atomic energy production and testing facilities, it is apparent that positive action must be taken to determine the nature of the objects and, if possible, their origin. Since it is known fact that the Soviets did not detonate an atomic bomb prior to 1949, it is believed possible that the Soviets may have developed the German aircraft designs at an accelerated rate in order to have a suitable carrier for the delivery of weapons of mass destruction. In other words, the Soviets may have a carrier without the weapons required while we have relatively superior weapons with relatively inferior carriers available. If the Soviets should get the carrier and the weapon, combined with adequate defensive aircraft, they might surpass us technologically for a sufficient period of time to permit them to execute a decisive air campaign against the United States and her allies. The basic philosophy of the Soviets has been to surpass the western powers technologically and the Germans have given them the opportunity.

4. In view of the facts outlined above, it is considered mandatory that the Air Force take positive action at once to definitely determine the nature and, if possible, the origin of the reported unusual flying objects. The following action is now contemplated:

a. to require ATIC to provide at least three teams to be matched up with an equal number of teams from ADC for the purpose of taking radar scope photographs and visual photographs of the phenomena;

b. to select sites for these teams, based on the concentrations of already reported sightings over the United States; (these areas are, generally, the Seattle area, the Albuquerque area, and the New York-Philadelphia area) and

c. to take the initial steps in this project during early January 1952.

1 Incl
Tech. Rept #26-45

W. M. Garland
Brigadier General, USAF
Assistant for Production
Directorate of Intelligence

UFO's - flying saucers

2. It is logical to relate the reported sightings to the known development of aircraft, jet propulsion, rockets and range extension capabilities in Germany and the U.S.S.R. In this connection, it is to be noted that certain developments by the Germans, particularly the Horton wing, jet propulsion, and refueling, combined with their extensive employment of V-1 and V-2 weapons during World War II, lend credence to the possibility that the flying objects may be of German and Russian origin. The developments mentioned above were completed and operational between 1941 and 1944 and subsequently fell into the hands of the Soviets at the end of the war. There is evidence that the Germans were working on these projects as far back as 1931 to 1938. Therefore, it may be assumed that the Germans had at least a 7 to 10 year lead over the United States in the development of rockets, jet engines, and aircraft of the Horton-wing design. The Air Corps developed refueling experimentally as early as 1928, but did not develop operational capability until 1948.

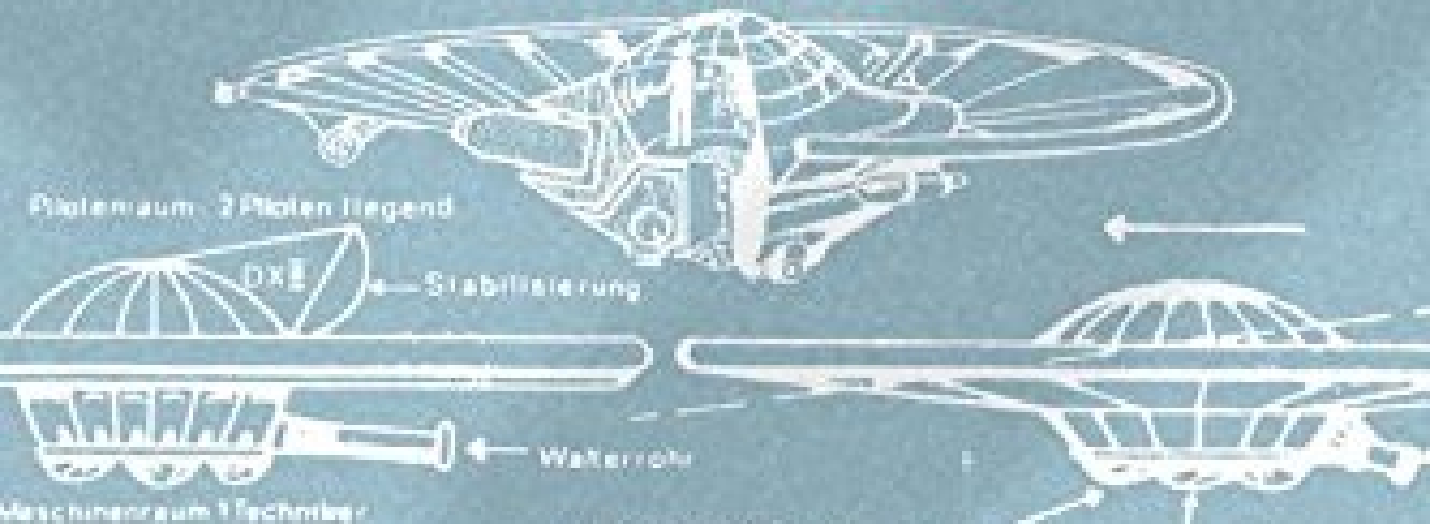
Left, U.S. Air Force document, Jan. 3, 1952
Right, blowup of the second paragraph

UFOs

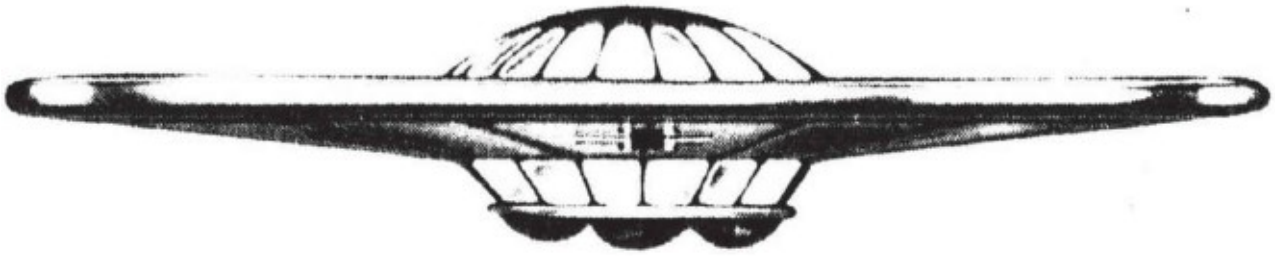


NAZI SECRET WEAPON?

ERNST ZÜNDEL



UFOs



NAZI SECRET WEAPON?

ERNST ZÜNDEL

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated by the authors, their collaborators and the publishers to the unsung and often-maligned heroes of the Second World War.



ZÜNDEL

Every effort has been made by the authors to give credit to the originators of material whether it be written or pictorial. However, the search for such originators sometimes proved fruitless. Should anyone not be included, it is solely due to the confusing maze of claims and counterclaims to copyrights.

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FORWORD

Ever since the fall of Berlin and the unconditional surrender of the German armed forces in 1945 one continually reads of Adolf Hitler's possible or definite escape from Berlin and Germany. Hitler has been reported to be living in several inaccessible spots in South America, in some well-guarded Shang-ri-la surrounded by S.S. Guards armed to the teeth. He is supposed to have spent some time in a monastery in Spain and other reports have him as a "prisoner" in Russia, itself.

Millions of words have been written and spoken to this effect. Over 100,000 books have been written about Hitler and W.W. II in most major languages of the world. Most of them were more or less fictional accounts and re-hashes of the official propaganda lines and clichés of the military victors of W.W. II. None of these studies were deep or exhaustive enough to be considered conclusive. Many very important facets were not covered at all or were only touched upon the fringes.

The book that is before you, is to the knowledge of the authors, their collaborators and to the publishers as well, the first attempt to cover some of these fringe issues in more depth. Consequently, they have drawn some very different conclusions to those already written on this vast and complex topic.

In order to start on a sound footing, and ultimately to do it justice, Hitler, the man is examined. Hitler, the thinker, the statesman, the politician and above all, Hitler the founder of the National Socialist Ideology (Weltanschauung) is examined in greater detail and in a more dispassionate manner. To only write about the technical aspects and ratifications of the UFO mystery, of the UFO's purely military potential, would, of necessity, lead to incorrect conclusions

To separate the totality of Hitler's control and influence over the production and eventual use of the UFO's and over every other secret development of the II Reich would be stupid. Without Hitler's backing or his knowledge of their potential uses, no weapons, not even the UFO's would have been developed; they would have been condemned to the "planners' morgue" or the junk piles.

Hitler knew about the research work being done on UFO's by his scientists, just as he knew about the other incredible secret weapons they were feverishly working upon in their bomb-proof laboratories. Many of these highly sophisticated weapon systems represented scientific breakthroughs of great importance. Many of these devices fell into Allied hands and they are pictured here for the first time and to the best of our knowledge. Others are re-created from engineering drawings or from testimony given to the Allied interrogators.

There is a whole array of jet and rocket-powered aircraft, both fighters and bombers. There are T.V. guided missiles and torpedos. There are plane and submarine-based rockets. Also there are wind cannons and many other devices.

In order to understand all aspects of this vexing problem we have to examine the governmental set-up of National Socialist Germany, especially war-time Germany. Unlike any other state in recorded history, Hitler's Germany was literally run by one man, much in the shape of a pyramid, with the chain of command moving down and out. In Hitler's hands ended all the strands; from his pinnacle of absolute power emanated all orders. From Hitler came the final orders of the scrapping or the production of any kind of weaponry. He alone was capable of making available the vast amounts of money for the research and production of what was needed to win the war. He alone could delegate the sweeping powers and set the orders of priority of one weapon system over any other.

All attempts to clarify this or that aspect of the German war effort, of diplomatic or military moves, which do not take fully into account this pyramidical structure of the decision-making process in Nazi Germany, are doomed to dismal failure. This structure of National Socialism is the very foundation of the movement, it is the "Führerprinzip" — leadership principle — in action. It is the failure or deliberate unwillingness to understand this basic principle, that has been the undoing of 95% of the writers, historians and media people of the world. By ignoring this simple principle in action and its effect on all things the origins of the UFO's (Krautmeteors), their current whereabouts and status, as well as Hitler's fate, have been shrouded in mystery and often contradictions.

The author of this book and his friends started to delve into the UFO mystery. They circulated their findings over the years to an ever-increasing number of friends and contacts around the world, but only as a basis for discussion and further study. Whenever more reports of UFO crews speaking German (Kearny Report) and behaving like German soldiers (electricity blackout Eastern States), or of sightings and documentation (French T.V. showed a UFO landing gear imprint in a clear swastika shape), reached the authors, they took a closer look. There now appeared a distinguishable pattern, in proper time and date sequence, that hinted at a possible connection between the appearance of UFO's in large numbers and Hitler's possible survival and escape from Berlin.

A book was born. Many publishers were contacted, all thought the material had merit, but none dared to publish it in its entirety. Many wanted to publish only the UFO developments. All would have loved to reproduce the hither-to unpublished engineering drawings and illustrations of prototypes of the German UFO's and the many other secret weapons but the authors insisted it was to be all or nothing.

So the manuscript made the rounds for years and years. Eventually it lay buried. Then one day, excerpts fell into the hands of a group of individuals who decided to collect money amongst themselves and publish the manuscript. With the help and active participation of the authors and their collaborators the book is now before you.

Against threats and persecution this courageous group of individuals composed of diverse ethnic backgrounds, has stood firm. We ask of the reader only to reserve judgement until he has thoroughly read through the book to the very last page. This book is not an easy book to read. One could almost call it an unnerving study of a very unusual and extraordinary man, his ideas his actions, his motivations and his ultimate goals. It also gives one a glimpse of German inventiveness and their capacity to suffer punishment and to be able to rise Phoenix-like from the ashes of "total defeat". This book also shows

Hitler's opponents in a new light; in the light of truth and not propaganda. The book can further serve the unprejudiced individual as a catalyst to study and re-examine many events from a new perspective. Now that many Allied documents are being de-classified, a new search will produce new and startling insights and conclusions.

We believe that the open-minded reader after studying this book and after delving into the many reference and source materials listed, will never again look at the world with the same eyes.

The publishers

P.S. Those of you fortunate enough to be able to speak and to read German will find a considerable difference between the English and German editions. The reasons are simply:

1. Difficulty in finding translators for such a deeply philosophical work.

2. The English-speaking readership is used to material in this lighter vein.

For the above reasons, this is not a true translation of the German version but rather a book about another book.



Hitler planning

THE MIND AND PERSONALITY OF ADOLF HITLER

The non-German world has a rather sketchy and fragmentary picture of the mind of Adolf Hitler; how he thought, felt and what motivated him. Lacking accurate knowledge, no one can possibly claim to understand the personality of this extraordinary man. Consequently, we will try to condense into a few paragraphs, what has taken historians volumes and volumes of books to describe.

Adolf Hitler was above all else, an intuitive, artistic human being, capable of accurately sensing situations and of grasping them with the clarity of an extremely orderly mind. He believed in the absolute supremacy of the spirit over the material, and this was borne out by his now-famous statement that for him, and for a National Socialist, two words did not exist in the dictionary — **impossible** (unmoglich) and **never** (niemals).

Let us look at his own life as a case in point. An early orphan, poor, with incomplete education, a stateless citizen in Germany with a sickly physical constitution, and, after the First World War, penniless and without a job or trade. He was just one of the many millions of Germans in similar desperate straits at that time in history. He had, one has to admit, not a chance to be anything other, even if lucky, than a manual labourer. Impossible, one would have to concede, that this man could ever become Mayor of Munich let alone the Chancellor of the largest, most populous, best-trained and educated country in the heart of Europe. Never — not in his circumstances!

Impossible? Never? Well, the entire world is witness to the fact that not only did the impossible become possible, it actually happened and in a very short period of time. The **never** and **impossible** were stricken from his and from history's dictionary.

Here enters the very first and most important component in understanding Adolf Hitler, and through it, the partial solution to the U.F.O. riddle.

Nothing in National Socialism was ever allowed to seem an impossible task or an unattainable goal. With Adolf Hitler it was always mind over matter. The belief then held by aircraft designers that the human body could not survive space flight and faster-than-sound speeds was scornfully put on one side by Hitler and it was his challenging of this belief that brought forth the U.F.O.'s.

Let us now return to the other facets of Hitler's mind in order to get an even clearer picture.

Hitler felt, based on his studies and an enormous amount of reading, that there existed a very definite plan by a small, but immensely powerful group of Jewish bankers, financiers, industrialists and others, to take control of the entire world. It is important to remember that he lived in Vienna during a time when a very noisy battle was raging between Zionist Jews, (who wanted to be a separate race,

religion, nation and culture with their own state, Israel), and the assimilated elements amongst the Jews, (who wanted to be part of the cosmopolitan establishment of the Austrian Empire), with all the privileges and power their immense wealth bestowed on them. Hitler's appraisal of the Jews can best be summed up as contained in "The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion". This is a very important aspect of the whole U.F.O. story, because in it, we find the seeds for many far-reaching decisions made 30 years later. Hitler saw in this actual or imagined Jewish drive for world domination, a very definite danger to his own work and plan.

From now on we must look at every problem from this vantage point. Hitler would undoubtedly double-check each major question by this criterion: "How would I act in this case if I were a Jew bent on world conquest?" Now we have the two most important keys to understanding the functioning of his mind.

There is, however, another very important fact, and this is motivation. What motivated this man? Why should this penniless and jobless vagrant, (often disparagingly called a paperhanger) act the way he did? Millions of words have been devoted to this question. All, or most of them, completely misrepresented him, and this is especially true in the non-German world where he is portrayed as some power-mad maniac, seeking power solely for destructive reasons. This kind of thinking might have been justifiable as propaganda during war time, but the truth requires a long over-due reevaluation, and the truth is simple.

The artistic, sensitive soul in this man rebelled at what he saw taking place around him. Since no single person, no group, no party and no ideology at that time expressed his feelings, he started expressing his own frustrations and ideas at the meetings of others. To his complete amazement he found that others listened and they listened in ever-increasing numbers. Thus, Hitler the agitator, the motivator, was born. There is no motivator without motivation and it was the concept of National Socialism that was his motivation.

It is neither the intent nor the desire of the authors to rewrite "Mein Kampf" and we shall restrict ourselves to the very barest of outlines to clarify his motivations. This is necessary to solve the U.F.O. riddle and can best be summed up in the 24 points of the N.S.D.A.P. Party Programme and also are reflected in a study Hitler made of the political situation for the army in Munich, where he was "Political Information Officer".

THE PROGRAMME OF THE PARTY

THE Programme of the German Workers' Party is limited as to period. The leaders have no intention, once the aims announced in it have been achieved, of setting up fresh ones, in order to ensure the continued existence of the Party by the artificially increased discontent of the masses.

1. We demand the union of all Germans, on the basis of the right of the self-determination of peoples, to form a Great Germany.

2. We demand equality of rights for the German People in its dealings with other nations, and abolition of the Peace Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain.

3. We demand land and territory (colonies) for the nourishment of our people and for settling our surplus population.

4. None but members of the nation may be citizens of the State. None but those of German blood, whatever their creed, may be members of the nation. No Jew, therefore, may be a member of the nation.

5. Anyone who is not a citizen of the State may live in Germany only as a guest and must be regarded as being subject to the Alien laws.

6. The right of voting on the leadership and legislation is to be enjoyed by the citizens of the State alone. We demand, therefore, that all official appointments, of whatever kind, whether in the Reich, the provinces, or the small communities, shall be granted to citizens of the State alone.

We oppose the corrupt Parliamentary custom of the State of filling posts merely with a view to Party considerations, and without reference to character or capacity.

7. We demand that the State shall make it its first duty to promote the industry and livelihood of the citizens of the State. If it is not possible to nourish the entire population of the State, foreign nationals (non-citizens of the State) must be excluded from the Reich.

8. All further non-German immigration must be prevented. We demand that all non-Germans who entered Germany subsequently to August 2, 1914, shall be required forthwith to depart from the Reich.

9. All citizens of the State shall possess equal rights and duties.

10. It must be the first duty of every citizen of the State to perform mental or physical work. The activities of the individual must not clash with the interests of the whole, but must proceed within the framework of the community and must be for the general good.

We demand therefore:

11. Abolition of incomes unearned by work. Abolition of the thraldom of interest.

12. In view of the enormous sacrifice of life and property demanded of a nation by every war, personal enrichment through war must be regarded as a crime against the nation. We demand therefore the ruthless confiscation of all war profits.

13. We demand the nationalization of all businesses which have (hitherto) been amalgamated (into Trusts).

14. We demand that there shall be profit-sharing in the great industries.

15. We demand a generous development of provision for old age.

16. We demand the creation and maintenance of a healthy middle class, immediate communalization of wholesale warehouses, and their lease at a low rate to small traders, and that the most careful consideration shall

be shown to all small purveyors to the State, the provinces, or smaller communities.

17. We demand a land-reform suitable to our national requirements, the passing of a law for the confiscation without compensation of land for communal purposes, the abolition of interest on mortgages, and prohibition of all speculation in land.

On 13 April 1928, Adolf Hitler made the following declaration:

"It is necessary to reply to the false interpretation on the part of our opponents of Point 17 of the Programme of the NSDAP.

"Since the NSDAP admits the principle of private property, it is obvious that the expression 'confiscation without compensation' refers merely to the creation of possible legal means of confiscating, when necessary, land illegally acquired, or not administered in accordance with the national welfare. It is therefore directed in the first instance against the Jewish companies which speculate in land."

"(Signed) ADOLF HITLER."

"Munich, April 13, 1928."

18. We demand ruthless war upon all those whose activities are injurious to the common interest. Common criminals against the nation, usurers, profiteers, &c., must be punished with death, whatever their creed or race.

19. We demand that the Roman Law, which serves the materialistic world order, shall be replaced by a German common law.

20. With the aim of opening to every capable and industrious German the possibility of higher education and consequent advancement to leading positions the State must consider a thorough reconstruction of our national system of education. The curriculum of all educational establishments must be brought into line with the requirements of practical life. Directly the mind begins to develop the schools must aim at teaching the pupil to understand the idea of the State (State sociology). We demand the education of specially gifted children of poor parents, whatever their class or occupation, at the expense of the State.

21. The State must apply itself to raising the standard of health in the nation by protecting mothers and infants, prohibiting child labour, and increasing bodily efficiency by legally obligatory gymnastics and sports, and by extensive support of clubs engaged in the physical training of the young.

22. We demand the abolition of mercenary troops and the formation of a national army.

23. We demand legal warfare against conscious political lies and their dissemination in the Press. In order to facilitate the creation of a German national Press we demand:

(a) that all editors and contributors to newspapers employing the German language must be members of the nation;

(b) That special permission from the State shall be necessary before non-German newspapers may appear. These need not necessarily be printed in the German language;

(c) That non-Germans shall be prohibited by law from participating financially in or influencing German newspapers, and that the penalty for contravention of the law shall be suppression of any such newspaper, and immediate deportation of the non-German involved.

It must be forbidden to publish newspapers which do not conduce to the national welfare. We demand the legal prosecution of all tendencies in art and literature of a kind likely to disintegrate our life as a nation, and the suppression of institutions which militate against the above-mentioned requirements.

24. We demand liberty for all religious denominations in the State, so far as they are not a danger to it and do not militate against the morality and moral sense of the German race.

The Party, as such, stands for positive Christianity, but does not bind itself in the matter of creed to any particular confession. It combats the Jewish-materialist spirit *within* and *without* us, and is convinced that our nation can achieve permanent health from within only on the principle: the common interest before self-interest.

25. That all the foregoing requirements may be realized we demand the creation of a strong central power of the Reich. Unconditional authority of the politically central Parliament over the entire Reich and its organization in general.

The formation of Diets and vocational Chambers for the purpose of executing the general laws promulgated by the Reich in the various States of the Confederation.

The leaders of the Party swear to proceed regardless of consequences—if necessary at the sacrifice of their lives—towards the fulfilment of the foregoing Points.[1]

MUNICH, February 24, 1920.

In a meeting held in the Circus Krone on 18 September 1922 Hitler formulated "*some fundamental demands of the Party":*

"1. We must call to account the November criminals of 1918. It cannot be that two million Germans should have fallen in vain and that afterwards one should sit down as friends at the same table with traitors. No, we do not pardon, we demand—Vengeance!"

"2. The dishonouring of the nation must cease. For betrayers of their Fatherland and informers the gallows is the proper place. Our streets and squares shall once more bear the names of our heroes; they shall not be named after Jews. In the Question of Guilt we must proclaim the truth".

"3. The administration of the State must be cleared of the rabble which is fattened at the stall of the parties".

"4. The present laxity in the fight against usury must be abandoned. Here the fitting punishment is the same as that for the betrayers of their Fatherland".

"5. We must demand a great enlightenment on the subject of the Peace Treaty. With thoughts of love? No! but in holy hatred against those who have ruined us".

"6. The lies which would veil from us our misfortunes must cease. The fraud of the present money-madness must be shown up. That will stiffen the necks of us all".

"7. As foundation for a new currency the property of those who are not of our blood must do service. If families who have lived in Germany for a thousand years are now expropriated, we must do the same to the Jewish usurers".

"8. We demand immediate expulsion of all Jews who have entered Germany since 1914, and of all those, too, who through trickery on the Stock Exchange or through other shady transactions have gained their wealth".

"9. The housing scarcity must be relieved through energetic action; houses must be granted to those who deserve them. Eisner said in 1918 that we had no right to demand the return of our prisoners—he was only saying openly what all Jews were thinking. People who so think must feel how life tastes in a concentration camp!"

"Extremes must be fought by extremes. Against the infection of materialism, against the Jewish pestilence we must hold aloft a flaming ideal. And if others speak of the World and Humanity we say The Fatherland—and only the Fatherland!"[1]

Hitler's "Study of the Jews" — for the army

In so far as the danger with which Jewry threatens our people today finds its expression in an undeniable aversion experienced by the majority of our people, the cause of that aversion is not generally to be found in a clear awareness of the Jews' systematically destructive effect, whether conscious or unconscious, on our nation as a whole, but arises mainly from personal intercourse and the impression made by the Jew as an individual... . Thus antisemitism all too easily takes on the character of a mere manifestation of emotion. And that is wrong. As a political movement antisemitism cannot and must not be determined by emotional motives but by a recognition of the facts...: To begin with, Jewry is incontestably a race and not a religious community. And the Jew himself never describes himself as a Jewish German, Jewish Pole or, say, a Jewish American, but always as a German, Polish or American Jew. In no case has the Jew ever . . . assimilated very much more from other nations than their language. . . . Even the Mosaic faith . . . is not the final word on the question of Jew or non-Jew. . . . By a thousand years of inbreeding, often occurring within a very small circle, the Jew has generally kept his race and type more sharply defined than the peoples among whom he lives. The result of this is that we have in our midst a non-German, foreign race neither willing nor able to sacrifice its racial characteristics or to renounce its own way of feeling, thinking and striving and which nevertheless has just the same political rights as us. If the Jew's very feelings are concerned with the purely material, how much more so his thinking and striving. The dance round the Golden Calf becomes a merciless struggle for all those possessions which to our way of feeling ought not to be the only and ultimate things worth striving for. The value of an individual is no longer determined by his character, by the importance of his achievements to the whole, but exclusively by the size of his fortune.... A nation's stature is no longer to be reckoned

> by the sum of its moral and spiritual forces but only by the profusion of its worldly goods. From this feeling there arises that thinking, that striving after money and after the power to protect it, which leads the Jew to be unscrupulous in his choice of methods, and pitiless in applying them.... In an autocratically governed State he whines to gain the 'majesty's', the prince's, favour which he abuses [by battening] on his subjects like a leach. In a democracy he goes whoring after the favour of the masses, crawls before the 'majesty of the people' and knows only the majesty of money. He destroys the prince's character by Byzantine flattery, and national pride – the strength of a people – by mockery and the shameless promotion of vice. His weapon is public opinion . . . which he guides and distorts by means of the Press. His power is the power of money which in his hands proliferates unceasingly and effortlessly in the form of interest.. .. Everything that induces men to aspire to higher things, be it religion, socialism, or democracy, is to him only a means to an end – that of satisfying his lust for money and domination. He acts on the peoples like racial tuberculosis. And as a consequence antisemitism arising out of purely emotional reasons will find its ultimate expression in the form of progroms [*sic*]. Antisemitism based on reason, however, must lead to a systematic and legal campaign to deprive the Jew of the privileges which he alone of all the foreigners in our midst enjoys (Aliens Legislation). But its final goal must always remain the removal of the Jews as a whole.

It could be said that we are a little far off the U.F.O. problem but without this groundwork it is not possible to unravel this very complex story. We now have a clear picture of the basic working of Hitler's brain. We know how he felt about "his enemies", real or imagined, and we also know what motivated him in his political moves and decisions.

To sum up:—

1. Hitler never thought anything impossible; he never accepted defeat. Hitler did not believe that even death was the end and thought of death only as a transition, after which the struggle continued only on a different plane. This can be clearly seen in his words "Und Ihr habt doch gesiegt" — "And you were victorious in spite of death" — often repeated during memorial speeches while honouring those of his supporters who fell during the march on the Feldherrnhalle on November 23rd, 1923 in Munich. This same thinking permeates his last two public speeches broadcast January 10th, 1945 and February 25th, 1945 in which he re-affirmed that Germany would still win the war — " . . . and the Last Battalion will be ours".

2. Hitler saw a world-wide conspiracy of Jews and their Allies, (democrats, liberals, social democrats and marxists) in a concerted, well-planned drive for Jewish world domination. He argued vehemently and convincingly to untold millions of Europeans that there was a struggle taking place for a Jewish world in which all non-Jews were to be mere work slaves, with Jewish rulers, similar to those forming the Communist government in the Soviet Union, e.g., Trotsky (Bronstein), Litvinoff (Finkelstein), Kanganovich (Cohen), Ehrenburg and Berija, or for an Aryan world where the white man played a forceful dynamic role in global affairs, based on self-determination but within strict limits of a larger white world or what the Germans call "Abendland".

3. Hitler's motivating force was an unusual synthesis, (never before or since attempted), of the best features of **Socialism** and of **Free Enterprise** as opposed to multi-national corporations, (then called monopoly or state capitalism) on the one side, and Nationalism (based on ethnic origin and adherence) versus universalism or internationalism on the other. Hitler's synthesis worked and it was eminently successful all over Europe, providing full employment, financial stability (zero inflation) and introducing the greatest worker-benefit programmes of any modern, industrial state. It was never defeated as an idea but only destroyed (by military power), as a system.

An idea can only be superseded or defeated by another, better idea. Germany was only defeated militarily in 1945 but the idea of National Socialism is still as strong as ever and is flourishing around the world, but by necessity, underground.

The above three factors must constantly be kept in mind as we move from chapter to chapter and from event to event in the following pages.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ESPECIALLY IN THE AIRCRAFT FIELD IN N.S. Germany

When Germany sent unmanned guided missiles, in the form of the V.1 and later the V.2 (the V standing for Vergeltungswaffen or Revenge Weapon), crashing into England as payment for England's, treason against Europe, a weapon was thus introduced to the astonished world that up to that time had only been written about in Science Fiction magazines. Again, the "impossible" had been realised. There was no defence in England against the V.2 and there would have been no defence against the A.9 and A.10 (America Rockets) which were destined to rain on New York and Washington in the Fall of 1945. These rockets were intended as revenge for the aimless and merciless killing of German civilians by the saturation fire-bombing of German cities by the U.S. Air Terrorists.

The breakthrough in the rocket weapon field by Germany so astonished the Allied leadership that Winston Churchill, fearing panic would break out in England,, contemplated germ warfare against Germany. It was only a lack of germs that prevented such action. However, the rocket breakthrough came too late to turn the tide for Germany. Conventional mass-bombing and mass-killing by the Allies took such a heavy toll that the war ended before all the new technology developed by German genius could be brought into the war. It was the knowledge that it was quantity winning over quality that had driven the hopelessly outnumbered German soldiers to despair, and the new technology gave them a feeling of relief plus the knowledge that only for a space of time had mass overwhelmed spirit.

Secret Weapons

General Eisenhower wrote in his book "Crusade in Europe": "It seems likely that if the Germans had succeeded in perfecting and using these new weapons six months earlier than they did, our invasion of Europe would have proved exceedingly difficult, perhaps impossible. I feel sure that had they succeeded in using these weapons over a six month period, particularly if he (Hitler) had made the Portsmouth-Southampton (landing) area one of his principle targets, Overlord (the invasion) might have been written off". Those were the "conventional" V. I and V. II rockets mentioned by Eisenhower with such awe.

Winston Churchill spoke of the “miracle weapons” that Goebbels had promised the Germans, and that if they had come half a year earlier Hitler would have driven the allies out of Europe!

It is interesting to speculate about what weapons these two allied war leaders were referring to. Some were undoubtedly the remote controlled missiles, V.I and V.ll already mentioned. But there were others. There were ground-to-air missiles, some radio-controlled, some heat-seeking, some radar-guided and others even more sophisticated.

Long Range Rockets (ICBM) The “Amerika Rocket” at extreme left was to be operational by Fall-Winter 1945. (Note size of man in relation to size of rockets). Some of the German jet planes on the drawing boards and in the test stage. The experienced observer can trace most “modern developments” to these ancestors. Germany was at least a generation ahead of the rest of the world in “conventional” aircraft design

Flying bombs — remote controlled. See fore-runner of famous U.2 spy plane at top right. All were operational

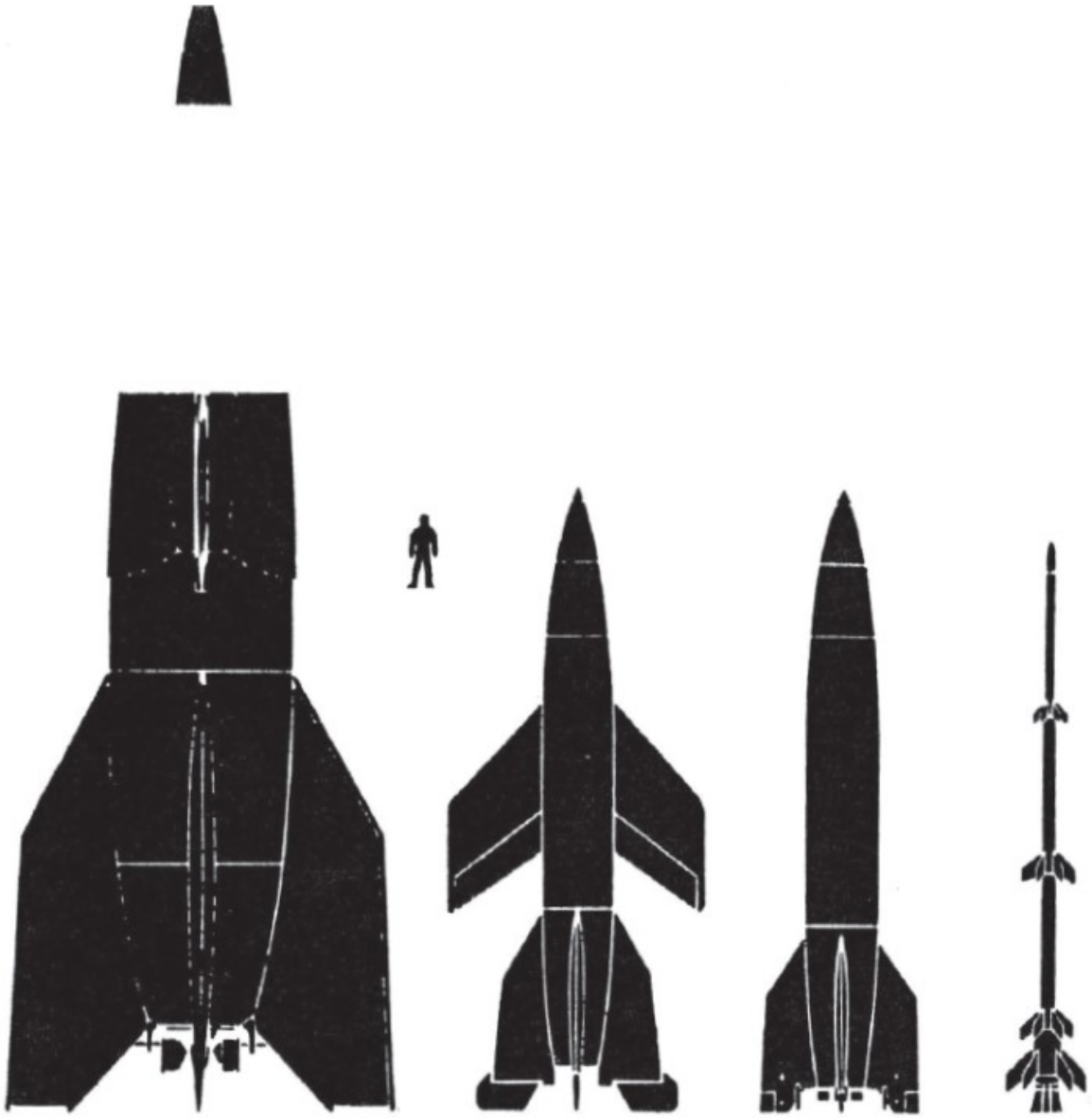


Abb. 217-220. Femraketen. Von links nach rechts: A-9/A-10; A-4b und A-4 (V 2) von Peenemünde; ganz rechts: Rheinmetall „Rheinbole".

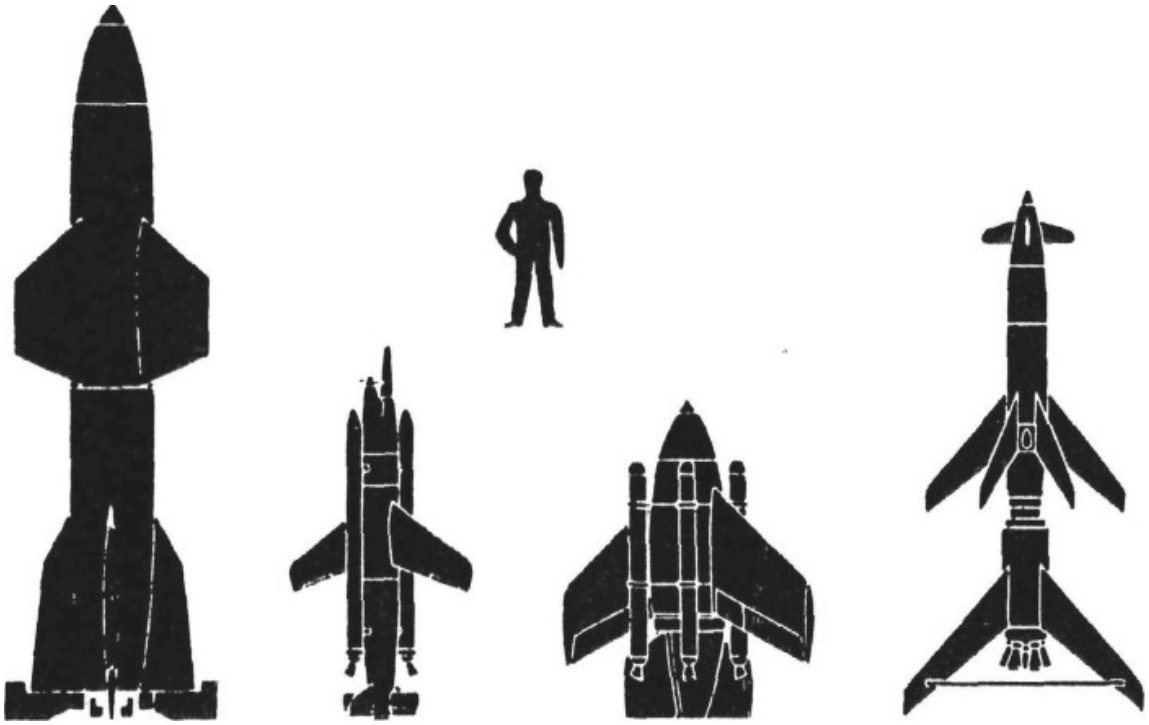


Abb. 221-224. Fla-Raketen. Von links nach rechts: Peenemünde C-2 „Wasserfall"; Hen achel Hs 117 „Schmetterling"; Konrad „Enzian E-l"; Rheinmetall „Rheintochter R. 1

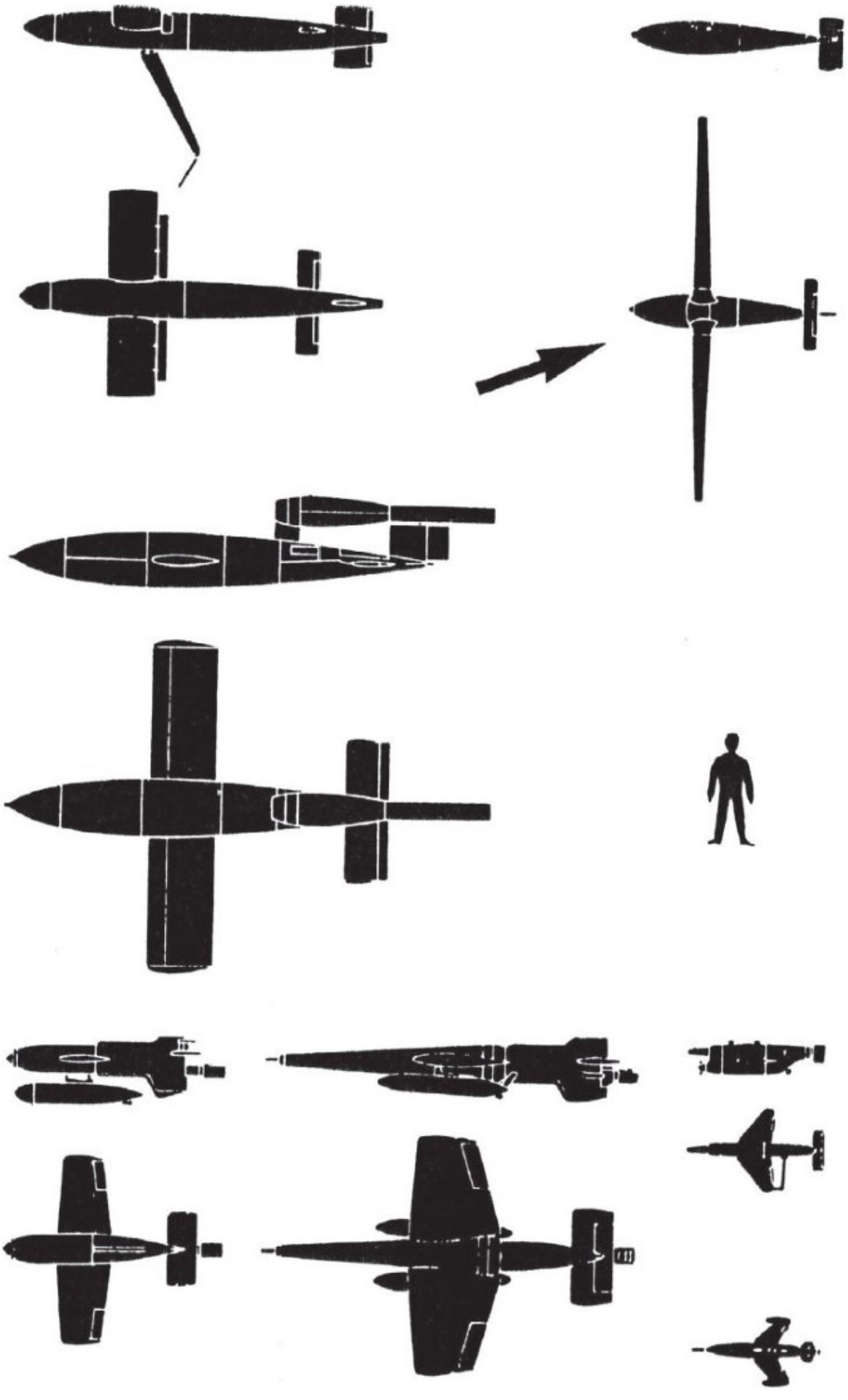


Abb. 225-231. Fllegende Bomben. Oben links: Blohm & Voss BV 143; oben rechts: BV 246 B; mitte: Fleseler Fl 103 (V 1); unten links: Henschel Hs 293 A-O; unten mitte: Hs 294; untere Relhe rechts oben: Hs 298; untere Relhe rechts unten: Kramer X-4.

In April 1945, Germany had, in fact, over 130 different types of missiles and rockets. We reproduce here a' cross-section of the most important types. Please note their size relative to the size of a man. All the ones pictured were operational types. Many others were just days or weeks away from combat use. Amongst them were the devastatingly successful R.4-M, air-to-air missiles which were mounted under the wings of an aircraft. A ME-110 could carry 48 R.4M's and Germany's new jets carried 24 of these murderously effective weapons.

Luftwaffe Lieutenant Werner Schneider, a German Wing-Commander, flying a F.W.190, attacked on allied bomber formation near the town of Schweinfurth in April 1945 and reported after his landing, "We were about a mile away when we received our directions from the control centre. 'You are close enough' a missile expert told us. 'Hold that range. Just point your noses forward towards them and pull the switches.' With a hissing sound the missiles blasted away. The result was beyond our wildest expectations. The missiles equipped with proximity fuses, some also with acoustical detonators, sent forty bombers to the ground within minutes."

Before the war ended, Germany had produced over 20,000 of these missiles of the R4M type in underground factories in the Sudetenland. Allied sources have put bomber losses at the hands of the R4M to over 500 in a few weeks. However, since aircraft were in short supply at that time, greater emphasis was placed on ground to air missiles. To mention but a few, there are the Enzian (Gentian), Hecht (Pike), Feuerlilie (Firelily), Schmetterling (Butterfly), Rheintochter (Rhine maiden), Wasserfall (Waterfall) and the Taifun (Typhoon). The last one had an acceleration of an incredible 45 G's.



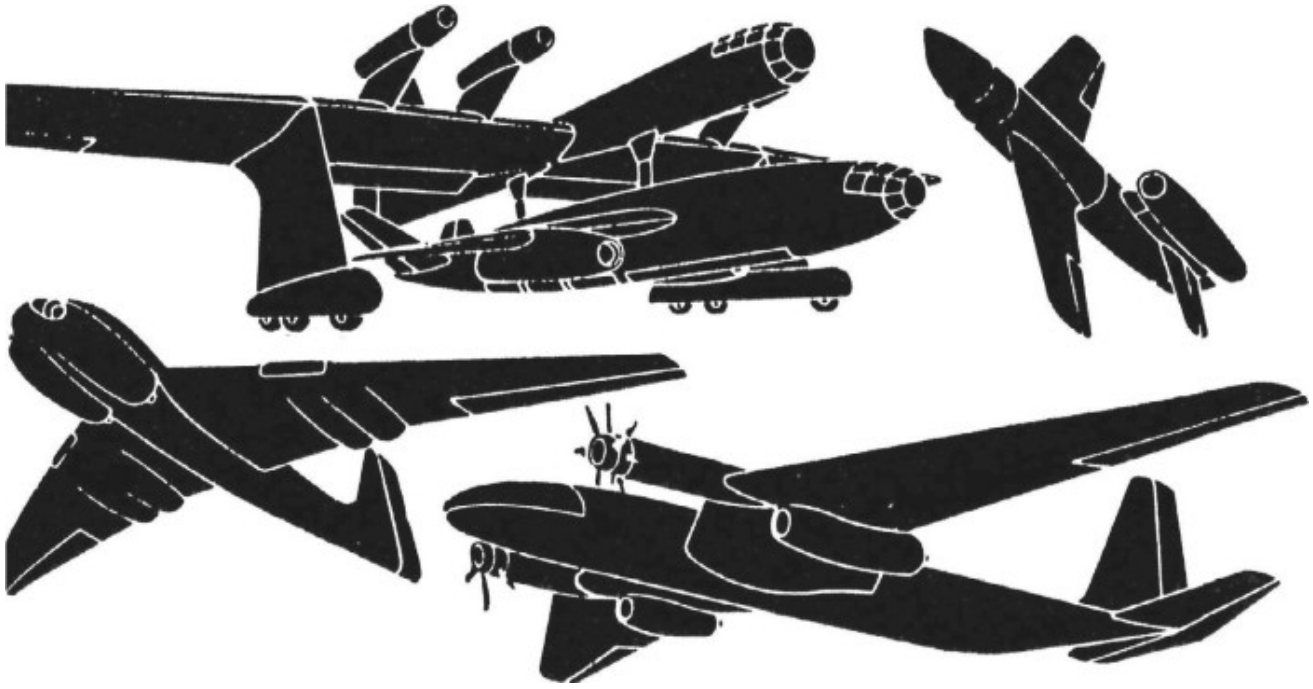
Wasserfall could reach 50,000 feet and was later improved upon. It was equipped with an infrared guidance system which sent it in a beeline for any Allied bomber — and was 100% accurate. The Butterfly was another step in the V (Vengeance) weapon programme. In April 1945, 3,000 were produced; in June it was to be 10,000 missiles of this type alone.

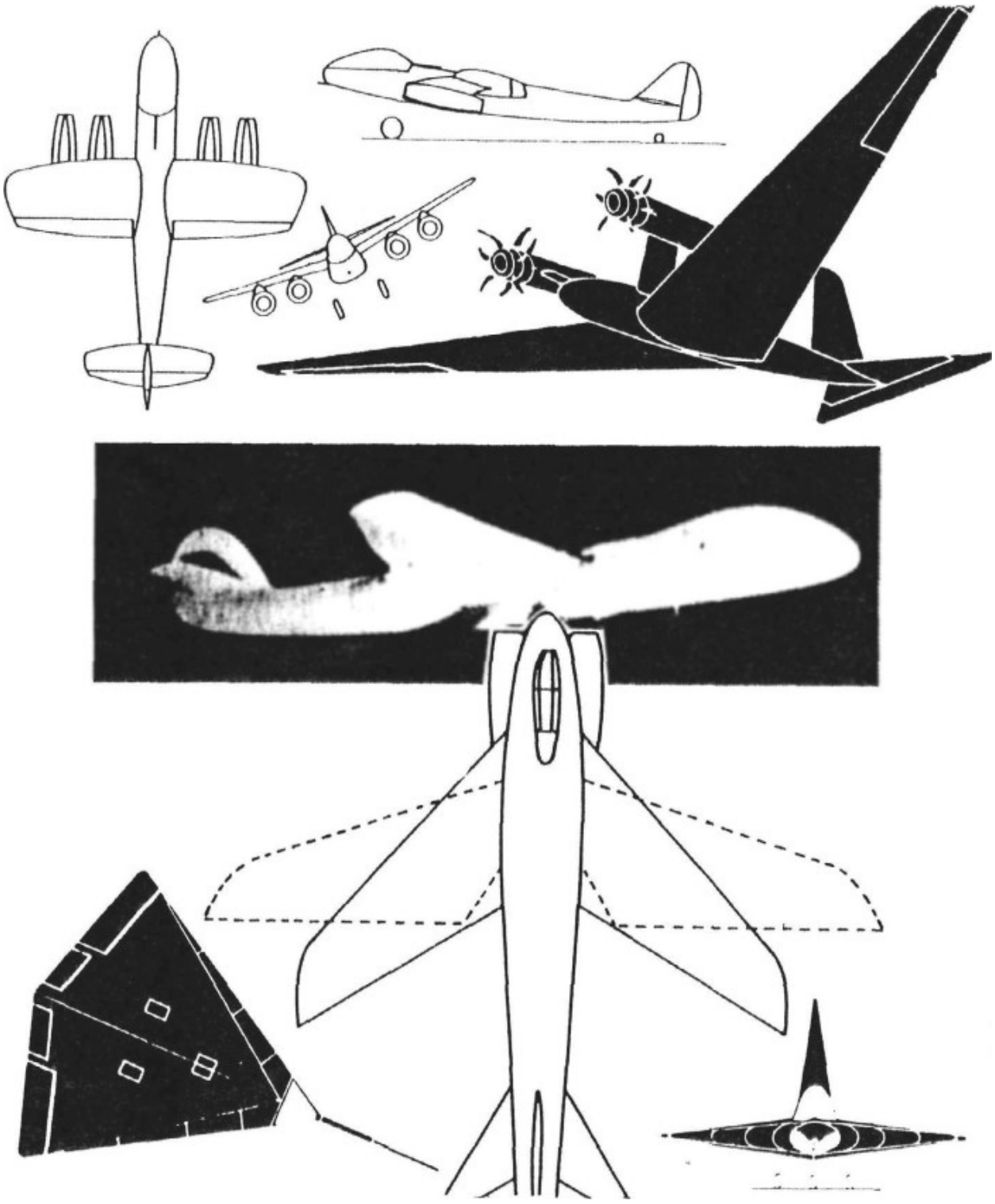
When V.E. day came around, on May 8th, 1945, many expert analysts amongst the victors expressed the opinion that not a single allied plane would have been able to penetrate the borders of the German Reich after May, 1945. Germany's defence curtain of anti-aircraft missiles would have been 100% fool proof. Not even the atomic bomb would have been able to be "delivered", not to mention the

fact that London and Washington were by that time within range of existing Germany long-range rockets and jet bombers. But there are other weapons to be mentioned here.

There was the “Lafferenz Projects” which was just completed at the time it permitted the firing of missiles from submerged U-Boats. Attacks were planned on cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington and even far-off Detroit.

Tests had been completed using small-scale subs and rockets (Lake Topliz, Austria) and large V.ll’s towed behind a submarine off Cuxhaven on the North Sea. Then there were flying bombs with built-in computer-controlled T.V. cameras, controlled by pilots who could be hundreds of miles away. There were long-range jet bombers, with 12,000 mile range, jet aircraft — aircraft carriers, transport planes that carried other smaller planes (12 of them) piggyback to their target area and then let loose their cargo of death and destruction. There were ram jets, jet fighters, bombers, transports and there was even an SST transport capable of flying four times the speed of sound.





T.F.X. Jets and S.S.T. airliners; their origins can clearly be traced to Germany's Research labs.

Also there were passenger jets, a few of which are reproduced here. These plans had already progressed to the stage where models were being tested in the wind tunnels. It is interesting to see that the Americans adopted the German engine mountings on their later aircraft, but most startling of all is the Jumbo jet shown in these pages. Many of the Allied postwar developments originated right here

in Germany's laboratories, as is evidenced by the following excerpts photographically reproduced from "America's Aircraft Year Book," an official publication. It speaks for itself.

> As part of its comprehensive research program to exploit former enemy aeronautical developments, the Air Materiel Command's Technical Intelligence agency was using the services of some 86 top-flight German aviation scientists of World War II. Working side by side with American military and civilian aeronautical engineers in the laboratories of Wright Field, these German experts were being used, as were tons of captured enemy materiel, documents, blueprints and microfilm, to save American engineers the time they would devote to problems already investigated by the Germans. Their knowledge also helped the Americans to catch up and improve upon Germany's wartime advancement in such phases of aeronautical developments as rocket and jet power. Similar groups of former enemy technicians were employed in other parts of the country by various branches of the armed forces. At Fort Bliss, Texas, one group was working in connection with research on German V-2 rockets and other guided missiles. Others were working with the Army ordnance and engineer experts, and still others were working for the Navy in several fields of applied war research and development.
>
> Among those in the German group at Wright Field were Rudolph Hermann, Alexander Lippisch, Heinz Schmitt, Helmut Heinrich, and Fritz Doblhoff and Ernst Kugel. Hermann was attached to the Peenemunde Research Station for Aerodynamics, where Germany's V-2 rockets were hatched and launched against England. A specialist in supersonics, he was in charge of the supersonic wind tunnel at Kochel in the Bavarian Alps. He also was a member of the group entrusted with Hitler's futuristic plans to establish a space-station rocket-refueling base revolving as a satellite about the earth at a distance of 4,000 miles—a scheme which he and certain high-ranking AAF officers in 1947 still believed to be feasible.
>
> In order to break down the language difficulties in deciphering captured German documents, prominent educators were working with the AAF in compiling a new 75,000-word German-English dictionary intended to clarify German aeronautical terms and phrases. Supervising the project was Dr. Kurt I.. Leidecker, on leave from the Behr-Manning Corporation and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where he was assistant professor of modern languages and instructor of scientific German. Nearly half the contents of the new dictionary were to be new words. The Germans had nazified aeronautical terms formerly having classic roots, and had coined many new terms not found in any existing dictionary. Material for the dictionary was being extracted from broken enemy codes and from 250 tons of captured German air documents. Considerable value was attached to the widely heralded German ZWB (Central Organization for Scientific Reports) Index which contained important scientific documents. Included were many of the newer aeronautical terms and some applications of older words, which served as an aid to the project translators. Also helpful were German translations of American and British aeronautical terms found in captured documents, and the arbitrary words and phrases applied to German prototypes and equivalents of Allied equipment and accessories.
>
> The German scientists worked voluntarily at Wright Field under special contracts as alien civilian employees of the War Department. Their salaries ranged from $2.20 to $11 a day, and were paid to their banks or families in Germany.

There are other developments never mentioned in any official book, namely the UFO and other even more devastating weapons. Why is no mention made of them officially? Is it because they were not found? Or that they were destroyed?

However, before proceeding with the UFO's there are a few more secret developments which must be covered and which, perhaps, you have never heard of before, — the death rays, the sun cannon, Pandora's Box and the Aeolus Bag.



ART BY FRANK BOLLE

The Sound Cannon

Once again, we find Hitler steering his scientists towards using nature, not opposing it. He had them harness two important elements, namely the power of the air and the power of the sun.

The first experiments started as early as 1943, on a lonely, rarely-visited mountain plateau in Tyrol. For a number of weeks scientists and specialists from the Reichsluftfahrtamt in Berlin (Office of Aeronautics) — of which Major Lusar, who reported about the German UFO programme, was also a member, had been busy setting up a camp, or more appropriately, a base. They were busy unpacking and assembling some odd-looking pieces of equipment. Huge crates arrived by truck from various parts of the Fatherland. Significantly again, many factories which were involved in this project were located underground in what is now Czechoslovakia. When all was assembled, there stood on that lonely, bleak plateau, high in the mist-shrouded mountains of Austria, a most fearsome weapon — the Sound Cannon. (see photograph reproduced here). It looks like a weird longish platform with an angular smoke stack that can be turned into horizontal positions and a fire place or boiler seems to be at the base of it. In actual fact it is a rigid steel combustion chamber in which methane and oxygen can be ignited under high pressure, with the ultimate aim of creating a series of powerful explosions at rapid intervals. The shock waves created by these explosions were to be directed, via the conical smoke stack against any aggressor, with a devastating force. The whole infernal principle was based on the knowledge that the shock waves

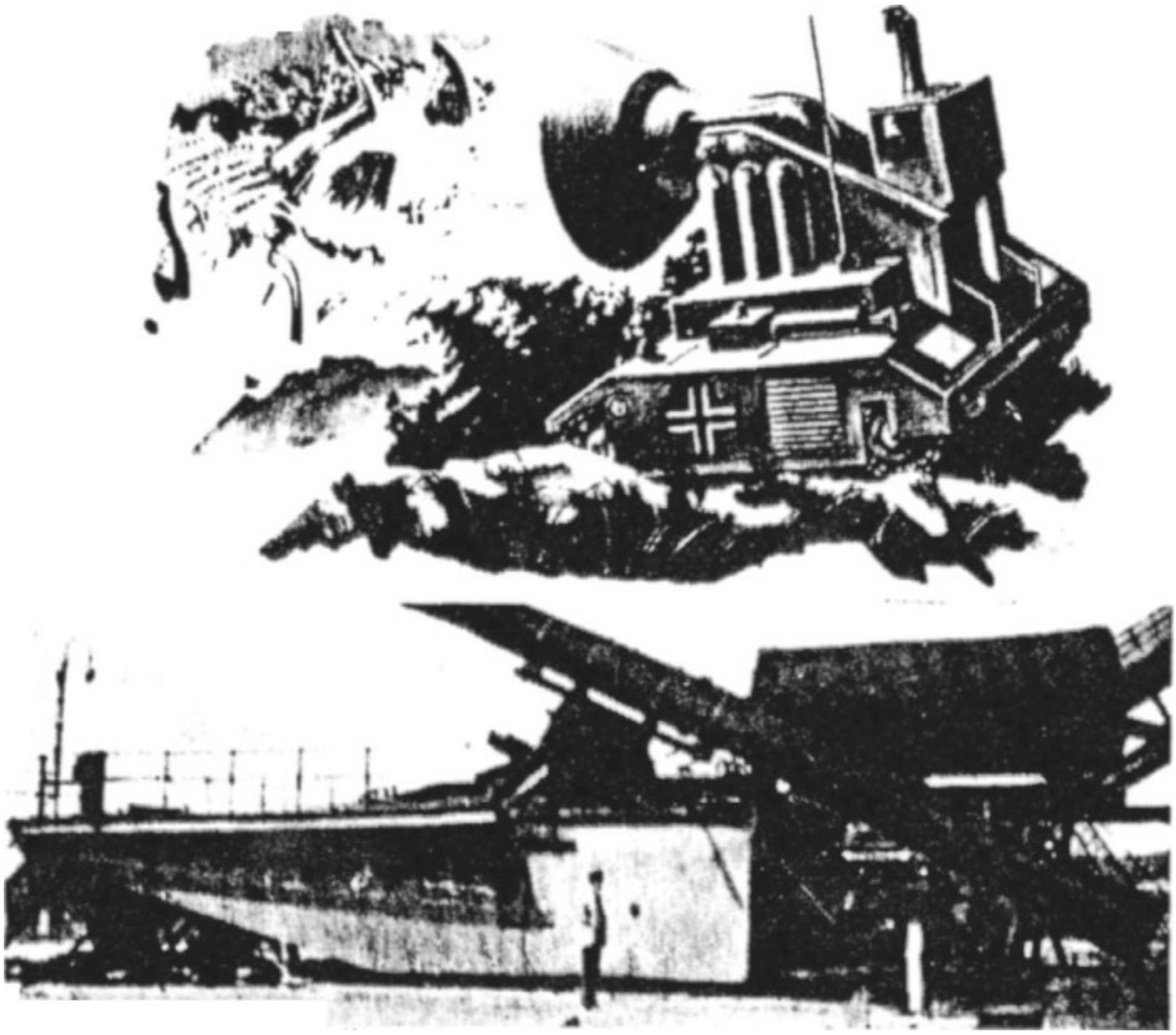
of sound, generate a certain pressure upon objects which may be in their path. Thunderclaps with their earth-shaking after effects served as the father of thought, in this particular case.

Sonic booms as created by fast and high-flying jet aircraft can, in effect, damage buildings and burst ear drums. Sound, therefore, if strong enough, can kill. And so the reasoning went behind these tests. Why were they testing this device way up in the Alps? To the peasants below and around, it sounded like a thunderstorm and so created little suspicion.

The scientists had had hundreds of dogs and pigs trained to take the place of attacking Russian infantry. The animals were trained, Pavlovian style to run in a certain direction for their daily fodder, about 400 yards away. The day the experiment was started, they were once again headed for their troughs. The Sound Cannon had been erected behind some bushes. First came the dogs, then the pigs. There were no eaters at troughs that day; not one animal survived that 400 yard dash.

The dogs came first; at 150 yards distance the first salvo was fired, there was a terrific bang and then followed the shock waves. The dogs stood as if frozen to the ground. Suddenly they let loose a heart-rending howl and raced towards the troughs only to be hit by another round. The dogs had come within 50 feet of the sound cannon and not one of them survived that second shot. The pigs, still 100 yards away were paralyzed for hours. All suffered from disorientation effects, causing them to run helter skelter in each and every direction. None of them made it to the feeding troughs.

The sound cannon was used operationally against the Russians on the approaches to the Elbe River and against American aircraft close to Passau on the Danube — with the same results. (One wonders did Admiral Byrd suffer the same fate as the pigs when he gave orders to abort that Antarctic overflight after all his orientation instruments went haywire in 1947?). Illustration shows artist’s conception of the Sound Cannon.



The Aeolus Bag

This New-Age weapon was used to fight off the seemingly endless hordes of Mongolians that were spewed forth from Asia's vast steppes. It used oxygen and hydrogen for combustion. The weapon's function was similar to an air compressor, commonly found on construction sites. If you have ever witnessed the concentrated power of pressurized air from a pneumatic tool or drill you will be able to appreciate the potential impact of the Aeolus Bag. It could stop a truck or a plane dead in its track before disintegrating it.



The Sun Cannon

Very early in the war, the Germans, well-versed in Greek mythology, built another contraption of note. This silent weapon consisted of a huge truck-mounted mirror able to be rotated at will. The sun's rays were to be collected, concentrated and sent back towards the sky, blinding enemy pilots and gunners, and so giving to the German fighters very easy pickings. Due to weather conditions over northern Europe, the weapon was seldom used "at home". However, a member of the Africa Corps reported it used on the ground on some occasions and with excellent results.



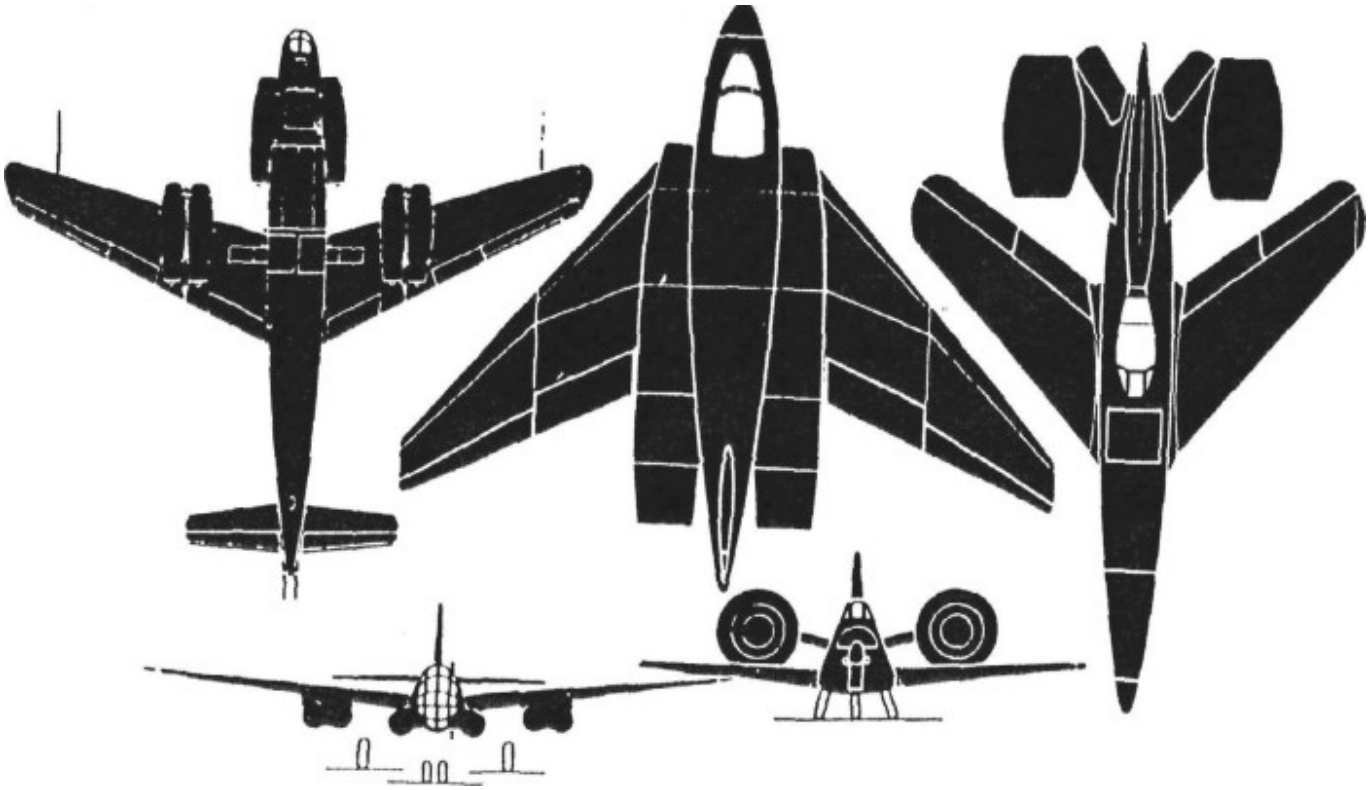
Pandora's Box

When first conceived Pandora's Box was thought of as an anti-aircraft weapon, but it proved to be most devastating on the ground. The SS used it against the Jewish, uprising in the Ghetto of Warsaw.

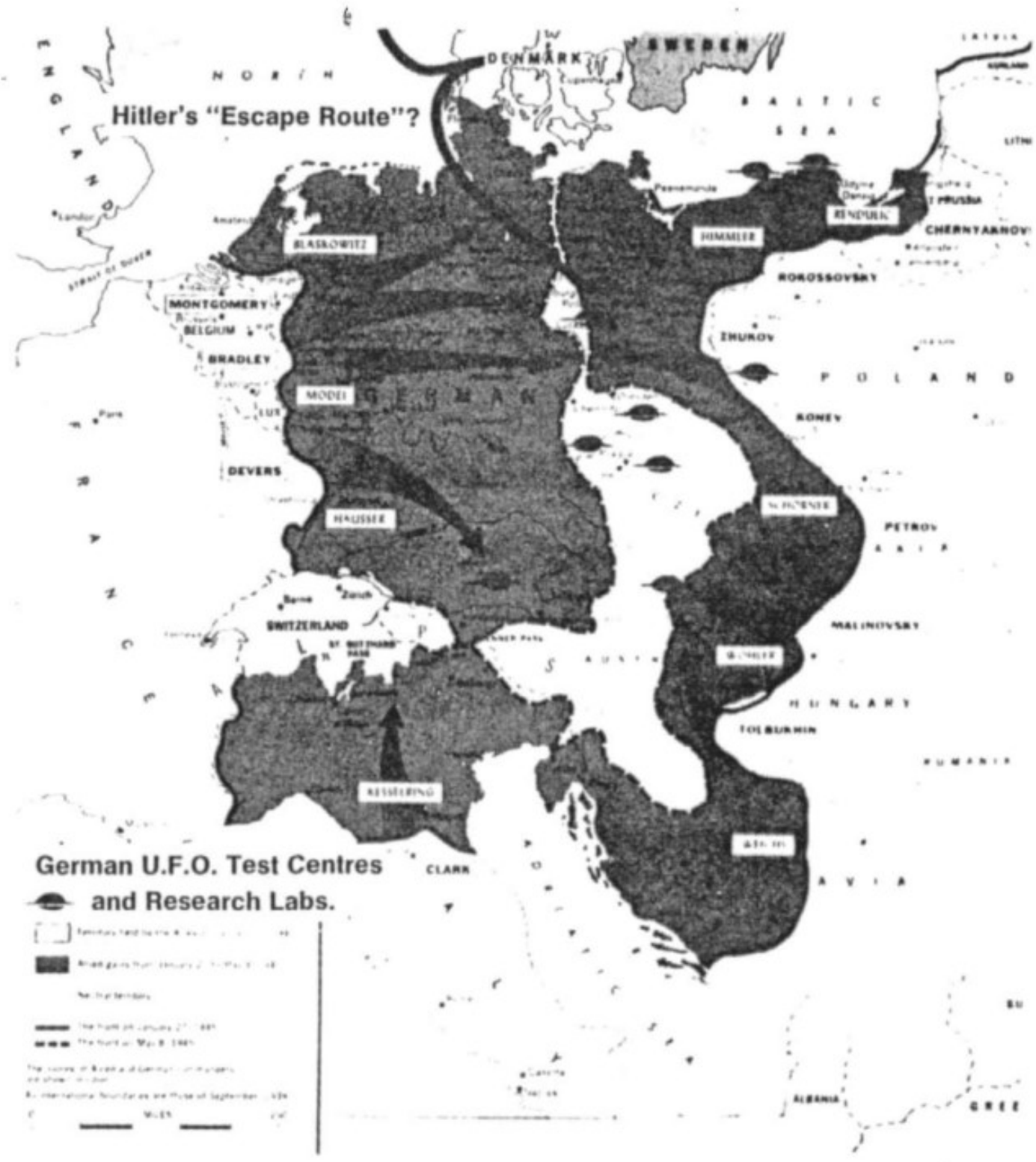
The inventor was, in civilian occupation, a mining engineer. He simply re-created the dread of all coal miners — an underground coal dust explosion. The explosion literally razed any building from its foundations. (See illustration). None of these weapons were ever used by the allies in any of the 50 wars since the end of W.W. II. One could safely assume therefore that these weapons did not fall into allied hands, since every other German invention has been reproduced; from missiles to space flight and satellites, and each has been always loudly heralded as some scientific breakthrough by either Russia or Uncle Sam.

This brings to mind a glaring example of the “Brain Drain”. Recently it was announced with great fanfare that a U.S. paint company had perfected a superb camouflage paint capable of absorbing radar waves or make them unintelligible. They must have either “re-invented” a German invention which had been long in U.S. hands, and probably at great expense to the U.S. taxpayer, or else they just pocketed the money for going through Hitler’s files, for it was nothing more than the paint used on German planes at the end of the war.

There were also other fantastic developments in the purely conventional aircraft design. Reproduced here are a few of the planes on the drawing boards when Germany surrendered. The famous B.M.W. plant in Munich produced for Hitler the world’s first supersonic jet bomber only 12 months after Hitler had requested it. It’s range was to be 10,000 miles. Six jet engines were to give it the speed of sound at an altitude of over 50,000 feet. The plane’s code name, the Horten XVIII, would have been rolling off the assembly lines in the summer of 1945. It was to have carried 8,000 pounds of explosives to America and Russia and was designed to give the native population of these continents a taste of what it felt like to be at the receiving end of the “Liberators”.



Hitler was an ardent believer in the teaching of Clausewitz and despite having under his control all of the above advanced technology and the atom bomb, he realised the necessity of having a certain amount of physical force to be able to occupy and control any given land-populated area. This Hitler lacked in April 1945 and hence his strategic withdrawal from Berlin.



Positions in February, May 8th, 1945

With the advancing allied armies came teams of scientifically trained specialists, whose sole jobs were to hunt for German scientists and to ensure that their installations, laboratories and factories were not destroyed. The Americans were the cleverest and best organized in this field, capturing many "prize catches", and this, much to the chagrin and often anger, of the British, the French and especially the Russians. This great American "brain robbery" of the defeated enemy was so mind-boggling that a special dictionary for technical jargon of the aircraft industry alone had to be created by the captured Germans. It was comprised of over 75,000 separate terms and it made possible the exploitation of the stolen German patents. Wind tunnels, whole factories, all machines, every nut and bolt, including models, drawings and prototypes were shipped to America and to a lesser degree to the other allies. Top flight scientists were "invited" to work in the U.S. for $2.20 a day while being kept prisoners. In order to get cooperation, their starvation diets were kept "supplemented". Some were even offered citizenship as an inducement, or "war crimes" trials if they didn't produce. They included "Wernher von Braun"!

The Russians used methods only slightly different to those used by the Americans. On one particular occasion in an extremely well-coordinated plan conducted all over Soviet-occupied Germany, 275,000 specialists with their wives and children were hauled out of their beds in the early hours of the morning.

KIDNAPPING OF GERMAN SPECIALISTS

The raid was conducted in the Soviet Zone, 21st and 22nd October, 1946, all over central Germany by heavily armed troops, working to a minutely detailed plan. The specialists were forced to sign work agreements of five-year duration. Those who refused were taken in spite of their refusal. Women, children and even babies were taken. Protests were ignored or beaten down.

With few personal belongings, they were all shipped off to Russia. German factories were awaiting them, already dismantled and crated. There these specialists worked around the clock for three bowls of borscht soup and a slice of dark bread daily. In this way they were forced to help in bringing the Soviets, first, up-to-date and into the 20th Century, and then into the space age. With the further aid of U.S. Communist spies, Rosenberg, Greenglass et al the Russians were able to produce the first atom bomb. German science allowed them to produce Mig fighter-planes which were used to kill many Americans in Korea and later, in Vietnam.

The German scientists worked in about 40 different locations all over Russia:

40% in Kujbyschew — aircraft and jet engineer works
31% in Podberesje — aircraft design
6.5% in Moscow — radio, telephone technicians
4.5% in Tuschinow — pipelines
3% in Ostasckleow —
2% in Suchumi — Atomic research
1.5% in Leningrad — T.V. technicians

When the Germans protested as a group, they were shown documents, in English, signed by President Roosevelt of the United States, and by Winston Churchill, granting the Russians the express right to utilize any German person as they saw fit. Apparently these democratic leaders had no regard for human rights or liberties. These were the same men, who had wailed at Nuremberg, about the Germans utilizing forced labour in concentration camps. What hypocrites.

After their five year terms had been served, during which many had died and many were condemned to slave labour camps for life — camps such as "Workuta", the scientists were kept for another 2-3 years in quarantine, so that they would forget the projects they had worked on, no pencils, no paper was allowed them. What devils in human form. Sanctioned by the leaders of England and the U.S.A.

All submarine construction, torpedo development, tank-building and, of course, military rocket construction was performed by the forced, slave labour of the German top brains and thus was fulfilled the agreement made by the Allies, and in particular by the Americans, at conferences held in Potsdam and Yalta.

The Allies committed the greatest highjacking crime in all recorded history when they stole thirty railroad cars full of German patents. Stolen is the only word that fits this crime, for not a cent was ever paid to Germany in royalties or property rights. However, the true motives of both the East and West were soon revealed to the entire world. It was not humanitarian ideals that led to the "get Germany" war in 1939 but obviously it was outright theft and industrial-economic considerations. As soon as the Allies had in their hands the German specialists and had bombed their troublesome competitor (German industry) out of the world market place, (not a savoury method but an extremely effective one), (see photo copy of U.S. Steel Speech), they couldn't have cared less about freedom. There was no freedom of the press, freedom of speech or of opinion in Allied-occupied Europe and even today, thirty years later, there is still none.



U. S. Steel President Here, Predicts Big Market In Europe For Postwar Rehabilitation

BY LARRY GLENN

Europe will look to the United States for steel for rehabilitation for several years after the war because its own steel industries have been crippled by aerial warfare, Benjamin F. Fairless, Pittsburgh, president of the U. S. Steel Corporation, said in New Orleans today.

"Bombings have taken a heavy toll in Europe," he said. "If reports reaching us are accurate, then we are led to believe that the steel industry, if not destroyed, is seriously crippled. European countries will need steel for rebuilding. It is only logical to suspect that we will be called upon to produce steel for her needs.

"European requirements, together with substantially more business with South America than ever before, will keep the steel industry in this country humming for some time to come.

"The industry in this country is today producing all the steel it can possibly turn out. There is a need for even more but we do not have the man power or the facilities with which to produce it.

"U. S. Steel Corporation shipped 21,000,000 tons last year. This was a third of the nation's total output. The steel industry as a whole produced last year between 20,000,000 and 30,000,000 tons more ingots than it did during pre-war years.

"I don't like wars. But as a result of the present war, the steel industry has shown tremendous advancements in the development of new products and new techniques. The ultimate development of these new ideas will take place after the war.

PLANTS FOR SOUTH

"I am enthusiastic about the future of the South, and I look for the establishment of new plants using fabricated steel for their products."

Mr. Fairless has been in the steel business for 32 years, and has been president of U. S. Steel since 1938. He is 55, and is here on an inspection tour of his firm's subsidiaries. The corporation's plant in New Orleans is the Bennett Manufacturing Co., on the Jefferson Highway near Cam Plouche.

He is accompanied by Mrs. Fairless, George Wolfe, president of the U. S. Steel Export Co.; Robert Gregg, president of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Co.; M. H. Geisking, vice-president of the same company, and E. D. LeMay, public relations director of the U. S. Steel subsidiaries in the southeast division.

Mr. Fairless was slated to inspect harbor facilities here today, and will leave tomorrow for Texas.

War and its aftermath always mean big profits for big business

It was also the victors who introduced at Nuremberg the “democratic” order that “Might was Right” and so hanged Europe’s elite for alleged crimes, which similar crimes the victors were still committing daily, such as employing slave labour (P.O.W.’s), establishing and running concentration camps, (Dachau, Buchenwald, Auschwitz etc., but now with Allied guards), and expelling millions from their ancestral home lands, to name a few.

However, despite all the stealing, one prize catch eluded both the east and west. Germany’s U.F.O. research scientists could not be found. At first, drunk with victory, this important factor was overlooked but as the hangover from booty hunting, rape and conquest came to an end, it was too late. That some key scientists were obviously missing became clear, and although some plants and their installations were located, the staff with their machinery and prototypes had disappeared. Even the test pilots had vanished.

The Allied Intelligence networks again became active, but now the singleness of purpose — to kill the Krauts — was missing. The Allies began to suspect and accuse each other of having captured the “last secret”. They had agreed to divide the loot “honestly”. Each Ally was to receive microfilm copies of each and every German patent and secret document, regardless of whom had captured them, and since each stated they had kept their side of the bargain, a deadlock was reached. This controversy, which took place in the utmost secrecy and on the highest level, suddenly took a new and alarming twist.

From Northern Europe, and especially from neutral Sweden, came reports of Flying Saucers, called by the Swedish Press, “German Secret Weapons”. This caused a sensation not only in Europe but in the entire world.

Stories abounded about overflights by these strange objects at speeds and in formations which the Swedes had only seen during the latter days of the war. During intense German secret weapon development, many of these weapons were being tested in the then still safe Baltic area. This U.F.O. activity (as it soon became called), occurred at just about the same time as serious European, and especially North and South American newspapers and radio networks, were carrying sensational reports about Hitler.

It was being claimed that Adolf Hitler had never committed suicide but had escaped from the Bunker in Berlin via a “hospital tank”, had been taken to Tempelhof airfield and there, with his wife, Eva Braun-Hitler, had transferred to one of Germany’s fast jets and flown first to Denmark and then on to Norway. Both Denmark and Norway were still firmly in German hands. From Norway, Hitler and a mysterious group of people, making up an entire convoy, were claimed to have left for an unknown destination. Let us now investigate!

Whilst the last paragraph reads like a story out of a sensational publication, (the type usually dealing with crime and sex), nevertheless Time magazine issue of May 7th, 1945, (one day before the war was officially ended), gave space for the following article, and this seven days after Hitler’s supposed suicide. Add to this the fact that the Press service from which this report emanated and was distributed, seems to be the same one or at least connected with, the Press service for which a certain Willy Frahm (now known as the retired Chancellor of West Germany, Willy Brandt) quite freely filed stories whilst in exile. Should this be the case then the report must be given added credence, for another of these exiles using this service was Herbert Wehner, today a top West German politician. At this time he was known as one of Stalin’s most active operators in the European underground and under constanct surveillance by the Swedish Police as a “Soviet Agent”.

Hitler Story

Along with the authentic news from the perishing Third Reich came a rash of rumors and "reports." The dizziest to reach print was whelped by the unreliable "Free German Press Service," operated in Stockholm by Germans who call themselves "*émigrés*." F.G.P.S.'s latest gasp:

The "Hitler" who was in Berlin was not Hitler at all. It was a Plauen grocer named August Wilhelm Bartholdy, whose face was his misfortune: he looked like the Führer. Grocer Bartholdy, said F.G.P.S., had been carefully coached and combed, then sent to Berlin "to die on the barricades. . . . He will act as Hitler's trump card, creating a hero legend around the Führer's death, while Hitler himself goes underground." To fasten the hoax on posterity, *Reichsbildberichterstatter* (Photographic Reporter for the Reich) Heinrich Hoffmann would "be on hand to film Hitler's last moment on the battlefield."†

† When Hoffmann was taking the real Hitler's picture in front of the Eiffel Tower in 1940, the Führer reportedly cracked: "Take this one, Hoffmann; then the next one in Buckingham Palace and the next in front of the skyscrapers."

These types of Press services were usually the mouthpieces of communist spy rings inside German-controlled Europe. They were organized and financed by the Soviet Komintern or K.G.B. Their sources of information were from secret communist cells operating vast guerilla and spy networks which the Russians had set up even before W.W. II. Usually their information was first hand.

The Reds were waiting for the day of Germany's defeat when they could then get away with "murder" by killing all anti-Communists and conveniently calling them Nazi-collaborators.



Local Man Sends Truman $5000 To Start a Capture-Hitler Fund

In the belief that Adolf Hitler is still alive and is being protected by his followers, Attorney William J. Brock today sent a certified check for $5000 to President Truman with the request it be used as the nucleus of a $500,000 fund for the capture of the former fuehrer. The attorney said the award would be made entirely at the President's discretion.

In his letter, Mr. Brock said:

"Newspaper comments from time to time seem to indicate the possibility that Adolf Hitler is still alive. His name is historically synonomous with evil. Hitlerism has soiled the pages of history, causing the death of millions of innocent persons, the destruction of property, and what is even worse, has caused a perversion of the sous of millions more. It would be tragic if the trail of blood, oppression and foulness that he has left could again be followed by activation and further growth of Hitlerism upon his return from hiding.

"Since Hitler and his followers had been proven devoid of ideals and were, and still are, motivated by selfishness, greed and avarice, I feel his own followers would be tempted to turn Hitler over to the Allied authorities provided the price is sufficiently large.

"I hereby tender the enclosed check for $5000 which I hope will form a nucleus for further sums to be contributed by public-spirited Americans for a fund to be offered as a reward to the person or persons causing the capture, apprehension and trial by the Allied Commission of Adolf Hitler. It would seem the sum of $500,000 would be a sufficient attraction for the most ardent adherent of Fuehrer Hitler."

Another very interesting article was one which appeared in many U.S. newspapers announcing the formation of a "Capture Hitler Fund"! This is only second to an incredible book written by one of America's senior diplomats, former Secretary of State Jimmy Byrnes, in which he reveals a lengthy conversation he had with Stalin about the touchy subject of Hitler's disappearance from the world scene, and confirms Stalin's belief that Adolf Hitler had not died in the Bunker in Berlin.

Reproduced here is a condensed version of an article which appeared in an American religious publication entitled "The Cross and The Flag" of date April 1948, and gives Stalin's response to a direct question from Mr. Byrnes about Hitler's whereabouts. It seems that even the highest echelons of the Allied governments were not convinced of Hitler's death, for any reports of Hitler having been seen were always thoroughly checked out.

Is Hitler Still Alive?

Former Secretary of State Jimmy Byrnes reveals in his new book entitled "Frankly Speaking" that it is the opinion of Joe Stalin that **Hitler is still alive.** The statement of Byrnes sounds more like a belated confession than an historical account. Says Byrnes in effect: "While in Potsdam at the Conference of the Big Four, Stalin left his chair, came *over and clinked his liquor glass with mine in a* very friendly manner. I said to him; **'Marshal Stalin, what is your theory about the death of Hitler?' Stalin replied: 'He is not dead. He escaped either to Spain or Argentina.'"**

If anyone knows where Hitler is, outside of his intimate friends, it is Josef Stalin. It will be remembered that the American troops were ready to invade Berlin first, but at the order of Franklin D. Roosevelt, acting through Ike Eisenhower, the American troops were held back in order that Stalin might have the honor of capturing Berlin. What a deal! What a betrayal of the pride and dignity of the United States Army, and what an insult to the British Army which was also ready to move in with our troops.

There are numerous theories concerning what happened to Hitler. I list them below:

1. The publicized theory is that he was burned up during the bombing of Berlin.
2. He was captured by the Russians and is now a prisoner in Moscow.
3. *He was captured by the Russians, tortured* and then killed.
4. He was spirited away by certain Jewish extremists who desired to slaughter him as an act of revenge.
5. He was assassinated by one of his own aides who had accepted a large sum from Hitler's enemies and promised safety.
6. He committed suicide.
7. He commandeered a military plane and escaped with a staff of trusted compatriots.

Evidently Joe Stalin believes that the seventh theory is correct. I agree with Stalin in this theory. The most sensational neglect of a news story is in the fact that when Stalin told this to Byrnes it was not flashed across the world and given sensational display in the headlines of every daily newspaper on earth. It is still one of the most sensational pieces of news to come out. I will give you my reasons for believing that the first six theores are not well founded.

1. Just prior to the capture of Berlin, Hitler was in complete command of all military forces. Why did a man as brilliant and powerful as he was crawl down into a shelter and submit himself to cremation. This is illogical and unreasonable in the light of all that is known about Hitler.
2. Hitler was hated by the Russians more than any enemy that the Soviet had. He never would have submitted to being captured by them alive, and there was no reason why he should have been captured. Escape was really easy as far as he was concerned.
3. The argument which eliminates the second theory eliminates this one.
4. There were practically no Jews in Berlin when it was captured or prior to its capture. This theory seems far-fetched.
5. This theory might stand up were it not for the fact that only a few months prior to his disappearance certain corrupted friends had planted a bomb under his chair and somehow it did not go off at the proper moment, but *went off after* he left his chair, injuring him but not killing him. This made him very cautious and it is reasonable to believe that he was very alert at the time of his disappearence to betrayal within his own camp.
6. This theory is exploded by the fact that Hitler was a very courageous man. He never did anything to indicate physical or moral cowardice. It will be recalled that newsreels showed him walking freely and mixing freely with the crowds. A courageous man, whether he is wrong or right, whether he is a statesman or criminal, never commits suicide.
7. This theory stands up and there is any one of five or six places where he might be today. They include (a) *Argentina;* (b) *Spain;* (c) *Ireland;* (d) *Sweden;* (e) *Africa;* (f) *Portugal;* (g) *Switzerland.*

Hitler was known to have many, many followers in all of these countries. It will be remembered when Stalin was about to overrun and undermine Spain, and his followers were burning the churches, that Hitler sent an abundance of help to Franco, and Franco evidently felt under lasting obligation to Hitler.

Whatever the truth may be concerning this matter, it is not to be overlooked that Hitler, Mussolini and Roosevelt left the stage of action within a few weeks of each other. Mystery still surrounds the passing of Roosevelt. Thus, these 'three rulers,' who were perhaps three of the most powerful men that ever lived, disappeared from public life shrouded with mystery. It is now a matter of common knowledge that Mussolini was hanged by a Communist mob. The same people who hung Mussolini and spat upon him and rolled his body in the

gutter in such a barbaric manner that the church authorities protested — it is now a matter of common knowledge that the same people and leaders who lynched Mussolini without a trial are now the leaders of the movement to make Italy Communist and turn it over to Tito and Stalin.

To those who believe that Hitler is dead I submit the following questions:

1. Who saw him die?
2. Why hasn't someone been able to produce a piece of metal or a bone or a tooth filling that remained after his alleged cremation?
3. Why did he voluntarily wait to be consumed when he had so many opportunities for escape?
4. Why does his personal aviator admit that he flew him out of Germany and turned him over to another plane?
5. Of course, the $54 question is: Why did Stalin tell Mr. Byrnes that he was convinced that Hitler was still alive? Although Stalin is perhaps the world's biggest liar, there would be no object in his not telling the truth concerning this matter. Stalin guessed Spain or Argentina. My guess is Argentina. The Argentine people were very friendly to Germany. The Argentine has a large German population, many of whom were pro-Hitler. Peron has made it safe for Mussolini's son and now his family.

THE SATIRE OF FATE

The satire of the passing of time in the hands of fate lies in the fact that we are now in Hitler's boots in one respect. We are trying to figure out how to push back Stalin.

When the Jew lynch mob which runs the Nuremberg Court caused the top generals of Germany to be virtually lynched without an appeal to a higher court and in violation to America's sense of justice, one of the generals said, as he was about to be hanged *"Some day Stalin will do this to you."*

It is interesting to note that the presiding judge at Nuremberg, a high class Supreme Court Justice from Iowa, recently announced that if he had known the facts he never would have gone to Germany. He criticized and virtually condemned the whole set-up. (See editorial elsewhere in this magazine entitled "Judge Gets a Stomachful".)

We may need a knowledge of Hitler's experience some day if we are to prevent Russia from overrunning the world. We need to know why Hitler failed to stop Stalin in order that we may profit by his mistakes.

As the truth comes out we begin to discover reports being made by the most conservative journalists that the war could have been avoided and that by a statesmanlike manipulation Hitler and Stalin could have weakened themselves on each other without destroying all of Europe and without involving us in a debt which now threatens inflation and depression. Strange enough, England and France, our two chief allies, are suffering almost as much as Germany, although they were, along with us, alleged victors.

If Hitler is still alive I hope it will some day be discovered and he will be permitted to tell his experience. Some experience! It could be that both Franco and Peron are profiting by his mistakes. They have established governments strong enough to eliminate Communism, free enough to give opportunity to the people, and sincere enough to protect the churches. Let us hope and pray that a strong central government will never be necessary in the U.S.A., but if we have to choose, may it be God's last will that as between a strength dedicated to Stalin and a strength dedicated to Jesus Christ, it may be the latter.

Oberst Skorzeny was a famous German Commando leader and a personal friend of Hitler. Hitler entrusted him with many daring missions, such as the rescuing of Mussolini from his mountain-top prison, and the arresting of Vice-Regent Horthy of Hungary from the Castle in Budapest, at a time when the Castle was surrounded by thousands of Hungarian elite troops. Skorzeny was repeatedly interrogated by the American C.I.C. and even as late as 1947-48, about his alleged role in the escape of Hitler!

Did Hitler and some of his closest men indeed survive the Third Reich? This question is of world significance, and it is with this in mind that the following articles are quoted, and some are reproduced in photo copy form for those readers who are multilingual.

Of all the articles and the versions of Hitler's escape from his embattled bunker in Berlin, the following seems the most plausible: In the German-language book "Das Ende des Hitler Mythos", page 339, reference is made to a series of events which completely negate the claims of the suicides of Hitler and Eva Braun. These suicides are usually stated to have happened at the Fuhrer Bunker, Berlin, April 30th, 1945, 3.30 p.m. In the above book it is claimed that Hitler was seen at 4.15 p.m. on that same day. Eyewitnesses gave their accounts under oath. Hitler either made a Christ-like resurrection, three quarters of an hour after his "death" or he had left the Bunker alive and with a plan.

LA SUPUESTA FUGA DE HITLER

VARSOVIA, — (A. P.) — [illegible] periódico "Wieczor" [illegible] afirmado hoy que el ex [illegible] de las SS, capitán Peter Baumgart, como lo [illegible] de Hitler y Eva Braun [illegible] a Finlandia [illegible] a bordo de un submarino, dos días [illegible] de la caída de Berlín, en [illegible].

Baumgart fué citado en forma similar por el mismo diario, en octubre del año pasado, diciendo [illegible] pero, en esa opor-

Tanquista alemán dice haber visto escapar a Hitler

MUNICH, 17 (UP). — Un tanquista alemán de 24 años de edad, que no quiso revelar su nombre por temor a represalias nazis, declaró bajo juramento que vió a Hitler escapar de la Cancillería en un tanque ambulancia el 29 de Abril de 1945, es decir, el día que el Fuehrer se suicidó.

Esta historia ha provocado poco interés oficial.

PRETENDE HABER VISTO A HITLER QUE HUIA

NUREMBERG, Alemania, [illegible] (AP).— Funcionarios del Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército de Estados Unidos encontraron a otro alemán que pretende haber visto a Hitler y Eva Braun escapar de Alemania. Artinio Frederick Angelotte Mackensen, ex piloto de la fuerza aérea alemana, afirmó a los oficiales que él vió a Hitler y a Eva escapar por avión de Berlín hacia Dinamarca, a fines de abril de 1945.

Mackensen fué arrestado en Molfratshausen, cerca de Munich, por una información proporcionada por una muchacha alemana.

Los oficiales dijeron que relatos similares les han sido hechos en el pasado, pero nunca

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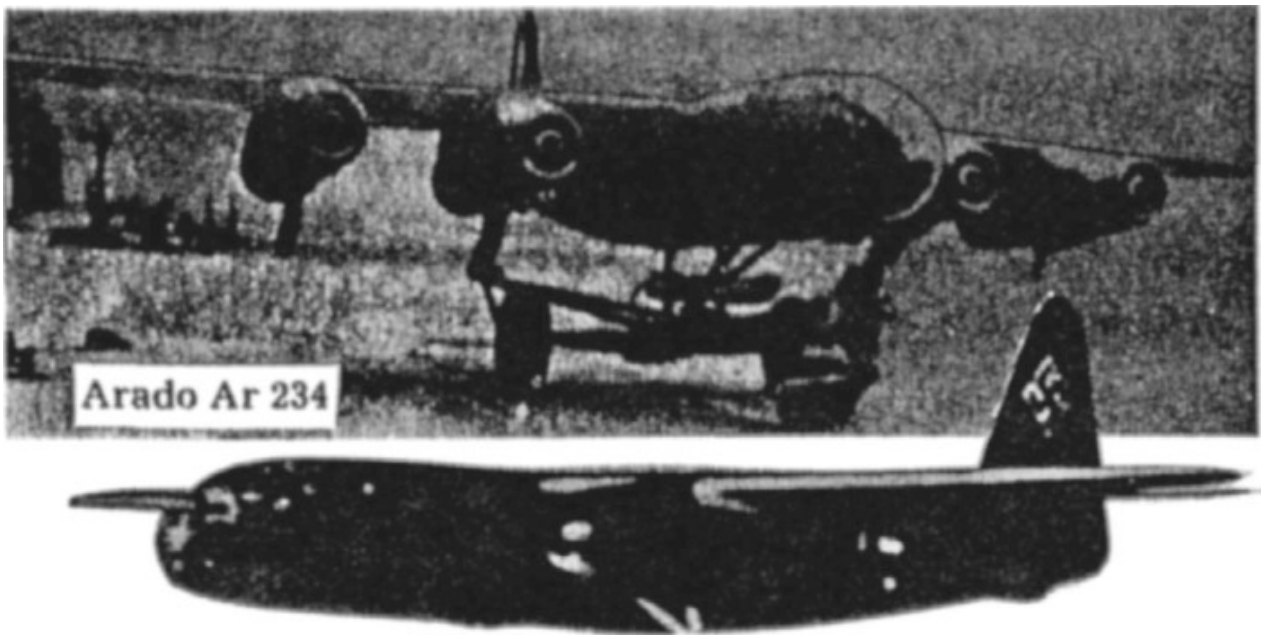
¿HITLER EN DINAMARCA?

Durante el proceso que se realiza en la ciudad de Varsovia, el capitán Peter Baumgart declaró que había llevado en un avión a Hitler y a [illegible] de los altos [illegible] de [illegible] vante vuelo en el [illegible] namarca, y aterrizó [illegible] del río Elbe, en Dinamarca. Según su declaración, el Fuehrer le entregó al aterrizar un cheque por 20.000 marcos. Baumgart aparece en esta fotografía con uniforme de aviador, tal como se presentó en el juicio que se le sigue en Varsovia en su condición de miembro de la organización hitleriana de las S. S. —iniciales con que se designaba a la "Schutz-Staffel", la [illegible] organizada y [illegible] Heinrich [illegible]

Spanish newspaper reports about Hitler's escape

According to further evidence contained in press reports emanating from Munich and appearing in the pages of "Diario llustrado" of Santiago, Chile issue of 18th January, 1948, "on 30th of April, 1945, Berlin was in dissolution but little of that dissolution was evident at Tempelhof airfield. Ground support organizations, such as radio, radar as well as harbour and riverboat direction were functioning at peak efficiency. Takeoffs and landings were handled smoothly. The airspace was crowded. Every six minutes a plane landed and ten planes took off every hour, and all of this with a city under siege. Highspeed German fighters and jets could be seen circling about to secure airspace and consequently Tempelhof runways had received only minor damage. The sound of machine-gun fire could be heard in the distance. Radio operators had received reports that the Russians had advanced to the Koch and Oranian Strasse. Contact to the city's centre had been interrupted. Two alternatives remained, escape by air from Tempelhof or capture by the advancing Soviet troops".

"At 4.15 p.m. a JU52 landed, and S.S. troops directly from Rechlin for the defence of Berlin disembarked, all of them young, not older than 18 years. The gunner in the particular plane was an engineer by the name of B..... whom I had known for a number of years and for whom I had endeavoured to get exemption from military service. He sought to tank up and leave Berlin as quickly as possible. During this re-fuelling interval Mr. B..... was suddenly elbowed in the ribs by his radio operator with a nod to look in a certain direction. At about 100-120 metres he saw a sleek Messerschmitt Jet Model 332. (The reporters must have made a mistake here, it could only have been an ARADO 234 — a mistake not difficult to understand since secrecy was the hallmark of the Nazi Regime. This Turbojet had a range of 4,000 km.) Mr. B..... and the radio operator saw and without any doubt whatsoever, standing in front of the jet, their Commander in Chief, Adolf Hitler, dressed in field-grey uniform and gesticulating animatedly with some Partyfunctionaries, who were obviously seeing him off. For about ten minutes whilst their plane was being refuelled the two men observed this scene and around 4.30 p.m. they took to the air again. They were extremely astonished to hear during the midnight military news bulletin, some seven and a half hours later that Hitler had committed suicide".



It was during this military news broadcast that Admiral Donitz announced that he was taking over as the new Commander-in-Chief. This same bulletin was broadcast over the German civilian radio network and Dr. Goebbels reported that the Fuhrer had entered Valhalla, (that mystical place in ancient Nordic sagas where heroes dwell after death).

Upon questioning, the engineer Mr. B..... denied the possibility of error on his part and reiterated that on April 30th, 1945 at 4.15 p.m., whilst refuelling his plane at Tempelhof airport, and in the bright light of the setting sun he saw Adolf Hitler, and at a time when it was no longer possible to reach the Reichskanzlei (Hitler's Bunker). When Mr. B..... first heard the news reports he concluded that Hitler had died in an airplane crash." This particular report by Mr. B..... with all the sensational content, was never published in the English-speaking press.

The Soviet Information Office reported on May 3rd, 1945, that Hitler's servant, Fritsche had been captured and interrogated by the Soviets and had stated that Hitler, Goebbels and the new Chief of the General Staff, General of the Infantry, Krebs, had committed suicide. Lt. Heimlich of the American C.I.C., whose responsibility it was to check all rumours and reports, all sightings and evidence regarding the whereabouts or the death of Hitler, reached the conclusion that Hitler, Eva Braun and Martin Bormann were still alive and that there existed not one iota of proof that Hitler had actually died.

The report (INS) further stated that according to investigations by the American authorities it would have been relatively simple to escape from Berlin, whilst experts pointed to the almost impossible task of burning a corpse in the open air by just dousing it with a can of gasoline and not leave behind some recognisable evidence.

It is a fact that a working party made up of American, British, French and Russian soldiers did find a ditch which produced two hats, supposedly belonging to Hitler, and also a pair of panties bearing Eva Braun's initials, but no corpses or parts of corpses.



This is where Hitler's hats and Eva Braun's panties were found. (Allied investigators)

Much has been written regarding identification through medical and dental records and Hitler has been much in the news in this respect. A recent report by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation makes interesting reading. On the programme "As it Happens" on September 17th, 1974 at 7:15 p.m., a Prof. Dr. Ryder Saguenay, oral surgeon from the Dental Faculty of the University of California at Los Angeles revealed the facts that Hitler had ordered a special plane to leave from Berlin with all medical and dental records, and especially X-rays, of the top Nazis and for an unknown destination, and that any drawings, charts and other evidence which have been presented, regarding Hitler's dental status; have been drawn from MEMORY by the dental assistant to Hitler's dentist, the latter who was himself never found.

To fully appreciate the importance of the above evidence, the situation of Germany at the end of the war must be taken into account. Planes were scarce, but apparently not too scarce for Hitler to decide

it was of great importance to use one to fly medical and dental records to some unknown place. If Hitler had been contemplating suicide why would he have bothered to remove such vital evidence? To where were they flown and why did he feel it was necessary to remove all traces of such identifying material? Unless the "suicide" was a well-thought out ruse to confuse the Allies whilst Hitler was escaping.



There are a few other reports from the Spanish-speaking press which deserve mention and reproduced here is one as it appeared in Editorial "Zip Zag". Santiago, Chile, on 16th January, 1948. It seems that on April 30th, 1945, a Peter Baumgart (FlugKapitan — Flight Captain), took Adolf Hitler, his wife Eva Braun, as well as a few loyal friends by plane from Tempelhof airport to Tondern in Denmark (still firmly in German hands). From Tondern, where Baumgart landed, the Fuhrer's party continued in a new plane with another crew, to Kristiansund in Norway, also still in German hands. There a German submarine convoy was waiting to receive its unusual "cargo". In the meantime the Junkers which had brought the Fuhrer returned to Tondern, circled the airfield and dropped a mes-, sage to the effect that the Fuhrer had reached his destination safely. This unusual method of communicating was chosen, so as to keep radio silence and not attract undue notice. (From Mattern, U.F.O. Letzte Geheimwaffe des III Reiches page 50-51).

Another dimension is added to this story when comparing some of the statements made by Erich Kempka who had been in Hitler's employ, as chief of his carpool since 1932. In his book "Ich habe Adolf Hitler verbrannt" — "I burnt Hitler", page 109, he recounts that after some confused telephoned conversations with Gunsche (Hitler's personal adjutant), Gunsche shouted at him, wide-eyed and rather theatrically — "The Chief is dead". Kempka stated how shocked he felt and then how he asked Gunsche how could it have happened since he had spoken to Hitler just the day before when he, Hitler, was completely well and completely controlled. In the same book on page 139 there is further information which all points to a well-conceived plan. A German submarine commander had stated under interrogation by the American C.I.C. that he was under orders since 25th April, 1945, to be at constant readiness, "Besonderen Verfugung", under immediate control of the Fuhrer. At Bremen this submarine commander declared that at least 10 other submarine commanders had received the same order! .

Further, the C.I.C. found that twelve Flight Captains had been issued a valid secret order from the Fuhrerhauptquartier (Hitler's H-Q.) to be in a constant state of readiness for Hitler's departure.

Gross Admiral Donitz has always figured in developments surrounding Hitler's whereabouts, and Donitz was Hitler's successor. The American writer, Malcolm X refers to him in his book "We Want You? Is Hitler Alive?", page 10, and claims that Donitz knew about Hitler's plans and was instrumental in his escape to an oasis in South America.

Mattern, in his German version of the U.F.O. Story, repeatedly quotes Donitz as playing a key role in the Fuhrer's plans. On page 15 he reports excerpts from one of Donitz's speeches at a graduation

ceremony to naval cadets in Kiel, in 1944: “The German navy has still a great role to play in the future. The German navy knows all hiding places for the navy to take the Fuhrer to, should the need arise. There he can prepare his last measures in (“aller Ruhe”) complete quiet”.

Michael Bar-Zohar speaks of the role of Donitz — “The Avengers” page 99. Essentially, Bar-Zohar corroborates Michael X and Mattern. Excerpts below.

Michael Bar-Zohar speaks of the role of Donitz

> In 1943 Admiral Doenitz had declared: “The German U-boat fleet is proud to have made an earthly paradise, an inpregnable fortress for the Fuehrer, somewhere in the world.”
>
> He did not say in what part of the world it existed, but fairly obviously it was in South America.
>
> As far back as 1933, when the Nazi Party had come to power, the new masters of the Reich had made a special effort to spread their doctrine in South American countries. For several reasons, these countries presented a fertile field. There were large German colonies strongly established in many parts of Latin America. Several hundred thousand Germans or people of German stock were settled in Brazil, At Blumenau and Florianópolis, in the federal state of Santa Catarina, everything was, and still is, reminiscent of Germany—the countryside, the style of the houses, the appearance of the people, their speech. It was the same in several regions of Argentina. In the capital, Buenos Aires, in Tucumán, Formosa, Córdoba, and Cordier, in the Gran Chaco and the vastness of the *Paraná Misiones*, and at San Carles de Bariloche, a bit of Switzerland in the southern hemisphere, with its pine trees and snow-clad mountainside—at all these places German colonies had settled and expanded with amazing rapidity. In Paraguay, tens of thousands of German immigrants had cleared and cultivated virgin areas to the east of the Asnnción and had given their new towns names like Hohenau to remind them of their origins. Another wave of German immigrants had spread over the southern part of Chile, the region round the towns of Osorno and Valdivia, and the island of Chiloé, as well as settling in the capital. Santiago. Many more had gone to Peru, Uruguay, and other Latin American countries.

Having made an initial study of the mind of Hitler and having some understanding of his modus operandi we can now move into another area of this story. What are the other indications, which point to where, why, when and how? Let us examine some of the statements made during Hitler’s career.

Hitler never tied the success of his mission on the sole fate of Germany. He fully realised, and early in his career, that Germany proper could be over-run by his enemies. He said right at the beginning of the war and during the conquest of Poland, “And if our enemies should inundate (uberschwemmt) all of Germany, we shall then fight on from abroad, we will never capitulate.” And another statement from no less a book than “Mein Kampf”, German version, 1938, page 470: “The battle that rages today is for very high goals. A culture fights for its existence, that encompasses the heritage of ancient Greece and modern Germandom as well . . .”

Again, we see that Hitler saw the struggle as a global one even before the war. He had written Mein Kampf in 1923-24. On page 475, of the same volume he states further: “Certainly the world is approaching a great upheaval. It can only be around one single issue; will it be favourable to the Aryan people or will it benefit only the eternal Jew?”

In these sentences can be found a very clear indication that Hitler felt, as far back as 1923-24 that the struggle, his struggle, (which, incidentally, is the literal translation of the words "Mein Kampf") was not for Germany alone but for all Aryan man, or to put it in simple language, for the existence of the white man.

It is evident from Hitler's alliance with "yellow" Japan and his collaboration and active support with many non-white independence movements, such as the Arabs, the Caucassus tribes, the Cossacks and also India, that he was never the narrow-minded, racist bigot allied propagandists have tried to brain-wash the world into believing. The German general, Beck, once said about Hitler, "This man has no fatherland". It is important we approach this entire question with an absolutely open mind, for only then will we be able to unravel this Hitler-U.F.O. connection.

Had Hitler been a narrow-minded, nationalist politician, a mustachioed dictator who experienced his thrills by ranting and raving at large crowds of cowed followers driven to mass rallies at bayonet point, then his end would seem explainable. He was far more than that, namely a prophet, with global vision much in the cast of the prophets of old who have been recorded and revered in the old Testament by both Christians and Jews. He was born into German-speaking central Europe, that's all. An accident of fate. Undoubtedly, he would have preached the same eloquent sermon had he been born in France or England.

On July 20th, 1944 Skorzeny arrived at Hitler's Headquarters bringing with him the liberated Mussolini. This visit coincided with the one and only nearly-successful attempt on Hitler's life. Hitler made to Skorzeny a most significant statement. "I begin to doubt whether the German people are worthy of my ideals". This statement again reveals Hitler's detachment from Germany and points up the mentality of a universal-thinking individual. It must be granted, that indications are present that Hitler was ready to continue the struggle from outside Germany. But how, and with what methods and weapons? Before we continue we must take another look at the suicide plot.

1. The bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun were never produced.

2. The items introduced as "evidence" are only circumstantial; two of Hitler's hats, 1 pair of panties with the initials E. B. and a few bones. (There were millions of bones lying all over Germany as the result of the mass-killing by the Allied aerial bombing)

3. The bloodstains found on the furniture in Hitler's quarters in the Bunker were not of his blood type.

4. Hitler was not suicide prone. On the contrary, only a few days earlier after he had heard of the suicide of the Mayor of Leipzig and his family, he had condemned suicide as cowardly and unbecoming to a National Socialist.

5. The most important witnesses and the men closest to Hitler have never been found, e.g. Bormann, Stumpfegger, Gunsche et al.

6. Hitler, by his very nature, and his unfailing belief in his mission, (one of global and not national dimensions), would tend to continue the struggle from elsewhere.

7. There are too many reports and sightings, eye witness reports and even evidence that the suicide attempt was a brilliantly-successful, carefully-staged scenario. A typical Hitler production.

In view of the above summation, we can assume that there was indeed a contingency plan.

One of the iron-clad rules of wartime Nazi Germany was to never let anyone, however high their position or rank, know more about a plan or operation than was absolutely necessary to the execution of his or her particular contribution to the overall whole. This rule applied to all and even to men like Himmler who was Chief of the S.S. and who by the end of the war, commanded vast military forces on the eastern front. Himmler had known Hitler since his earliest days and even he could not comprehend the absolute calm and certainty of final victory that Hitler displayed in those terrible last days in the Bunker in Berlin. He saw, when he tabled his ever more devastating reports about lost ground, enemy advances, bombing damage etc. how Hitler would listen attentively and quietly. This led him to speculate aloud and come to the conclusion "The Fuhrer has some kind of a plan" — reported in Trevor Roper's book "Hitler's Letzte Tage" on page 101.

There are other indications that even very high level military types, such as General Keitel and Jodl were not privy to all secrets. An April 22nd, 1945, these two men received orders to leave for the Obersalzberg (Hitler's famous "Alpine Redoubt" about which we will speak later). Although loyal to the very end to their Commander-in-Chief, they did not want to die in the "Rat Trap" as they called the Bunker in Berlin. Consequently, they tried to persuade Hitler to leave with them. A heated debate ensued, according to the ever-present stenographer, Hergesell, and even a forceful abduction of Hitler to the Alpine fortress was considered by the two top generals. Finally Bormann, one of the few who apparently was in the know about the plan, persuaded them otherwise, and they left without Hitler.

Dr. Josef Goebbels, one of the most brilliant followers and exponents of Hitler, seems also to have been initiated to some degree, in the final phase. He had a three hour meeting with Hitler in those hectic last days and left the meeting calling out "Mein Fuhrer was sind Sie gross" — "My Fuhrer, what a great man you are". A few days later in a radio broadcast he made a number of interesting statements and one in particular which referred to new Secret Weapons, so fantastic "they made my heart beat more quickly when I saw them".



There are also some statements he made to his secretary on April 22nd, 1945, as reported in the book "Mit Goebbels bis zum Ende", Durer Verlag, Buenos Aires ". . . We want to see if under these circumstances the Americans will shoot us in the back". A few days later Goebbels gave a further highly-significant glimpse of what was planned when he said "May God protect our Fuhrer during the approaching danger" — reported also in the above-mentioned book. Was Goebbels referring to the underwater journey to the paradisical oasis in South America? How much clearer could we be told of what was afoot?

Maybe in Hitler's own words? On February 24th, 1945 Hitler made a prophetic speech at the end of which he said these words:— "In this war there will be no victors and no vanquished either, but only the dead and the survivors. The last battalion however, will be a German one". A further definition can be obtained by Hitler's remark, towards the end of the war, that ". . . the inevitable and automatic clash between east and west will come sooner or later and we (the Germans) will then be and act as the proverbial tip of the scale".

Should there still be some doubt in the reader's mind as to whether there was, in fact, "something cooking" in Adolf Hitler's fertile brain in those days when his world around him was going up in dust, flames and smoke, then read this. Germany's legendary female flyer, Hanna Reitsch, holder of many world records, first rocket plane jet pilot, daredevil of the air and one of the Fuhrer's favourite people, had voluntarily accompanied one of Germany's top men — Ritter von Greim, to embattled Berlin. They flew over the Soviet lines in order to get into the beleaguered capital and were hit by Russian antiaircraft fire. Ritter von Greim was hit by shrapnel and badly wounded. Hanna Reitsch managed to wrestle the controls of the floundering aircraft out of the hands of von Greim and landed the aircraft in Berlin's famous Unter den Linden Boulevard.

In the previously-quoted book of Trevor Roper, "Hitler's Letzte Tage", page 146, mention is made of a telephone conversation which took place on April 28th, 1945 at Hitler's headquarters, between Ritter von Greim and his subordinate, General Koller, who was in Furstenberg. "It goes something like this" said General Koller "He, (von Greim) would be lost. Gen-Koller offered his condolences about Greim's condition, his wounds, and his seemingly useless promotion to new Chief of the German Luftwaffe (after Goring's firing). He bemoaned the state of things generally and the future of Germany, in particular. He also reiterated his doubts about being able to do anything with the Luftwaffe. Then he paused. He expected a similarly gloomy echo from the Fieldmarshall on the other end of the line. But the world was still full of surprises for Gen. Koller. Life in the Bunker Headquarters seemed even more surreal than his experiences at Furstenberg. Koller was astounded when instead of lamentation of impending defeat, he heard an optimistic analysis of the future, and even promise of an inevitable German victory. "Just wait", said the new Chief of the hard-pressed Luftwaffe. "Don't despair. **All will be well!** The presence and

optimism of the Fuhrer have given me new hope. The Bunker affects me like a fountain of youth". Koller listened in disbelief and was incredulous. He just could not understand it at all.

So the optimism in Germany in these last days was spoken from the mouth of Goebbels, a brilliant doctor of jurisprudence, the Reichsminister and the hero of Berlin. The man who had wrestled the communist-controlled workers of Berlin out of the clutches of the false prophet's of Moscow and delivered them to the Fuhrer as a gift to Germany's inner healing. A level-head and a first-rate brain. Also from Heinrich Himmler, the cold realist, a top cop of Germany, holding the same position and wielding even greater power, than the late J. Edgar Hoover had held in the United States. And lastly, from Fieldmarshall Ritter von Greim's conversation with a General Staff Officer. All these men had had lifelong careers and training in the martial arts and were cool, non-emotional Prussians to the core. From the above, there can be only one conclusion and that is that Hitler did not commit suicide. Hitler did not die.

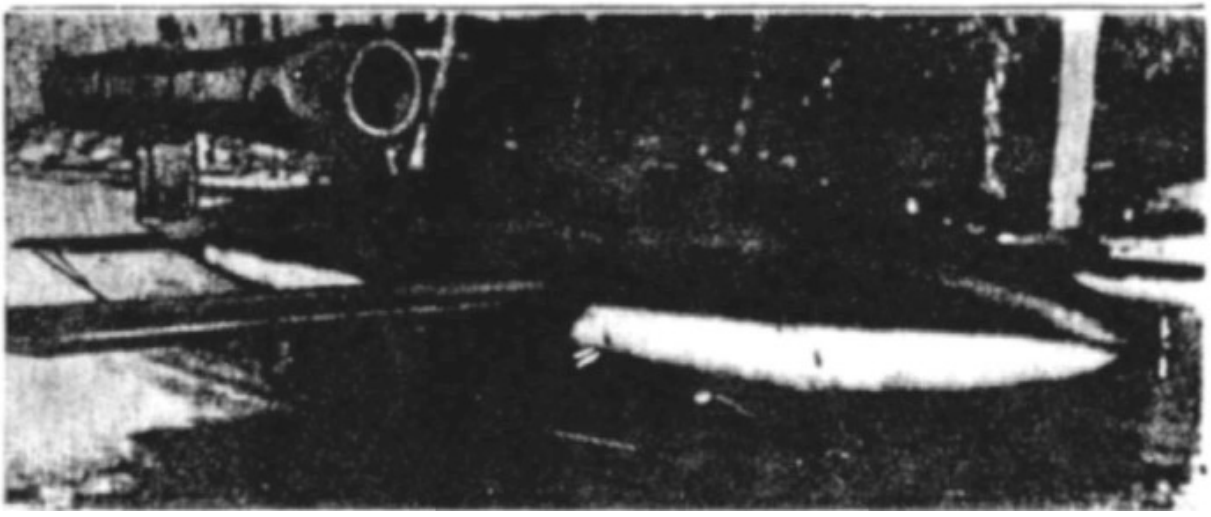
That there was a drama could hardly be denied, as evidenced by the article (reproduced earlier) from Time magazine, but weighing all the evidence, an escape from Berlin is certainly more likely than a suicide.

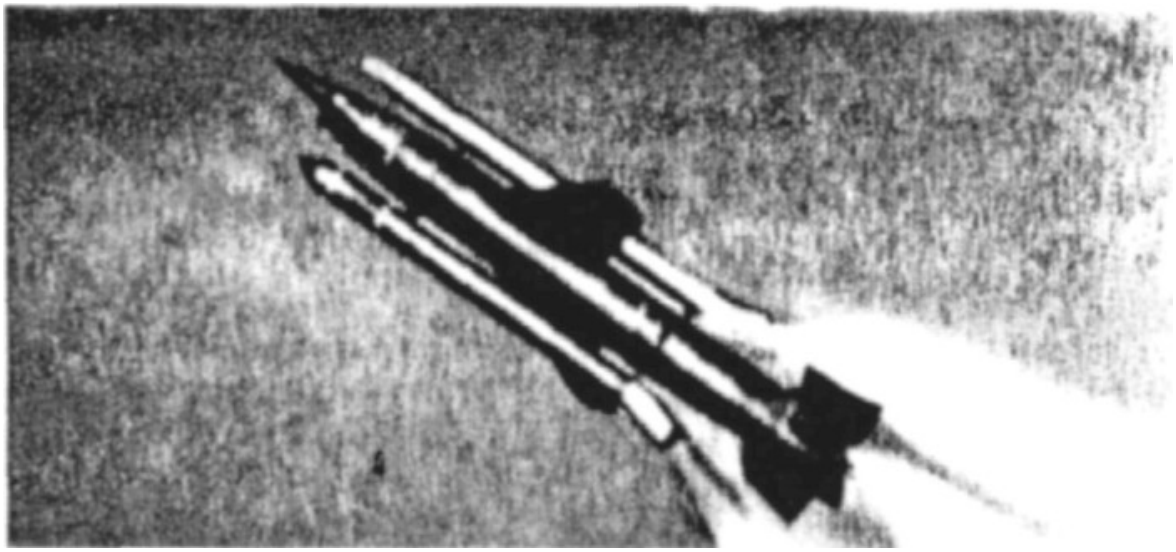
We have now covered almost every loose end and woven the loose strands into a more or less logical pattern. Now there remains only the how and where? Hitler escapes! Why?

Why were the secret weapons not used in the battle for Germany's survival? Many of them were, but there was a standard requirement in German military thinking that demanded that for every new weapon introduced, a defence had to be introduced with it. A sensible safety measure in case any weapon ever fell into enemy hands which could then quickly be copied and used against Germany. Thus, when radar was introduced, radar jamming devices were introduced at the same time. When fast jet planes were brought in, (200 kilometers faster than the fastest Allied planes in existence or in the planning stage), ground to air defence missiles were concurrently introduced.

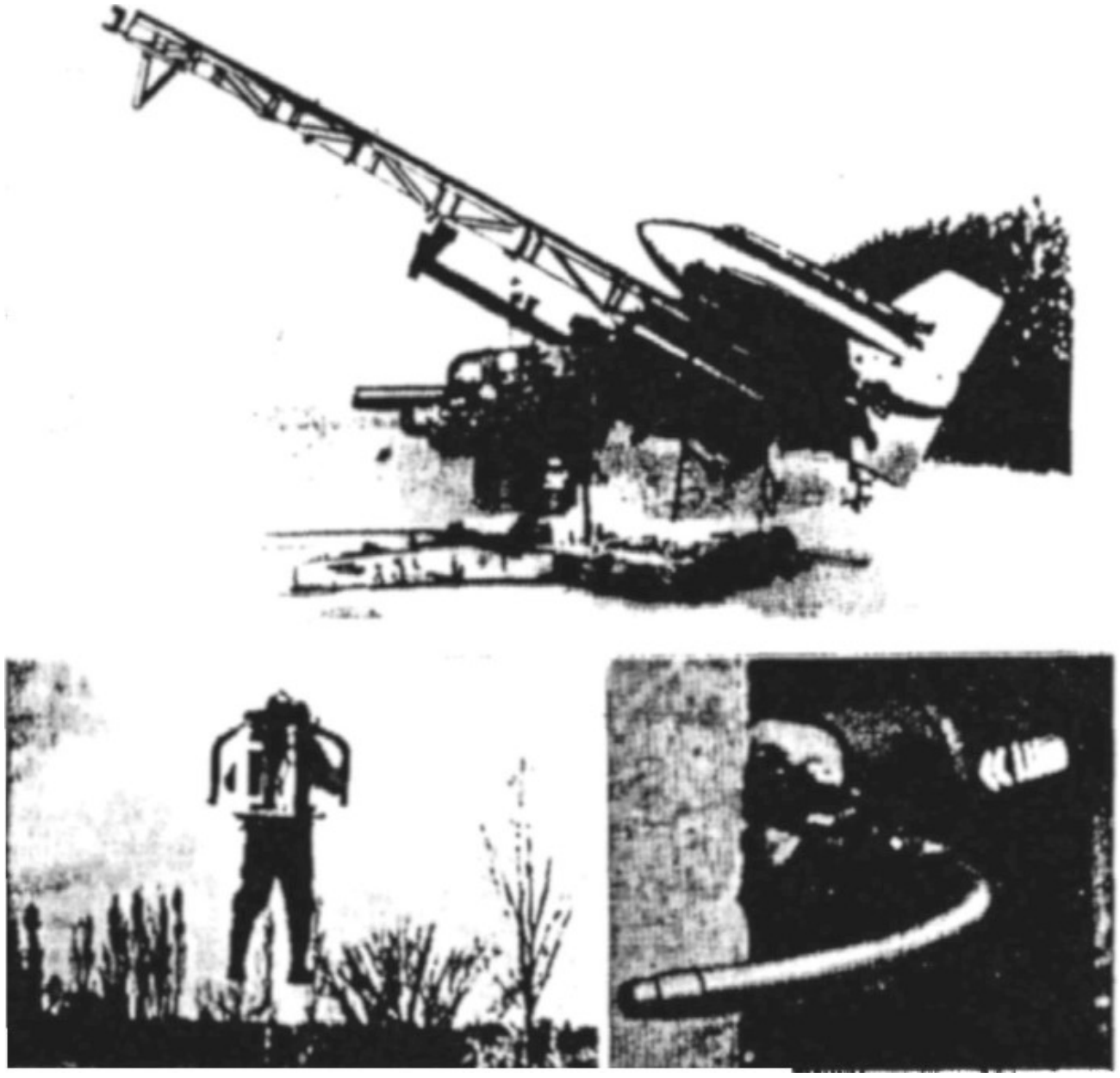
It might interest the reader to have a look at this array of advanced technology, unparalleled in variety and ingenuity even to this day. The photographs shown here are of operational types only. Some of the "planned" hardware is also shown in order to give the reader a quick look at how far ahead National Socialist Germany was in 1945 compared with the rest of the world.


German U.F.O. being serviced. Conventional propulsion system.





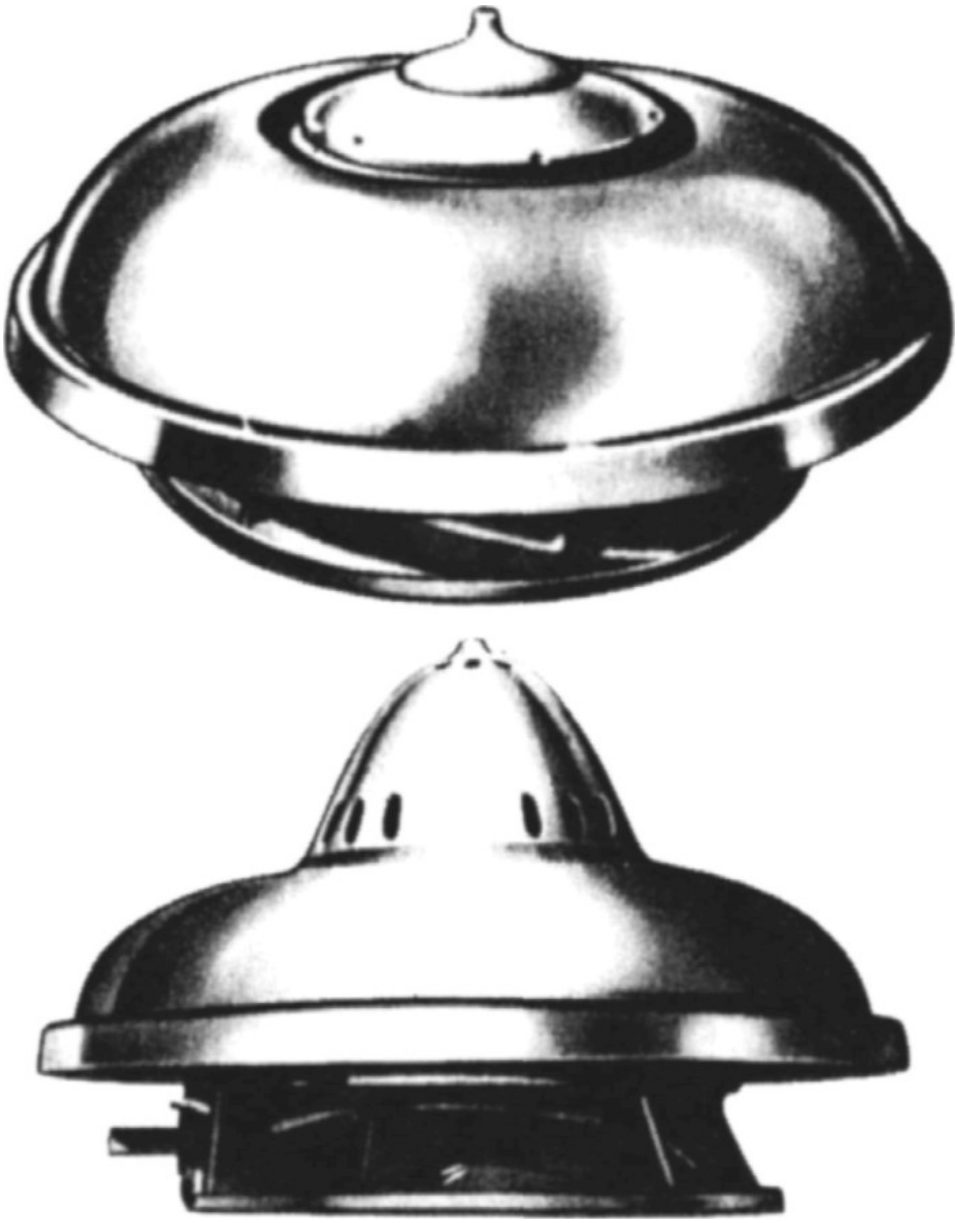
Anti-aircraft, ground to air rockets would have completely stopped Allied air activities over Germany after June, 1945



Flying People. Jet-powered back-packs — called "Himmelsturmer" — Sky stormer. Designed for mountain troops and for leaping across rivers

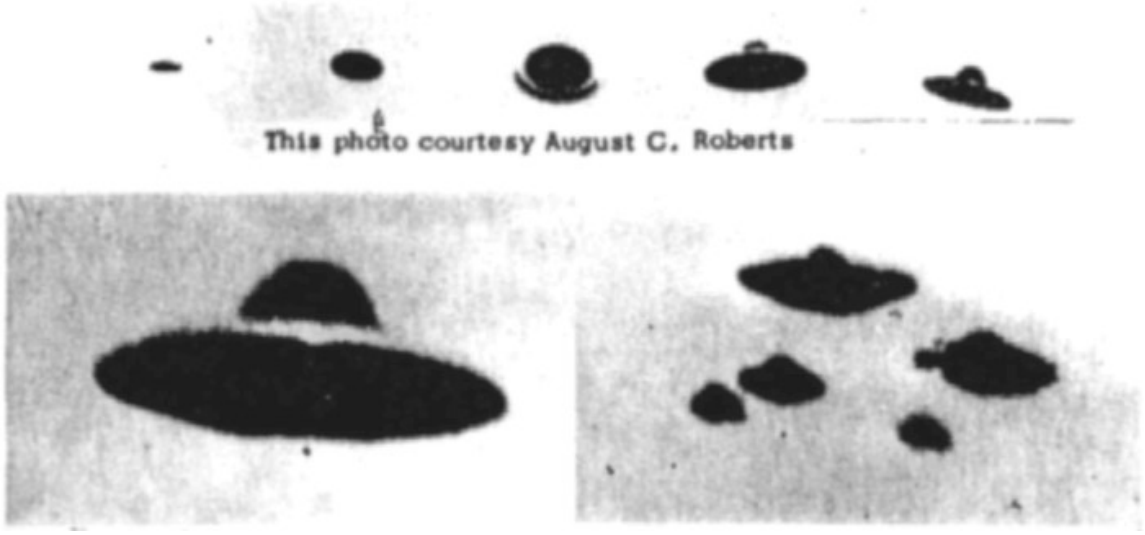
Intercontinental missiles were already a fact and although stolen by both the U.S. and Russia after the surrender in 1945 it took them another 15 years to come up to the German level, even though they were using many of the "captured" scientists. This brings us back to the actual story of the U.F.O. mystery.

Germany had U.F.O.'s as early as 1940. We find photographic proof of the existence of flying prototype models. Reproduced here are two photographs of two different U.F.O. designs, both operating on the electromagnetic propulsion method of Victor Schauberger, (also the inventor of the implosion motor), and produced by the Kertl firm of Vienna IV, which was then part of the greater German Reich.

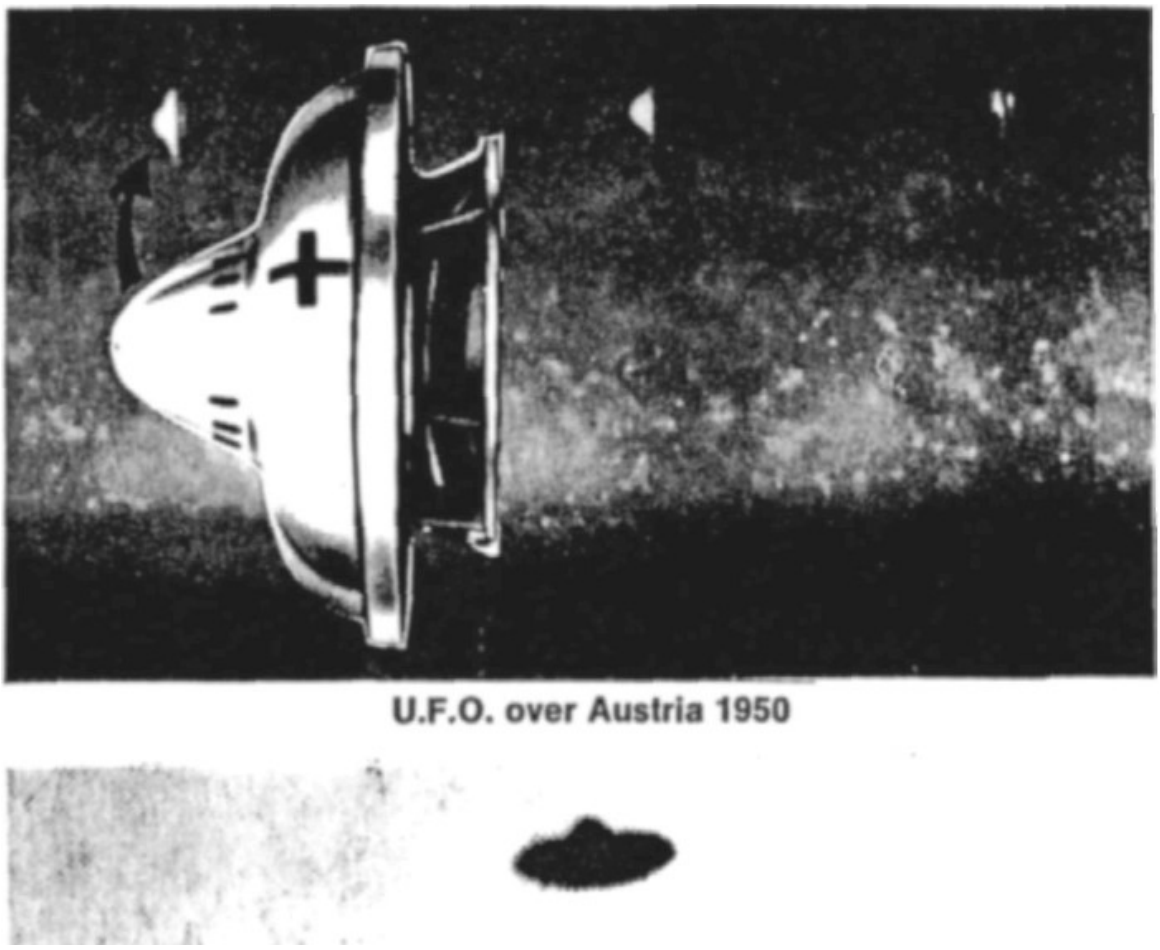


These are the famous smokeless, soundless, Schauberger Models. Note similarity to real U.F.O. shown in A.C. Roberts Photo

Below are reproduced a series of actual photographs of a U.F.O. photographed in flight over New Jersey in 1958 by George J. Stock of Passiac, N.J., courtesy August C. Roberts Wayne, N.J. The similarity to one of the Schauberger models is self-evident and is conclusive enough proof to most people of the German origin of the U.F.O.'s. However there is more.



Photographed by A. Birch, February, 1964. Mosborough, England.



Photographed by Bruno Ghibandi, 27th April, 1961, Pescara, Italy.

U.F.O.'s were seen by American and German night fighters and bomber pilots *over* Germany in 1943-45. The Americans called them Kraut meteors and were scared of them. Even the top brass knew about their existence, as is indicated in the book entitled "Der Weltraum Ruckt Uns Naher", Blanvalet Verlag, by Major Keyhoe the famous U.F.O. investigator, Chapter III. Major Keyhoe says the U.S. infiltrated 600 scientists into Bohemia, in tank crew uniforms, in 1945, to check over some of the U.F.O. bases.



German Flying Saucer — called Kraut Meteor — during night flights in 1943-44.



Focke-Wulf 190 fighter plane in foreground. U.F.O. shooting straight upwards at tremendous speed. Over Austrian Alps 1944. Rare photograph.

Following is a letter from a lady, still alive and personally known to the authors which we have translated into free English. The lady attests to having been one of the first and top secretaries in the S.S. Reichssicherheitshauptamt working in the anteroom of one of the most powerful men in Nazi Germany — S.S. Amtschef III Ohlendorf (the subject of many books and articles since the end of the war). The lady letter writer states that one day in 1938 a young scientist came into her office clutching a document, neatly typed and comprised of about 60 pages. The young man said that the contents were a revolutionary new approach to the aircraft propulsion problem. He proceeded excitedly to explain to the young lady some of his ideas. He said he hoped for active help and protection from the S.D. (Security Service) in doing experimental work on his project, since both Himmler and Ohlendorf were absent from Berlin at the time, she took the document into safe keeping, storing it in her safe. This document was later handed to Himmler and Ohlendorf. After reading it they contacted aircraft and propulsion experts. A number of top secret conferences were called but with no positive results. The experts scoffed at the revolutionary proposals advanced by the young man, which amongst other things, contained such suggestions as the creation of a vacuum in front of the disc shaped aircraft into which the craft could then move, without effort, at incredible speeds. Also proposed was exploitation of the earth's natural magnetism along with a steering mechanism based on internal polarity shift.

mir sagte, hat er den Mr. X während seiner USA-Reise persönlich kennen gelernt und [redacted]. meint, daß X Holländer sei. Die darin aufgeführte Meinung, daß die UFO's auf das Schauberger'sche Prinzip zurückgehen, teile ich nicht, weil Herr Schauberger auf einer anderen Grundlage aufbaute und da auch nicht mitgenommen wurde. Die UFO's arbeiten auf elektromagnetischer Basis. Ab September 193[redacted] war ich im RSHA (damals noch SD-Hauptamt) in einer der ersten [redacted] tätig und habe das Vorzimmer des Amtschef III, Ohlendorf, betreut. 1939 so um die Zeit des Kriegsbeginns erschien eines Tages bei uns ein freundlicher etwa 30-jähriger junger Mann bei uns und gab eine etwa 50-60-seitige Niederschrift ab, daß ihn seitens des SD Unterstützung bei der Durchführung gegeben werde, die er aber nicht bekam, weil unsere "Akademiker" das nicht begriffen und als "verrückt" ablaten, worüber er damals empört war, obwohl ich es nicht verstanden habe. Neben dem Chef und seinem Vertreter habe auch ich die Niederschrift gelesen - mit atemloser Spannung. Darin war genau beschrieben, was man machen könnte, wenn "Luftelektrizität und Erdmagnetismus" in der beschriebenen Form verwendet würden. Begriffen hatte ich es damals nicht, aber der Inhalt blieb in meinem Gehirn wie ein Steckschuß sitzen. Diese Schrift lag einige Wochen bei mir im Panzerschrank, bis eines Tages der Herr freudestrahlend erschien und sagte"Frau [redacted].kann ich meine Nierderschrift wieder haben, ich habe jemand gefunden, der sich der Sache annehmen will."
Als 1954 im Blanvalet-Verlag das von Major Keyhoe auf Veranlassung des Pentagon geschriebene Buch unter dem Titel "Der Weltraum rückt uns näher" erschien konnte ich in Kapitel VIII lesen, daß der "kanadische Untertassenforscher Wilbert Smith festgestellt habe, daß diese Dinger auf magnetischer Basis arbeiten würden, mußte ich sofort wieder an diese Niederschrift von 1939 denken. In Kapitel III schreibt Keyhoe, daß "diese Dinger 1944 der Schrecken der amerikanischen Nachtjäger gewesen seien und von diesen Sauerkraut-Meteore genannt wurden. 1945 wurden 600 amerikanischen Wissenschaftler in Panzeruniform gesteckt und nach Böhmen eingeschleust;"alle Welt wunderte sich damals, was die Amis in Böhmen zu suchen gehabt hätten, wenn sie sich sowieso gleich wieder zurückzogen.
Im Juli 1954 fuhr ich erst nach Wien und dann nach Klagenfurt in Urlaub, wo ich frühere Kameraden aus dem FlüHi besuchte. Als ich in Wien einem KrimKom. die große Neuigkeit erzählen wollte, winkte der ab und sagte:"Ach das haben wir schon 1943/44 gehabt. Wir bekamen damals eine GKdS in der stand, das und das wird sich in der Luft zeigen, bitte beobachten,Eindrükke hierher mitteilen und zu niemandem sprechen". An einem schönen Juli-Abend hatte ich dann in Klagenfurt meine schönste Sichtung: eine Lichtscheibe größer als der Mond zog mit Schweif von Südwest nach Nordost, am nächsten Tag waren die Zeitungen voll. Da sich zur damaligen Zeit über Österreich diese Dinger massenhaft zeigten, veranstaltete eine Zeitung eine Rundfrage und erhielt u.a. einen Leerbrief von einem Dipl.-Ing. aus Baden b/Wien, in dem es hieß:".. jawohl, diese Dinger wurden bei uns im böhmisch-mährischen Raum erzeugt. 1943 wurden die Anlagen auf Befehl des Führers abgebaut und abtransportier und seither fehlt von meinem Freund, der da Einflieger war, jede Spur !!"

To the young secretary all this seemed very difficult to comprehend and only because it was so totally out of her usual line of work does she remember all of the above details. The closed minds of the consulted experts annoyed her, it was their arrogant **impossible** and **never** which stuck in her mind. Being a convinced National Socialist, she had known of the Fuhrer's abhorrence of the stuffy traditionalists and reactionaries with which Germany, especially, seems to be plaqued? The project was still being discussed when the young man re-appeared, and in a very happy frame of mind asked for the return of the documents. He told our correspondent that he had found someone else to support and finance his research and experiments, even with plant facilities to produce them.

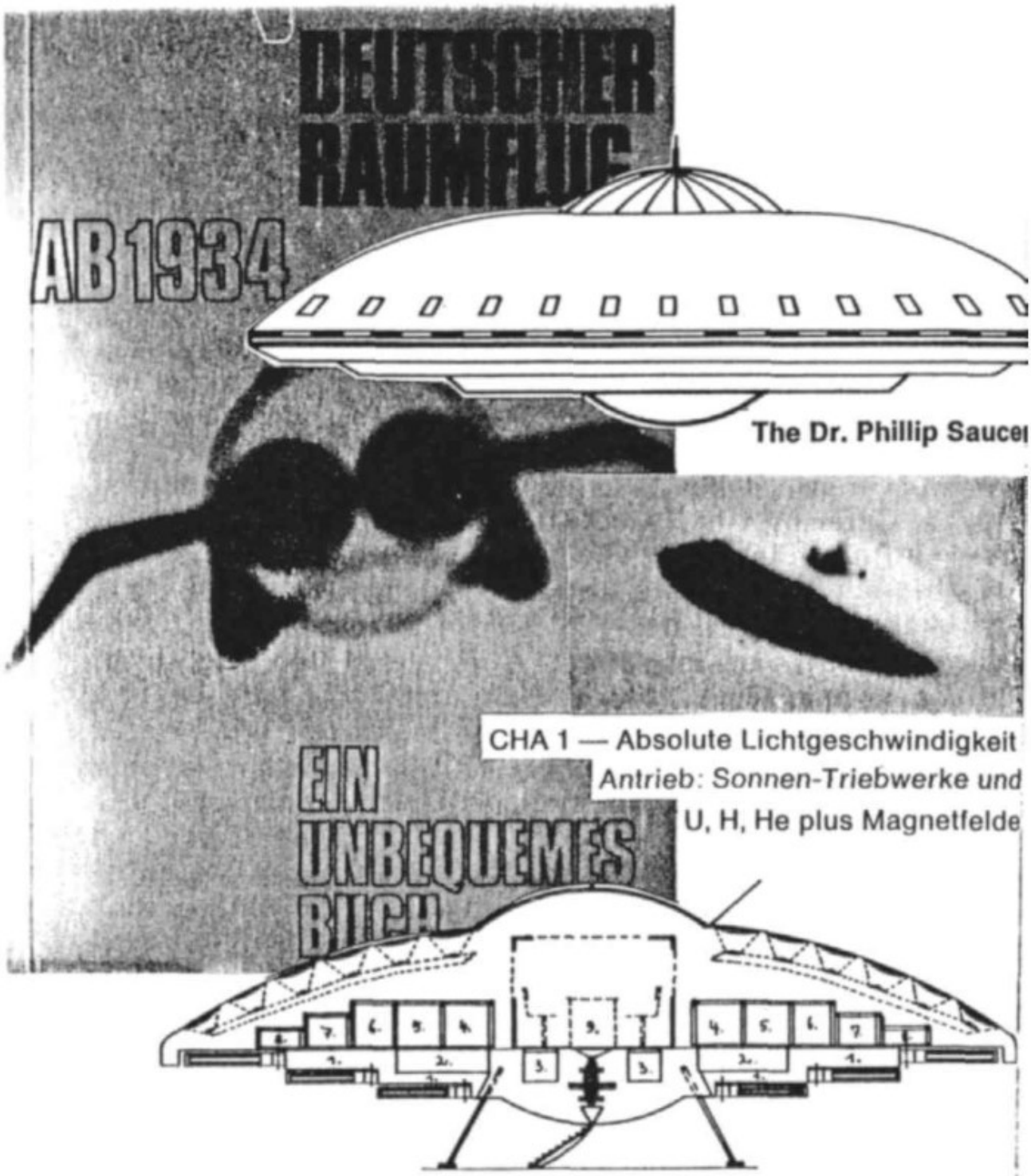
Years later, after the war, when the U.F.O. sightings were the topic of the day, she mentioned the above to a friend, a man, who had been a Kriminal Kommisar (Criminal Commisar similar to the American G man of old) in Austria during the war (then a part of the greater German Reich). He was not at all surprised but on the contrary he remembered having received a top secret telex order, issued by Berlin Headquarters, requesting that the people's reactions to "strange flying objects" be monitored, and

that these flying objects would be appearing in the skies over the entire Reich. There would be no need to sound the alarms for they belonged to Germany. The date? 1943-44. In due course, the flying objects appeared. The German fighters thought they were American, the Allies thought they were German secret weapons. The Americans nick-named them appropriately enough, "Kraut meteors". (Keyhoe) There is one final aspect of the lady's letter which seems particularly significant. While in Vienna she saw a letter published in a large daily newspaper by a well-known Diplom Ingenieur from Vienna's fashionable suburb, Baden, and this letter stated:—"We built flying saucers in Bohemia and Sudetenland. My friend was one of the test pilots for these devices. One day in 1943 the entire plant was dismantled and shipped by freight train to destinations unknown. From that day to this, I have never heard from my friend, the test pilot. Incidentally, orders for this dismantling came directly from Adolf Hitler".

A most incredible development. Were the flying saucers not used in combat because the Germans had not come up with the required anti-weapon? Or were they, perhaps, not available because of the rare metal needed in large enough quantities to make the required impact? Or were they used and so devastatingly that no survivors were around to tell the story? Once again, a letter and some suppressed books written by a German engineer, can help us fill the gap. We reproduce excerpts from a letter received by the authors from divided Berlin, Germany. The letterhead of the correspondent states he is a Diplom Ingeneur who seems to head a private spaceflight research organisation in Germany and Switzerland. He is the author of several books about spaceflight and we reproduce the cover of one. The title translated into English is: "German Spaceflight Since 1934", with a sub-title of "A Troublesome Book". In it are many engineer's drawings of weird and strange-looking craft the like of which we have never seen anywhere before. Strange names are given to these contraptions. One model especially merits to be reproduced here for your evaluation. The claim is made that the author launched a rocket to the moon in the early thirties, propelled by a light conversion power plant. In other words, the rocket was propelled by sunlight transformed into energy. Certainly, a revolutionary concept.

In a series of letters we have received, Prof. Dr. Phillips, claims to have been a wartime comrade (W.W.1) of Adolf Hitler, and that they kept in close touch and that Hitler was kept fully informed about all the research and that he, Hitler himself, entrusted Phillips with critical missions, in rare cases. He further states that to this day he has in a bank safety depository a special pass of the Fuhrer giving him sweeping authority. See photocopy of excerpt of letter.

Two other points mentioned in different letters are relevant to our story. Dr. Phillips who speaks several languages, and amongst them Russian, claims to have been employed by the Russians in the very "collecting camps" the Soviets had set up for screening German scientists for use in their own weapons development. His linguistic abilities made him "Chief Screener". If all this is true, then one can safely assume that Hitler's friend would find ways and means to ensure that top grade scientists did not fall into the hands of the Soviets at least in this instance. Prof. Dr. Phillips claims he knows exactly who went where and many other details. Dr. Phillips also men-lions his experimental work during the war with the practical use of death rays.



Noch etwas : Ich besitze (auch heute noch im Banksafe liegend)
d e n Sonderausweis des Führers über "plein pouvoir" .-

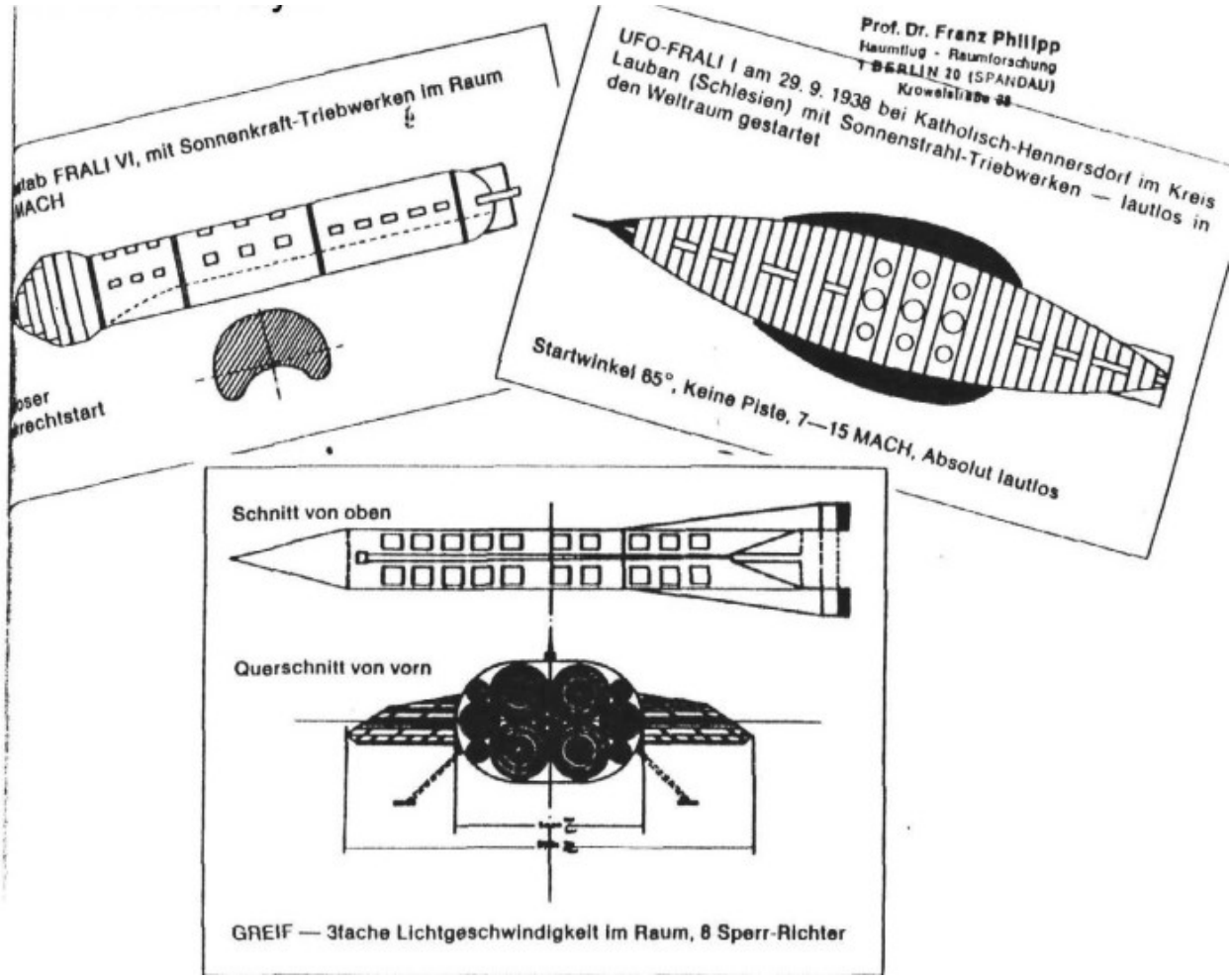
ami-Flieger gültig, die im Rundfunk vorerst bekanntgaben : die Bewohner von Bremen werden ausradiert. Militär war sowieso keines dort !
Nun ruht der Pulk geschlossen in der Nordsee !

Frdl. Grüße

Jhr

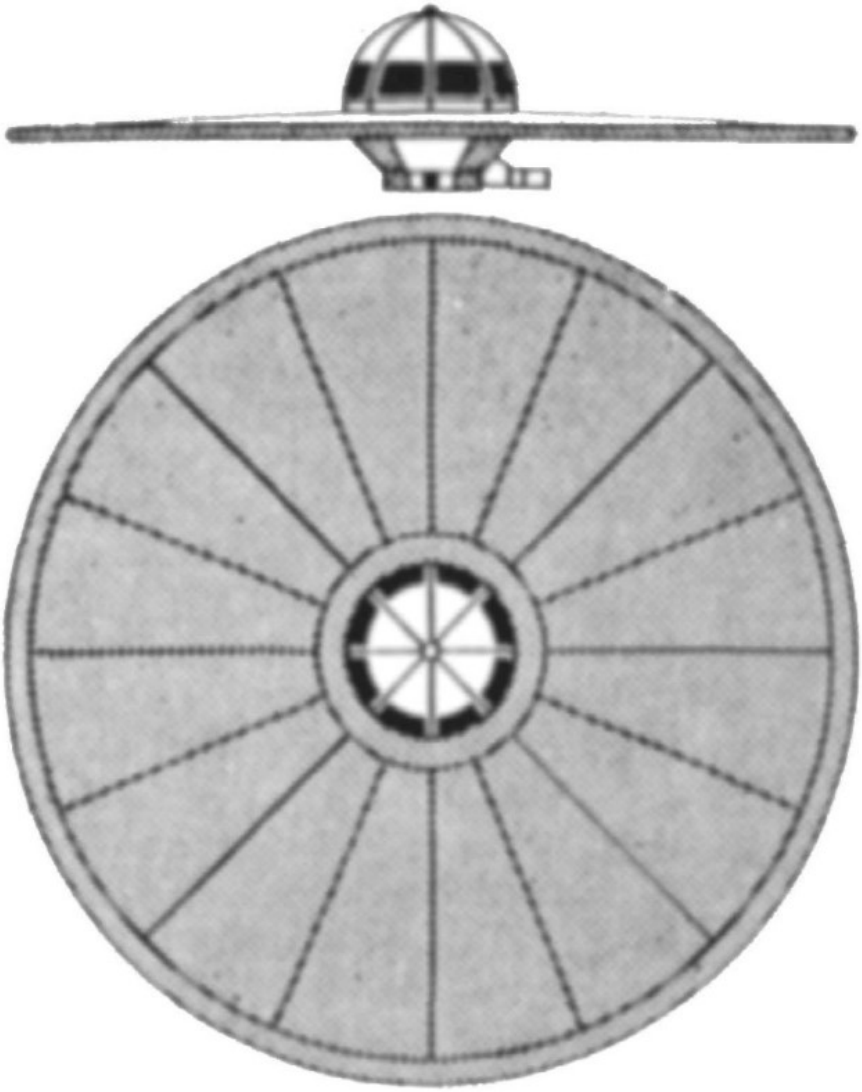
(pp. Philipp)

Excerpts of letters



The solar-energy-powered space vehicles

However, there are also other sources available for the U.F.O. verification. There is the best-selling book already in its 5th Edition called “Die Deutschen Geheimwaffen des Zweiten Weltkrieges und ihre Weiterentwicklung” by Rudolf Lusar, published by Lehmann Verlag of Munich, West Germany. A small English edition exists but seemingly is suppressed. One of the authors of this book obtained just one copy from the author himself. The late Rudolf Lusar had been a Luftwaffe Major, an inventor and engineer, he had been employed during W.W. II in the patent and experimental section of the Reichsluftwaffen Ministerium in Berlin. In this book Lusar describes some pretty far-out, highly-advanced technology on rocket torpedoes, submarine fired ballistic missiles, Flying People (see photo) and very detailed information on the flyinq saucer programme. Shown here are photographs of engineering drawings, top and front view, along with excerpts of his descriptions.



Flying Disc

Flying Saucers

Flying saucers have been whirling round the world since 1947. suddenly turning up here and there, soaring in and darting off again at unprecedented speed with flames encircling the rim of the saucer's disc. They have been located by radar, pursued by lighters and yet nobody has so far succeeded in establishing the existence of such a "flying saucer" or managed to ram or shoot one down. The public, even the experts, are perplexed by an ostensible mystery or a technical miracle. But slowly the truth is coming out that even during the war German research workers and scientists made the first moves in the direction of these "flying saucers". They built and tested such near-miraculous contraptions. Experts and collaborators in this work confirm that the first projects, called "flying discs", were undertaken in 1941. The designs for these "Hying discs" were drawn up by the German experts Schriever, Habermohl and Miethe, and the Italian Bellonzo. Habermohl and Schriever chose a wide-surface ring which rotated round a fixed, cupola-shaped cockpit. The ring consisted of adjustable wing-discs which could be brought into appropriate position for the take-off or horizontal flight, respectively. Miethe developed a discus-shaped plate of a diameter of 42 m. in

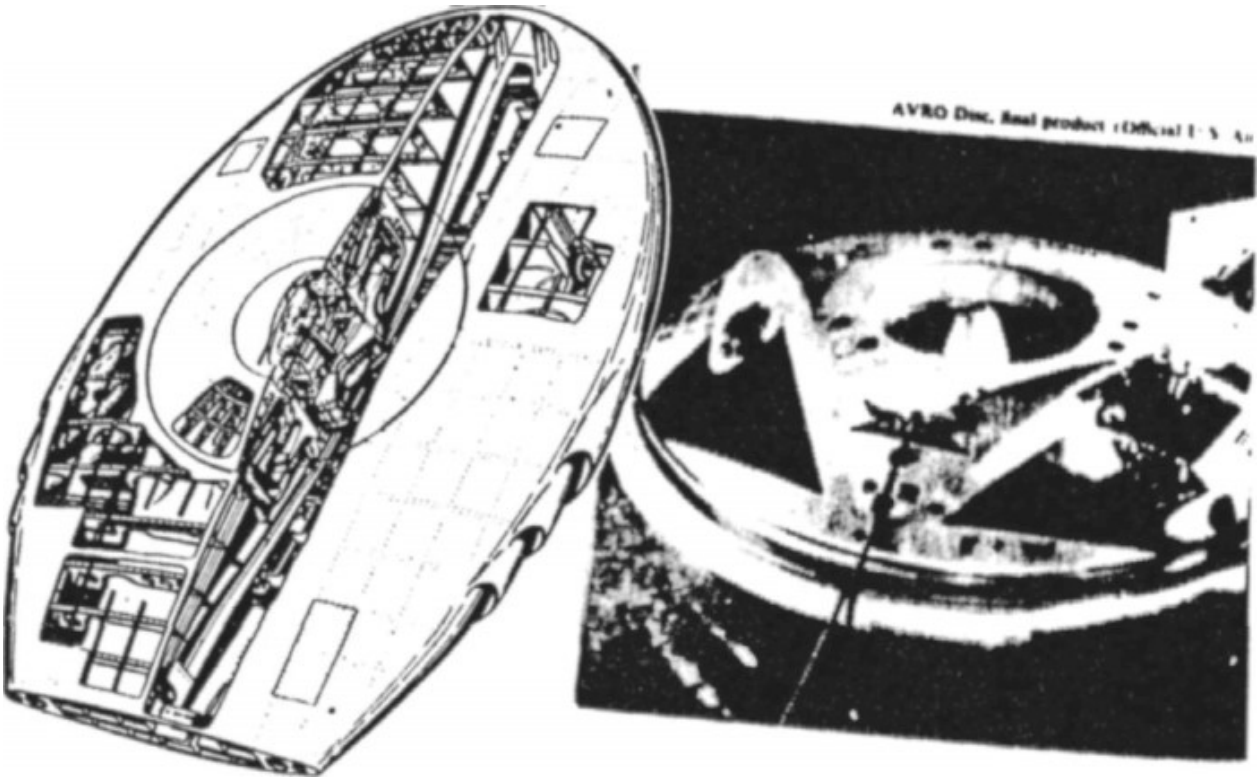
which adjustable jets were inserted. Schriever and Habermohl, who worked in Prague, took off with the first "flying disc" on February 14, 1945. Within three minutes they climbed to an altitude of 12,400 m. and reached a speed of 2,000 km./h. in horizontal flight (!). It was intended ultimately to achieve speeds of 4,000 km./h.

Extensive preliminary tests and research were necessary before construction could be started. Because of the great speed and the extraordinary heat stress, special heat-resisting materials had to be found. The development, which cost millions, was almost completed at the end of the war. The then existing models were destroyed but the plant in Breslau where Miethe worked fell into the hands of the Russians who took all the material and the experts to Siberia, where work on these "flying saucers" is being successfuly continued.

Schriever escaped from Prague in time; Habermohl, however, is probably in the Soviet Union, as nothing is known of his fate. The former designer Miethe is in the United States and, as far as is known, is building "flying saucers" for the United States and Canada at the A. V. Roe works. Years ago, the U.S. Air Force received orders not to fire at "flying saucers". This is an indication of the existence of American "flying saucers" which must not be endangered. The flying shapes so far observed are stated to have diameters of 16, 42, 45 and 75 m. respectively and to reach speeds of up to 7,000 km./h. (?). In 1952 "flying saucers" were definitely established over Korea and Press reports said they were seen also during the NATO manoeuvres in Alsace in the autumn of 1954. It can no longer be disputed that "flying saucers" exist. But the fact that their existence is still being denied, particularly in America, because United States developments have not progressed far enough to match the Soviet Union's, gives food for thought. There also seems some hesitation to recognise that these novel "flying saucers" are far superior to conventional aircraft—including modern turbo-jet machines—that they surpass their flying performance, load capacity and manoeuvrability and thereby make them obsolete.*

According to Lusar, of the many scientists who worked on U.F.O. projects only one of these was found, a man named Miethe, and he was from the team who worked outside Prague. His whereabouts and movements are known. He worked in the early fifties for the A. V. Roe Company in Malton, Ontario, a suburb of Toronto, Canada. This man Miethe is the originator of a genuine flying saucer, which was produced by Avro on contract to the U.S. Air Force.

See photograph below — compare similar shape and concept with Lusar's drawings. Of particular interest is the propeller fan blade arrangement. The craft pictured above was shown to the press on the ground only, not in flight. However, we reprint a photograph or what is purported to be a photograph which originated with the Royal Canadian Airforce in Ottawa, Negative File No. T.P. 1256C, unit 2 Rd. The craft looks similar to the Miethe-designed Avro saucer, that has never been seen air borne by anyone. This was reprinted by the now defunct Toronto Telegram, once the second largest daily newspaper in Toronto.



The much-maligned Avro Disc, built with the collaboration of the German scientist, Miethe. Because it has never been seen "flying" does not mean it has not "flown" when the press were not around. Design clearly employs the "Vertikalzugschraube" experimented with by Miethe and his colleagues in Germany, or at least elements of the idea.



DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

CANADA

MINISTÈRE DE LA DÉFENSE NATIONALE

1555-3 (D/Coord)

Commanding Officer
Canadian Forces Photographic Unit
Canadian Forces Base Ottawa
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0K4

25 June, 1974

The Truly Great Books
107 King St E
Toronto 110, Ontario

Dear Sir:

This is to thank you for your letter dated 12 June, 1974.

Our research department has checked our files and made inquiries at various other photo departments in the Ottawa area, but unfortunately they have been unable to locate the negative that you asked about.

We regret we are unable to assist you with your request, but if we may be of any assistance to you in any future quest, please do not hesitate to write us.

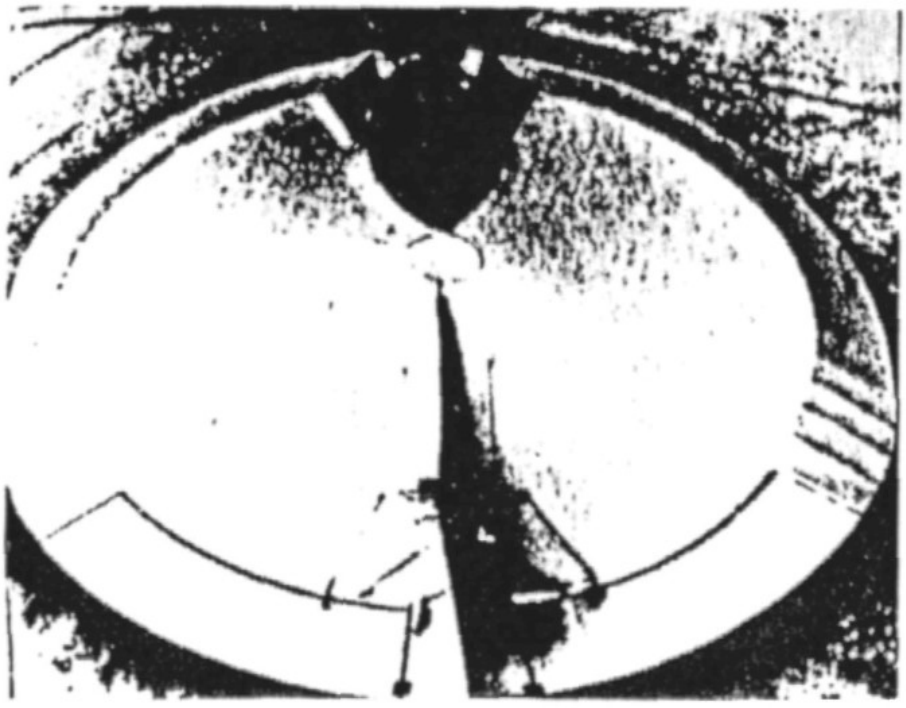
Yours truly,

J.A. Young
Lieutenant Commander
Commanding Officer
Canadian Forces Photographic Unit

The authors contacted the defence department in Ottawa for permission to re-print the photograph. The file was missing and it was reported that no trace could be found of anything, negatives or prints. So that leaves the big question — why didn't Miethe's saucer fly? Or did it fly and we were not told the truth? Or, was Miethe a victim of the previously described German policy of only letting an individual know as much as he needed to know, to fulfill his task? No more and no less! Did he purposely sabotage the American Flying Saucer? Of greater importance, where is Miethe today? I doubt that we will ever know.

The A.V. Roe aircraft company was driven into bankruptcy in 1958-59 by the then Prime Minister of Canada — John Diefenbaker. Thousands of top flight scientists were overnight out of work and the cream of them were quickly hired by Boeing, General Dynamics and others. Miethe and the flying saucer he helped to build have vanished without a trace!

The Soviets too got into the act during the height of the UFO craze in the late 50's and early 60's. Since the Communists have ruled Russia, they have invented everything or reinvented everything, from gunpowder to spaceflight! To assure that credit goes where it is due, reproduced here is the Soviet flying saucer. A poor photograph of a canvas-covered circular-shaped wingless aircraft, the type the Germans experimented with around 1935 and in concept similar to the United States all-wing bomber. Surely, if the Soviet's had captured, as had been feared for some time, the German UFO teams and their factories, they could have come up with something a little better! And so again, we must conclude there is a missing link.



Where are the flying saucer teams now? Or better still, to where did they go after they left Germany? It is almost a certainty that they did leave Germany. There are a number of possibilities, but all point in the general direction of the Southern Hemisphere.

Essentially, Bar-Zohar corroborates Michael X and Mattern.
"The Avengers" page 110 111 Excerpts below.

> When the fighting ended in Berlin, some men of the Russian Fifth Army came across a burned-out tank at Spandau, and lying near it was the body of a man wearing a long leather jacket In one of the jacket pockets they found a small book which turned out to be the diary of Martin Bormann, the Fuehrer's deputy and one of the most astute of the Nazi Party leaders.
>
> The dead man was not Bormann—this was very soon verified—but an entry in the diary, in Bormann's handwriting, said "May 1, attempt to break out."
>
> A telegram that the Reichsleiter had neglected to destroy was found in his office: "April 22, 1945. Agree with proposal of dispersal in southern zone beyond the ocean. Signed, Bormann."
>
> These two sentences clearly conveyed Bormann's intentions to flee to South America and showed that he had begun to put his plans into effect on May 1.

There was Peron, Hitler's admirer, in power in Argentina. It is a well known fact that huge tracts of land had been bought up by Nazi money and interests. An interesting aside is that Germany's top fighter-bomber pilot Hitler's favourite, (Stuka divebomber ace with over 2,500 sorties and over 500 tanks and 140 planes to his credit), Hans Ulrich Rudel, worked on secret aircraft development schemes for Juan Peron after the war. He met Peron personally on several occasions and the team around Rudel, Tank and Horten did produce a very fast jet fighter plane for Argentina. See photographs. From this fact it is possible to deduct that both the facilities as well as the talent were available and did not lay idle. Rudel by the way has made over 75 trips to South America since then!!! What for?



German scientists produced this jet for Peron.



Peron and the German experts

So we have seen Berlin fall. We have looked into the suicide drama, we have seen Hitler leave Berlin for Denmark and Norway. We have double-checked every angle, even Hitler's mind and motivation. We have traced his thinking back to as early as 1920 right up to 1945 and gleaned from his own book "Mein Kampf" and from his various speeches right up to the last days in Berlin and all are valuable insights, having a direct bearing on the solution to the UFO mystery.

Now we must follow the U-Boat convoy that allegedly has Hitler and Eva Braun aboard on its secret underwater journey — to where? Will it be possible to break out of the ring of steel and fire the seemingly all-conquering allies have thrown around the crumbling Third Reich? The first indications come from a captain of the British Navy. His cruiser was part of a large allied force which engaged the Fuhrer's convoy in a battle. The allies were obviously not aware of the significance of this particular convoy, but must logically have expected some isolated break out attempts by a select group of top political and military leaders from fast-sinking Germany. They had thrown up a virtual blockade around the entire North Sea, stretching from the polar region down to the Spanish coast.

The Fuhrer convoy was detected and promptly engaged by all available allied units in the general area, and with unexpected and devastating results. It would seem that the secret weapons, which Goebbels had spoken of in such glowing terms only a few days previous, were now put to use for the first time in an actual battle situation. The result, was one sole survivor from a British destroyer and it was from this, the captain, that the words were uttered: "May God help me, may I never again encounter such a force". The report of the captain's words was carried in El Mercurio, Santiago, Chile and in "Der Weg" a paper published by exiled Germans living in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Michael X in "We Want you — Hitler is Alive" mentions that the great mediaeval seer and prophet, Nostradamus prophesied Hitler's escape from Germany, and in a submarine, and we quote him as follows:—

"The leader who shall lead an infinite number of people,
Far from their home land to one of strange manners and language,
Five thousand in Candia and Thessaly finished,

The **leader escaping, shall be safe in a barn on the sea"**.

But there is another verse, even more explicit, mentioning an "iron cage" — a clear reference to a submarine.

Wild beasts for hunger shall swim over the rivers,
Most of the land affected shall be near the Danube
Into an iron cage he shall cause the great one to be drawn
When the child of Germany shall see nothing"

The wild beasts are obviously the raping, all-devouring Allies, fording the Neisse, Elbe, Rhine Moldau, **Danube**, that's where it all ended in April 1945. Or did it?

Michael X also involved Donitz and the German submarine fleet, and speaks of a paradisical oasis in Latin America. There is even more weightier evidence of the submarine escape of Hitler and Eva Braun. On July 10th, 1945 a sensational news report made headlines around the world. (A world that was busy getting ready for the sell-out conference of Potsdam where a final stamp of approval was given to the Bolshevik armies allowing them to rape, plunder and drive from their ancestral homes, millions of Germans beyond the Oder Neisse line, who were now defenceless since the German soldiers, beaten, disarmed and starving were performing unpaid slave labour in England, France and America. The Soviet methods were even more indescribable than those of the rest of the Allies.)

A German submarine, of the latest design, "U-530", had given itself up to the Argentine authorities, but not before all scientific instruments and weapons on board had been destroyed. The U-boat had calmly slipped into the harbour of Rio de la Plata. The Commander's name was Otto Wermoutt. The world was stunned and electrified! What was a German submarine doing all the way down there in South America more than two months after the war had officially ended? Why had they not surrendered earlier?

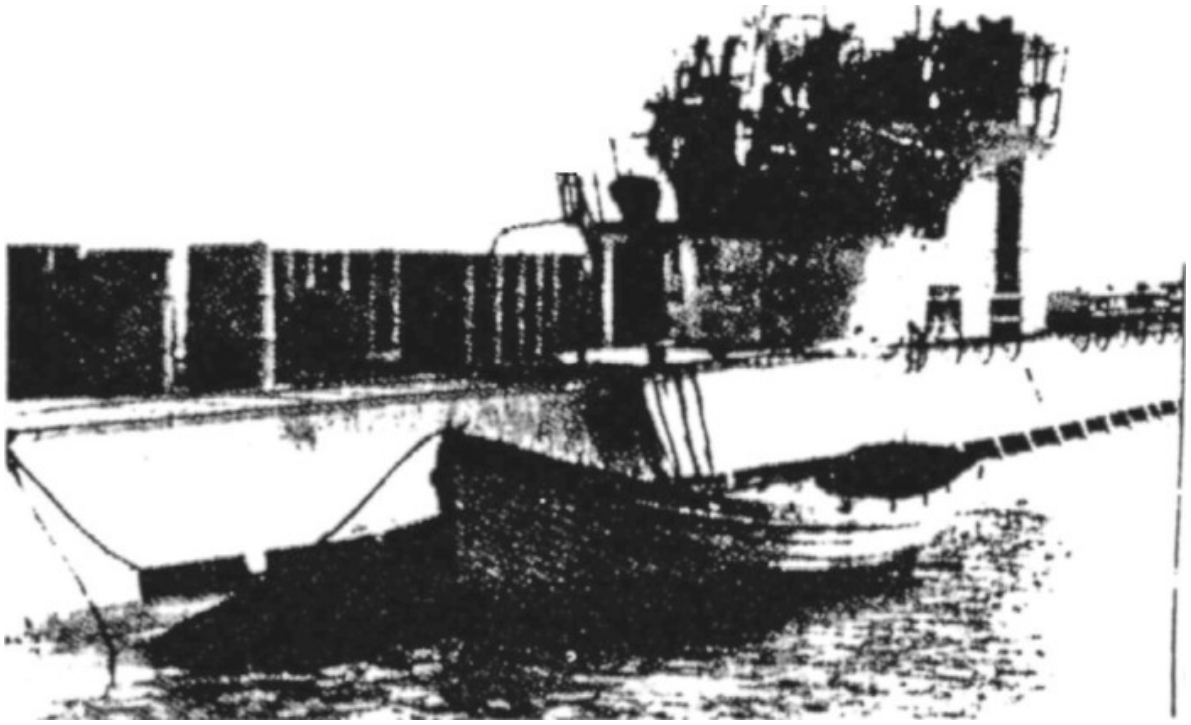
The U.S. government immediately demanded internment and extradition of the entire crew to the United States. As per usual in Yankee dealings with South America, the colonial master whistled and the Latin dog had to wag its tail. In order to save face the Argentinian authorities "studied" the request just long enough to question the officers and crew about the why and where of their surrender unusual. Since Washington became very insistent, the prisoners were turned over to the U.S. authorities. Special planes had been dispatched to Argentina and the men were shipped off to the United States for interrogations. An icy silence settled over results obtained and also about the whereabout of the crew. Rumours have it that the entire crew answered all questions put to them with similar answers so that the impression remained that they had been prepared for this eventuality.

Apparently little useful information was obtained from officers and crew about the intended purpose and final destination of their U-Boat. However, the Argentinian investigators did find that the U-530 was part of a larger submarine convoy which was travelling entirely underwater and under strict

orders to keep absolute radio silence, a measure usually employed only during extremely sensitive and highly-secret missions, for this type of movement risks the loss of cohesion of the convoy and therefore the possible loss of U-Boats and crews to the watchful enemy. Obviously, whoever had planned this mission was willing and capable of losing some boats. The precautions taken in order to safeguard the secret of the final destination are extraordinary.

It was later revealed in a news report that James Forrestal, then U.S. Secretary of the Navy, (who later supposedly jumped to his death from a 13th storey window while in the Walter Reed Army Hospital) had stated that the U-530 was chiefly a transport submarine and had only carried a few torpedoes. They were of a new type called “torpedoes-arana” or “spider torpedoes”. In effect, they were wire guided underwater missiles and remote controlled and they never missed their targets. Due to the devastating effectiveness of the secret weapons carried by the convoy, there apparently were few Attack U-boats in the convoy.

Two things, however, aroused the suspicions of the interrogators. The U-530 carried a crew of 54 men aboard. The usual German crew size was only 18 men. There were also unusually large food stocks on board. However, the real surprise was 540 large tin cans or barrels, all hermetically sealed and upon opening were found to contain nothing but cigarettes. This was especially unusual since all crew members turned out to be avowed non-smokers. Now what was a German U-boat of the very latest and very largest design doing, cruising around South American waters two months after the end of the war? And with a triple strength crew; carrying a cargo of nothing but cigarettes?



Photograph of U-530 after surrender In Argentina. Note “tin cans” on submarine — mentioned in text

The average age of those 54 men turned out to be less than 25 years, with the exception of the machinist who was 32 years old. The commander himself was only 25, and the second officer an incredibly 22 years young. (Photograph shows the extreme youth of the crew. Shown with them are the tin cans on the deck of the submarine.)



Faces of crew clearly reveal how young they are. Close up photos for more detail.

Age and name-list of crew of U-530

Officers: Captain Otto Wermoutt (25 Jahre), Karl Felix Schubert (22), Karl He
Lenz (22) Petri Leffler (22) Gregor Schluter (32).

Sub-officers: Jürgen Fischer (27), Hans Setli (26), Johannes Wilkens (3
Paul Hahn (45), Georg Rieder (27), Kurt Wirth (24), Heinz Rehm (24), Rud
Schlicht (26), Rolf Petrasch (26), Ernst Zickler (24), Georg Mittelstaedt (2
Robert Gerlinger (24), Viktor Wojsick (27), Günter Doll (21), Rudolf Bock (2
Werner Ronenhagen (24), Arny Krause (25), Karl Kroupa (25).

Crew members: Herbert Patsnick (22), Sigismund Kolacinsky (22), Friedrich Mü
dick (23), Arthur Jordan (21), Eduard Kaulbach (23), Rudolf Mühlbau (2
Franz Hutter (22), Harry Kolakowsky (21), Franz Rohlenbücher (22), Johan
Oelschlager (20), Willy Schmitz (21), Heins Hoffman (20), Heins Paetzold (2
Gerhard Nellen (20), Ernst Liewald (21), Reinhard Karsten (22), Hans Wolfg
Hoffmann (22), Arthur Engelken (22), Hans Sartel (21), Erhardt Piesnack (
Joachim Kratzig (20), Erhardt Muth (25), Friedrich Ourez (21), Werner Ze
(20), Erhardt Schwan (20), Hugo Traut (20), Engelberg Rogg (20), Franz Je
retzki (23), Georg Wiedemann (21), Günther Fischer (29), Georg Goebl (24

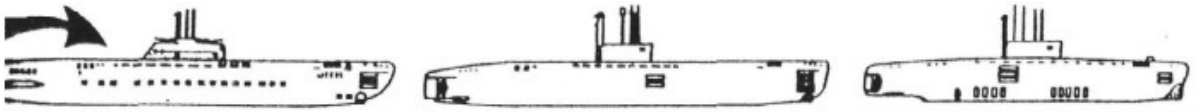
Extensive checks and cross checks were conducted by the American and the Argentinian authorities with the files at the German Naval Headquarters in Kiel, and another mystery was brought to light — there was no record of a Captain by the name of Otto Wermoutt as commander of U-Boat 530; he

along with several others of the U-530 had similar mysteries surrounding them. Interrogation by the allies brought forth from Otto Wermoutt and his crewmembers the same response — "We are alone. We have no living family relations". Apparently, their wives, parents, brothers, sisters and sweethearts had died in air raids or had been killed in some way or another during the war.

Soon the world forgot about U-530 and its fate and was busy listening to radio reports of the sudden arrest of Rear Admiral Karl Donitz, whom Hitler had designated as his successor as military leader of Germany — significantly enough not as the new Fuhrer but as military leader of Germany. Donitz was arrested and with his entire cabinet was shipped off to Nuremberg for war crimes trials. Germany thus became a country with its entire government behind bars.


Donitz after his "arrest"

In the meantime, Allied Naval Intelligence Units were engaged in endeavouring to locate Hitler's monster submarines which had been built on the insistence of Hitler and whose success once led him to remark "I am of good mind to scrap all surface vessels — the future belongs to the submarine". Not one single operational submarine was found. It was not until the surrender of Japan that a number were turned over to the Americans. Occasionally, stories were heard of mysterious submarines appearing and disappearing, mostly alleged to be of Soviet origin, or more often, of unknown identity.

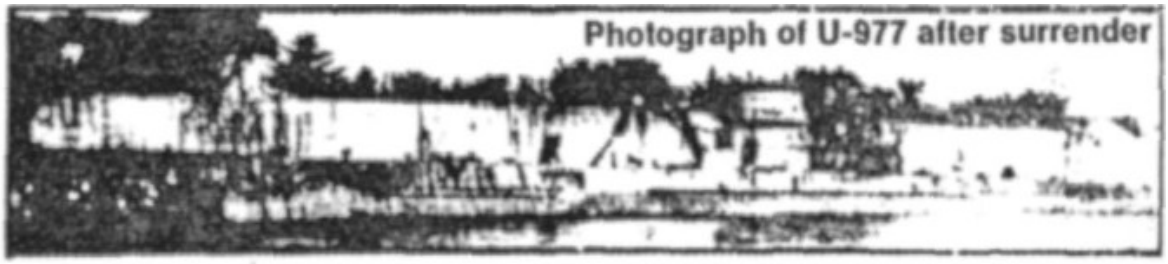

XXI (1944)

Typ XXX (Entwurf 1944)

Typ XXVI (Entwurf 1944)

On August 17th, 1945, five weeks later, another sensational submarine surrender took place and again at Rio de la Plata. A German U-boat, U-977 under Commander H. Schaffer gave itself up to the Argentinian authorities, and this, three months after the end of the war in Germany. This time the crew consisted of only 32 men, but this was still fourteen above the average crew number. It was soon learned that another 16 men, all of them married and with families in Germany, had been dropped off "on orders", on the Norwegian coast. It would certainly seem that whoever was in charge of this operation was completely in control and knew the smallest detail right down to an individual crew member's family and marital status. From the logs of both submarines, the U-530 and the U-977, it was found that they had

left Kristiansund, Norway, on May 2nd, 1945; none other than the exact same spot where earlier reports stated the Fuhrer had been taken after his departure from Berlin.



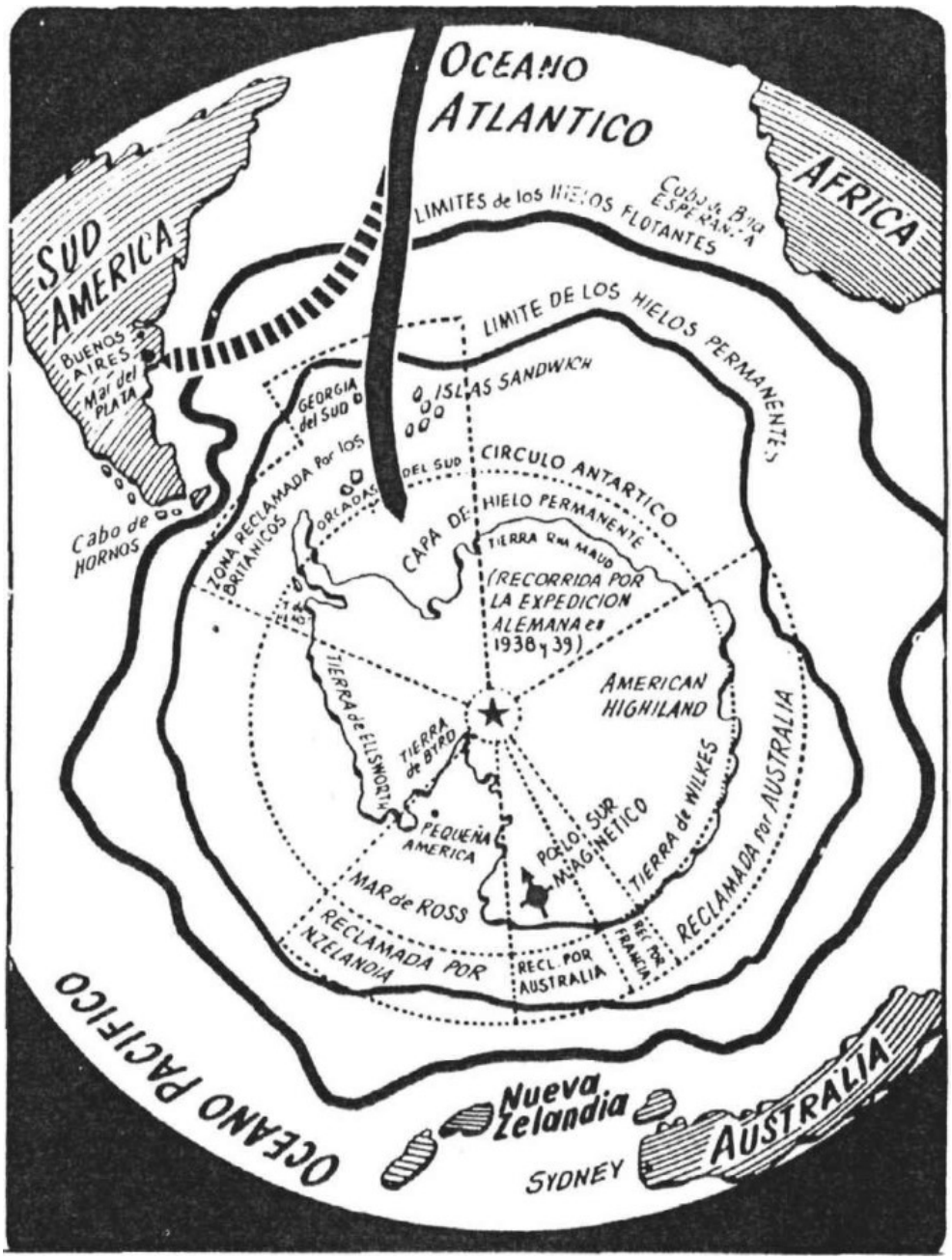
Age and name-list of crew of U-977

Officers: Captain Heinz Schäffer (24), Karl Reiser (22), Albert Kahn (23) ingenier Dietrich Wiese (30).

Sub-officers: Hans Krebs (26), Leo Klinger (28), Erich Dudek (23),

Crew members: Gerhard Meyer (23), Karl Kullack (21), Wilfried Husemann (20) Heinrich Lehmann (21), Rudolf Schöneich (21), Walter Maier (19), Rudolf Ne mirther (20), Hans Baumel (21), Hermann Heinz Haupt (21), Hermann Rie (21), Johannes Plontasch (20), Heinz Blasius (21), Alois Kraus (20), Ku Nittner (21), Heiz Rottger (20), Heldfried Wurker (19), Heinz Waschek (20) Kurt Naschan (20), Gerhard Eofler (19), Harry Hentschel (19), Helmuth Mar (20), Alois Knobloch (19), Karl Homorek (19), Heinz Franke (21), Adwi Baier (19).

The fact that Captain Schaffer had waited another five weeks before giving himself up in the same manner and in exactly the same spot as the U-530 can only mean that he had waited, in the hope that he was to be picked up by a search party. He must have known of the fate of the U-530 since radio reports were regularly monitored. Captain Schaffer wrote a book about his experiences called “U-977” in which he supplies these details. “We were whisked out of Argentina with great haste. However, not before every square inch of the U-Boat, even floor boards, walls and corners had been painstakingly examined and probed for a trace of the Fuhrer — **In the clear knowledge that the Fuhrer was still alive”**.



Map taken from the Spanish book "Hitler esta vivo?" — "Is Hitler Alive?", showing the Fuhrer convoy route and the deviation of U-530 and U-977 (broken line)

Less well known, but equally significant, is the report supposedly originating with the British Admiralty. On June 5th, 1945, five weeks before the surrender of the U-530, the 47 crew members of a German submarine had surrendered to the Portuguese authorities, opposite Leixoes, after they had scuttled their heavily damaged submarine. One can certainly assume that this submarine also belonged to the Fuhrer convoy. Time and direction certainly seem to coincide. Perhaps the submarine which had been abandoned had been damaged during the allied blockade force attack?

THE STORY OF U-859

On April 4, 1944 at 4:40 a.m., the German submarine U-859 under Kapitanleutnant Jan Jepsen left Germany for a mysterious mission which was to come to an abrupt end several months later, at a place half way around the world. The unusually large crew of 67 men had not the faintest idea where they were heading. For several months they cruised around Africa then Arabia and India and finally they ended up in the area of Sumatra, Indonesia. During this time they sank some freighters and an Allied troop transport.

Just outside Penang in the Straits of Malakka, fate caught up with U-859. The U-boat was sunk by a British submarine and most of the crew lost their lives. Not in itself an unusual event in wartime, and therefore soon forgotten by the world. Almost forgotten that is. One of the survivor's mentioned on his deathbed, almost 30 years later that U-859 had taken a treasure to its watery bed. He insisted that welded into the bow and holds of U-859 were 33 tons of mercury, all in glass bottles and sealed again in watertight tin crates.

Since mercury is a very expensive item, even today, an expedition was organized to investigate the rumour. After months of effort U-859 was indeed located, and just where the dying sailor had indicated his comrades' large steel coffin would be found. Divers went down into the shark-infested waters and started to cut open the hull with the latest of underwater blow torches. After several months of very difficult work the divers found large black tin crates which were hauled to the surface and opened with blowtorches. The dying man's story was found to be true in every detail. Packed in neat rows, none the worse for their 30 years at bottom of the ocean was 33 tons of mercury.

Again the question must be asked, what was a German U-boat doing with an incredibly large crew of 67 men, carrying a secret cargo of war-vital mercury half way around the world? To where was the U-boat heading? For whom was the cargo intended? And for what use was the mercury to be put to? Obviously the British did not know the real mission of U-859.



The Mercury Treasure of U-859 after it was salvaged

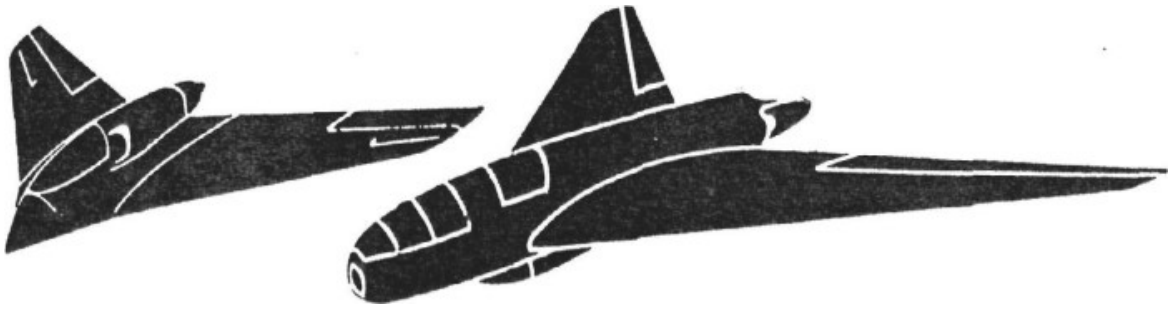
Here again, was that remarkable loyalty and discipline of the German displayed — this secret had been kept for 30 years, almost unto death. It is interesting to speculate how many more submarines, similar to U-859, were on mysterious missions and to ponder as to where they now may be.

Still more reports of mysterious German U-Boats arriving in South America can be found in "The Avengers", page 105, written by Michael Bar-Zohar, published by Hawthorne Press. Excerpts reproduced here.

> Two more U-boats, according to reliable sources, appeared off an uninhabited stretch of the coast of Patagonia between July 23 and 29, 1945. Two sailors from the *Admiral Graf Spee*, Dettelman and Schulz, who were sent to Patagonia by Captain Kay with several of their shipmates, later described their "mission." They were lodged at an *estancia* belonging to a German-owned firm, Lahusen. From there they were taken to a deserted part of the coast and saw two U-boats surface. The *Graf Spee* men went aboard the U-boats and collected some heavy crates which they ferried ashore in rubber dinghies. Then the crates were quickly loaded on eight trucks and taken to the *estancia*, but very soon afterwards the trucks set off again with their load, heading inland. The rubber dinghies also served to bring about eighty people ashore, a number of whom were in civilian clothes. Judging by their manner of giving orders, they were obviously important people. They got quickly into cars waiting for them with engines running, and were driven off.

There has been a great deal of speculation about the size of the Fuhrer convoy. An assumption can be made that it must have been considerable, for otherwise the loss of three boats, with large crews, would have prompted "rescue attempts", an easy enough task in the quiet waters off the South American coasts during that summer season. If Hitler had indeed set up some refuge in South America, we might ask ourselves with how many people. No definite answer can be supplied but again, by deduction, we can arrive at an approximate number.

Perhaps unknown to many north American readers, is the fact that in Europe, there exists a registration obligation for each member of a community. Precise and detailed records are kept of where a person lives, number of children, sex, age etc. and also place of work. Also noted, are details of closest relatives. In Europe, therefore, it is relatively easy to trace and locate anyone and at short notice. True, there was a temporary breakdown in the last few months of the war due to heavy bomb damage and the refugee problem, but conditions soon returned to the usual bureaucratic precision. The Allies found these exact records to be extremely useful in the job of ferreting out “Nazi war criminals”. They soon discovered that 250,000 persons had disappeared. Taking into account, casualties and deaths from all causes, this number of 250,000 has remained relatively constant and has been a continual source of speculation. To where could so many people disappear in densely populated Germany? Could the answer be found in a new “Third Reich” located in some far away place? Were select individuals withdrawn, over a long period of time, and re-located somewhere? Were they the “last battalion” to which Adolf Hitler referred several times In his prophetic speeches towards the closing days of the war? Are they the cream of the crop — saved for the day — that inevitable day when east and west shall meet in mortal combat and WE, as Hitler put it in several speeches, “will be the tip of the scale”? Will they hold the balance of power? How? With what? Will their Secret Weapons be the disappeared “Kraut meteors” the “Fliegenden Scheiben” or the flying discs? With what will they be armed? The death rays spoken of by Prof. Dr. Phillips?



* According to a Washington report at the end of 1955, the United States Air Force was then shortly going to test aircraft models whose appearance would fully correspond to the conception of the “flying saucer”. Secretary of the Air Force Donald Quarles has stated that these models are disc-shaped and able to take off vertically. They will do without expensive runways (see “German flying discs”).

ATOMIC BOMB

The great guessing game as to whether Hitler had or did not have the atomic bomb can be answered rather conclusively. The German scientists whom the western Allies scrounged together after V.E. day who were working on the atomic bomb revealed they had reached a critical point in their research. They were part of the teams who had done research work near Berlin and at the Max Plank Institute. Later on they worked at Haigerloch, a little Swabian town in the south of Germany.

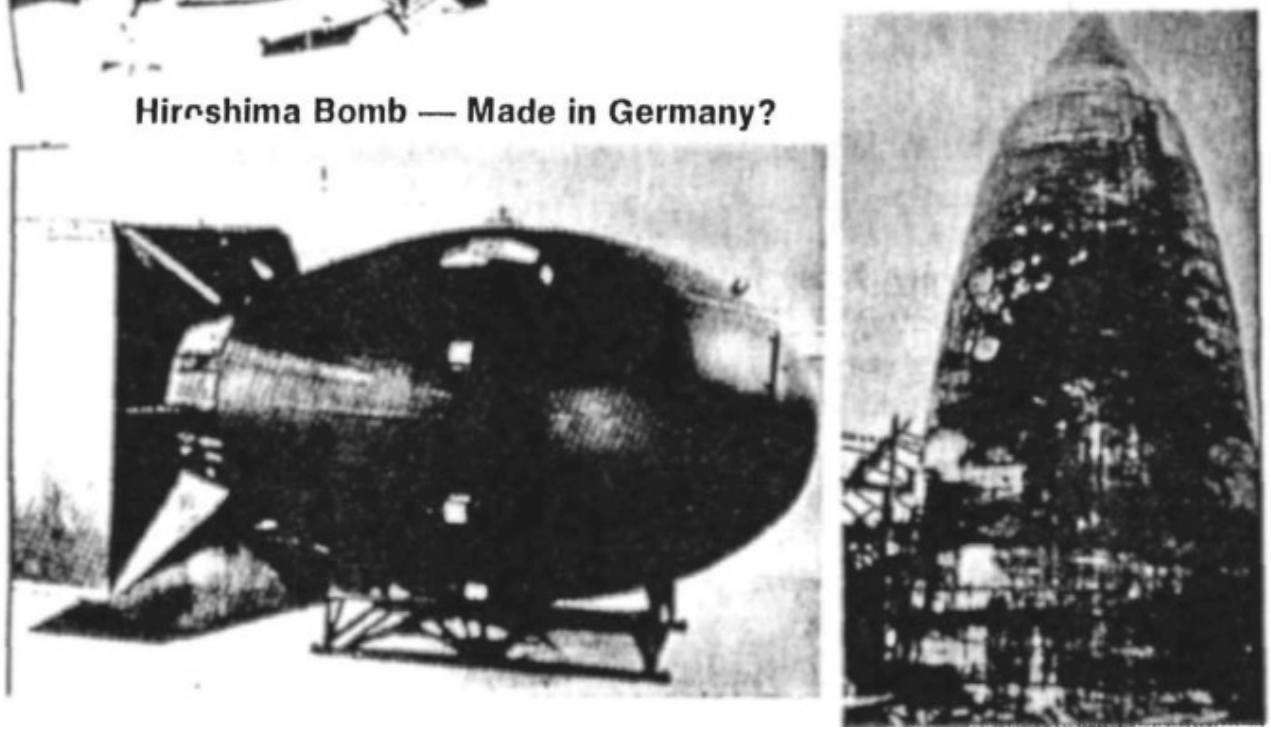
The scientists were imprisoned after the war in Farm Hall, an English maximum security prison. Their rooms and cells were bugged with microphones. During the night of Aug. 6th, 1945, when the American A-Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, the British "listeners" found out how far Hitler's atom bomb had progressed. Apparently it was ready. Prof. Oppenheimer is reported to have said that the bomb dropped on Hiroshima was made in Germany.

Germany first started atomic research when Hitler was sent a letter by Prof. Dr. Harteck. Hitler's order was signed Sept. 26th, 1939. Dr. Esau was put in overall charge. With the capture of Norway there was available to Germany a source of heavy water which had previously been lacking. Production was ordered to be increased by 5,000% at the heavy water plant at Vermork. This plant was the repeated target of frantic Allied bombing raids and a favourite source for "commando raids". Some were very damaging and did hamper Germany's efforts. Apparently one tanker full of heavy water had not been accounted for to this day. It was presumed lost or sunk by a mine. An interesting question would be — "Did it get sent to some place else for later use?"

It is interesting to note that Hitler sent Field Marshall Erhard Milch to the Gottow laboratories near Berlin, where atomic research was also being carried out in 1945, to do an inspection. He also was given wide powers to supply the scientists with anything they might need. During the inspection Milch asked Dr. Werner Heisenberg: "How big would a bomb have to be in order to destroy New York or London?" Heisenberg told the Fuhrer's envoy: "About as big as a pineapple, and we will have a basketful for the Fuhrer by Christmas . . .!" Heisenberg was later tried and the above statements were introduced by the allied prosecutors as evidence!



Two of Hitler's A-Bomb experts. Dr. Wirtz. Dr. Mentzel



Hiroshima Bomb — Made in Germany?

Haigerloch Atomic Research Lab

As a passing note, it may be of interest to the reader to know that America's atom bomb effort took 125,000 workers and cost well over two billion dollars. It was later betrayed to the Russians by communist spies, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, Nobel, David Greenglass, Fuchs and other Jews.

Was Wernher von Braun and his staff of conventional rocket experts deliberately sacrificed to put America on the obsolete track of wasteful fire-cracker rocketry while the Nazis perfected the superior U.F.O.'s somewhere in South America?

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION?

The following story was made available to the authors by a British businessman who has requested to remain anonymous. The identity of the nurse and hospital are known to him. We include it without commentary.

Letter is unedited. Punctuation and spelling as in original

I have been a night nurse in charge of a terminal geriatric ward for many years and as you can guess have seen some pretty horrible sights, but still met some interesting people, the one who was really fascinating was this German chap I mentioned to you some time ago, the poor chap was a terminal case, a terrible carcinoma of the stomach, he was in a side ward by himself as he rarely got more than a couple of hours sleep a night even with the huge injections of heroin we gave him, but he never complained and was always ready to have a chat, and many a night when it was quiet I would take him in a cup of coffee and sit with him and chat for an hour or so. He spoke English well, with a marvellous German, American accent which he had picked up in America, he had been with us over a year, when one night I was sitting talking about my service in the navy and the conversation got on the Flying Saucers . . . he then went very quiet and gave me an odd look, I laughed and said:

"Do I sound mad talking about Flying Saucers?"

He said no, and then said, I might think he was mad as he had flown in one, anyway I had to leave then but the next night we continued the conversation, for the first time he told me he had been in the Luftwaffe, a security officer, attached to somewhere called Rechlin, where they were experimenting with all manner of almost science Fiction type weapons, he mentioned a wind gun, rockets and laughed and said Germany had all these long before the rest of the world had even thought of them and that given another year or so, the war would have had a completely different ending, and that even now things could still happen engineered by the Reich that could alter the world's future.

I laughed, and he continued, on and on about the progress that had been made during the war years, a lot of things I had heard about but some that seemed way out of this world . . . heat rays, queer new explosives and new type flying vehicles, then he went on about the saucers, how they began with quite small open ones with one man cockpits then on to bigger and bigger ones.

Later they moved to another base, and here for the first time he heard about the so-called "Neuer Deutschland" in the Antarctic, pre-war there had been rumours but never many details, there were many scientists at the new base and flying took place only by night as allied planes were continually flying over, and there were continual attacks, as time went by and the outcome of the war became more apparent the work was speeded up more and more and late in 1943, the first of the big saucers was flying and then came the news that certain specialists were being chosen to go on a special trip to a secret base where the war was to be continued from, he flew in planes on several occasions to bases in the North of Norway, escorting men and women scientists equipment, files, specialised machinery and weapons, all of this was

taken direct to long range U-Boats and put straight on board, the weapons were all very modern and he described them as brand new automatic rifles that later were known as MP 44s, there was also a large amount of explosive.

The saucers flew continually and as soon as a new one was built and tested it was loaded with equipment and crewed and when night fell they took off and did not return, as time went by stories of the U-Boats coming and going taking out masses of supplies and people, not just scientific personnel but also administration and military, security, cooks, and amongst them a fair contingent of women.

As the end of the war came near organisation began to break down and supplies ran short they were being bombed and strafed daily by Allied fighter bombers, when the last saucer left, the base was abandoned, he flew on in one of the last planes to leave the base a Heinkel III, they were attacked by a Russian fighter and damaged and landed eventually just outside Oslo. Norway was in chaos at this time but he got a lift in a car with an SS officer, he explained he was heading for a U-Boat base and a possible way out, the SS man had no better ideas and they went North, they reached the base two days later and found two U-Boats refuelling and restocking for their final trips, there were not as many people wishing to use the vessels as most wanted to go home after the war, in fact the cargo carrying boats were even short of crews, they were full of supplies of all sorts, the day after they arrived there was a raid by American bombers a lot of buildings were damaged but the boats were not. . . they sailed that night.

They reached the Antarctic base after a long trip, by sea and across the ice cap, but after a couple of weeks he went back to the coast to carry on his security work with some last minute arrivals on a U-Boat, he then left with instructions to meet another boat in the Atlantic, things however went wrong and his vessel was damaged and sunk by a patrol boat, he was rescued and was made a P.O.W., his captors did not realise who he was as he had got rid of his papers and was wearing naval cold weather gear.

He was held as a P.O.W. in America, and after his release was repatriated to Germany, when he saw the way things were going there under the occupation he got himself some new papers, Polish and managed to get to Britain as a refugee, he settled down, married, his wife died in the late 1950's, and he was having treatment for cancer, radium treatment was tried but slowly things got worse and he was eventually admitted to hospital where he died.

End of letter

Whatever the merits of this dying man's story are, one thing we can be very certain and that is of one terrible weapon at the Fuhrer's command and of which Hitler spoke towards the end of the war when he clearly made reference to the atom bomb — "May the heavens forgive me, if I should reach for that final terrible weapon still at my disposal! We are today already able to blow up half the planet".

Another startling fact proving quite definitely that W.W. II did not end on 8th May, 1945 is the following account in "France Soir", a serious paper (not a scandal sheet):— "Almost 1½ years after

cessation of hostilities in Europe, the Islandic Whaler, "Juliana" was stopped by a large German U-boat. The Juliana was in the Antarctic region around Malvinas Islands when a German submarine surfaced and raised the German official naval Flag of Mourning — red with a black edge.

The submarine commander sent out a boarding party, which approached the Juliana in a rubber dinghy, and having boarded the whaler demanded of Capt. Hekla part of his fresh food stocks. The request was made in the definite tone of an order to which resistance would have been unwise. The German officer spoke a correct English and paid for his provisions in U.S. dollars, giving the Captain a bonus of $10 for each member of the Juliana crew. Whilst the food stuffs were being transferred to the submarine, the submarine commander informed Capt. Hekla of the exact location of a large school of whales. Later the Juliana found the school of whales where designated. This is the direct quote from "France Soir". Added to this must be a wire service bulletin releasd by France's own Agence France Press on the 25th Sept. 1946, which further clarifys the above: "The continuous rumours about German U-boat activity in the region of Tierra del Fuego (Feuerland, in German), between the southernmost tip of Latin America and the continent of Antarctica are based on true happenings".

Putting all these details into proper sequence and perspective a clear picture emerges. Selected segments of the Third Reich survived the collapse of Germany proper and obviously did not surrender to the allies as they were supposed to have done under the "Unconditional Surrender" signed by Donitz on behalf of the German people.

There must be rather large secret Nazi bases where work continues on the UFO's and other secret weapons. Investigation shows that huge amounts of money were clandestinely invested by Nazi Front men all over the world, but especially in South America. An incomplete, but nevertheless surprising statistical compilation of these funds appeared in the newspaper "Zig-Zag" in Santiago, Chile, on 19th June, 1947. According to this compilation, Spain received 300 million dollars, Sweden 250 million, Switzerland 100 million and Portugal 50 million and this represents only about 25% of such investments.

This amounts to nearly 3 billion dollars invested in large tracts of remote jungle and pampas real estate, factories, transportation, airlines, shipping(!!!) companies,, food processing and agriculture. **In the shockinly candid book entitled "The Avengers" written by Michael Bar-Zohar dealing with Jewish war and post war tactics against the Germans, we find a lot of detailed information about the transfer of German money to foreign lands. Some excerpts are reproduced here.**

> A most unusual conference of German officials and industrialists was held at the Maison Rouge Hotel in Strasbourg on August 10, 1944. The proceedings of this "Red House" conference are known from the shorthand report, which fell into the hands of the American OSS at the end of the war. A Lieutenant Revesz showed it to Simon Wisenthal, who took a photostat and published it some years later.
>
> Among those present at this conference were representatives of the Ministry of Munitions and the Foreign Office, delegates from the big industrial combines—Krupps, Messerschmitt, Rochling, Goering Werke, Hermannsdorfwerke—and several senior civil servants. The object of the meeting was to decide upon measures for safeguarding the treasury of the Third Reich. They reached two

main decisions—some of the riches would be hidden away in the territory of the Reich; and German capital would be sent abroad.

The conference urged that the Nazi Party should go underground in the event of defeat, and should prepare for a return to power with the help of the treasures safely hidden away.

These decisions began to be put into effect in the following months. An "experimental station" was set up near Lake Toplitz and a number of containers packed chiefly with forged pound notes and documents were submerged in the lake, and some other containers were hidden away in old mines in the hills. Most of them were removed again when Allied forces were approaching the region. Although the Allies did not have full knowledge of these hiding places until the report of the "Red House" conference fell into their hands, some information on the Nazis' postwar plans had reached the Allied secret services early in 1945. In March of that year a detailed report on the subject was submitted to the State Department in Washington:

"The Nazi regime has made very precise plans for the perpetuation of its doctrine and domination after the war. Some of these plans are already being put into effect.

"Members of the Nazi Party, German industrialists and Army leaders, realizing that there is no hope of victory, are presently preparing commercial plans for the postwar period, endeavoring to renew connections with industrial circles abroad in the hope of reestablishing prewar cartels. After the war, the intention is for 'front men' to appeal to the courts of various countries against the 'illegal' seizure of German industrial concerns and other German property by the Allies at the outbreak of the war. In the event this method does not succeed, the recovery of the German property would be made through figureheads possessing the requisite citizenship. German attempts to continue to have a share in the control and development of technological progress during the immediate postwar period are reflected in the phenomenal increase in German patents registered in certain foreign countries during the past two years. These registrations reached their peak in 1944....

"German capital and plans for the building of ultramodern technical schools and research laboratories are being offered on very advantageous terms, in view of the fact that the Germans will thereby be able to make and perfect new weapons.

"The German propaganda program is an integral part of this general planning for the postwar period. The immediate aim of this propaganda program will be to bring about a relaxation of Allied controls on the pretext that the Germans should be treated 'honestly.' Later, this program will be extended and intensified with a view to reviving Nazi doctrine and pursuing German ambitions of world domination. Unless these plans are counteracted, they constitute a constant threat to the peace and security of the postwar world."

The American specialists had greatly extended their knowledge of this subject by the end of the war. They soon had a list of 750 firms with head offices in neutral countries, founded or bought with German capital. Switzerland headed the list with 274 firms; then came Portugal with 258, Spain with 112, Argentina with 98, and Turkey with 35. A number of firms had also been acquired in South American countries other than Argentina.

Special accounts in Swiss and Liechtenstein banks were placed at the disposal of the Argentine Government, officially to help their industrial development. Some of the accounts were made personally available to Argentine leaders.

As military defeat and final castastrophe had become more certain, the Nazi chiefs stepped up their preparations for the future—a future in which they meant to have a stake. They had deposited large sums with banks in neutral countries and salted away just as much in the portfolios of apparently respectable persons in Liechtenstein, Portugal, and Patagenia, and had hidden much wealth in the depths of old salt mines in Austria and below the dark water of the Alpine lakes. All of this hidden treasure might indeed permit a revival of Nazism one day—so long as there were still Nazis around able to draw upon it.

Added to this must be the fact that the high priority tasks of the newly elected National Socialist government in 1933, was the securing of adequate food supply for the entire population. Extensive research was immediately launched into areas of artificial food cultivation, in huge greenhouses, with everything grown only on "chemical soil" and under artificial light. Butter was apparently produced from coal and dry milk was another German invention. A method was also discovered to indefinitely preserve wheat flour. Great strides were also made in Freeze Drying all types of food and this was carried out particularly in experimental plants located in the area of Helmstedt. Hitler was keenly interested in these projects visiting them frequently. In a very short time, Germany was more or less self-sufficient and for the first time in centuries. No German ever experienced want and hunger again until the Allies burnt or robbed all the huge warehouses of their contents in 1945 and after.

Any German who lived through that dreadful time will tell you what the humanitarian liberators of Germany doled out as food rations after their victory. In the French zone of occupation it was officially 850 calories a day, in the American zone a little more, whilst the inmates of Hitler's concentration camps, (whose bony corpses you are still seeing daily on T.V. and in the newspapers), received more than double that amount of calories daily. The resultant famine and death from starvation, particularly among the elderly and infants is well remembered by the German population. They call it a "peace crime". The food supply for any secret UFO force, (which we shall call by the name Hitler himself had given it) — The Last Battalion, had already been solved. But how about necessary monies to keep such an enterprise running? Hitler had again already planned, with great foresight for this inevitability. In captivity in concentration camps such as Dachau, Buchenwald and Auschwitz, were Europe's best-known and most skilled forgers, — many of them Jews. They were geniuses at their particular craft.



The victims of the "Liberators".

One day, a secret order arrived from Berlin code-named “Operation Bernhard”. All the forgery experts were collected and were offered life and freedom if they cooperated in producing for Hitler, perfect forgeries of some of the allied currencies, but in particular, forgeries of the British pound and the American dollar. At first they refused, but one by one they cooperated and in an astonishingly short space of time, they produced what seemed to be perfect forgeries. The German government supplied from its own papermills what is usually the stumbling block to perfect counterfeiting — high quality paper. The plates and paper were perfect, but not satisfied with their own judgement, a secret agent was sent to neutral Switzerland with a suitcase full of “German-made” pounds and dollars as well as other currencies in all denominations. This agent went to one of Switzerland’s largest banks and requested to see the manager and stated: “I am negotiating a business deal with a man I suspect of being a Nazi agent, and he intends to pay me in this currency with these bills. Please test them and see if they are genuine”. The bank manager explained he could not do this right away since it was in foreign currency, so the Nazi agent left the bills with the bank manager arranging to return within a few days. Upon his return, he was told that the money was genuine, and that the bank would be pleased to accept it for exchange. The agent returned to Germany and the printing presses started rolling in Auschwitz and Buchenwald. Untold millions were printed, so much so that Britain after the war, withdrew from circulation its five pound note — a first in British history.

There is an interesting sequal to this story. Rumours persisted about operation Bernhard long after the end of the war and one such rumour was checked out. For weeks a group of Austrian government frogmen searched Lake Toplitz in Austria. Eventually they found the wreckage of a German plane, the skeleton of the dead pilot still strapped to his seat. In the hold were large metal trunks which, when pried open, revealed over 300,000 British five-pound notes, in neat bundles, perfectly unspoiled and with them, some of the printing plates. The money was confiscated by the Austrian authorities, although it was at that time useless the five pound note having been withdrawn from circulation by the British after the war.

Now remember the U-Boat captain had paid for his food in U.S. dollars and obviously had no shortage of money since each crew member of the whaler had been given a $10 bonus.

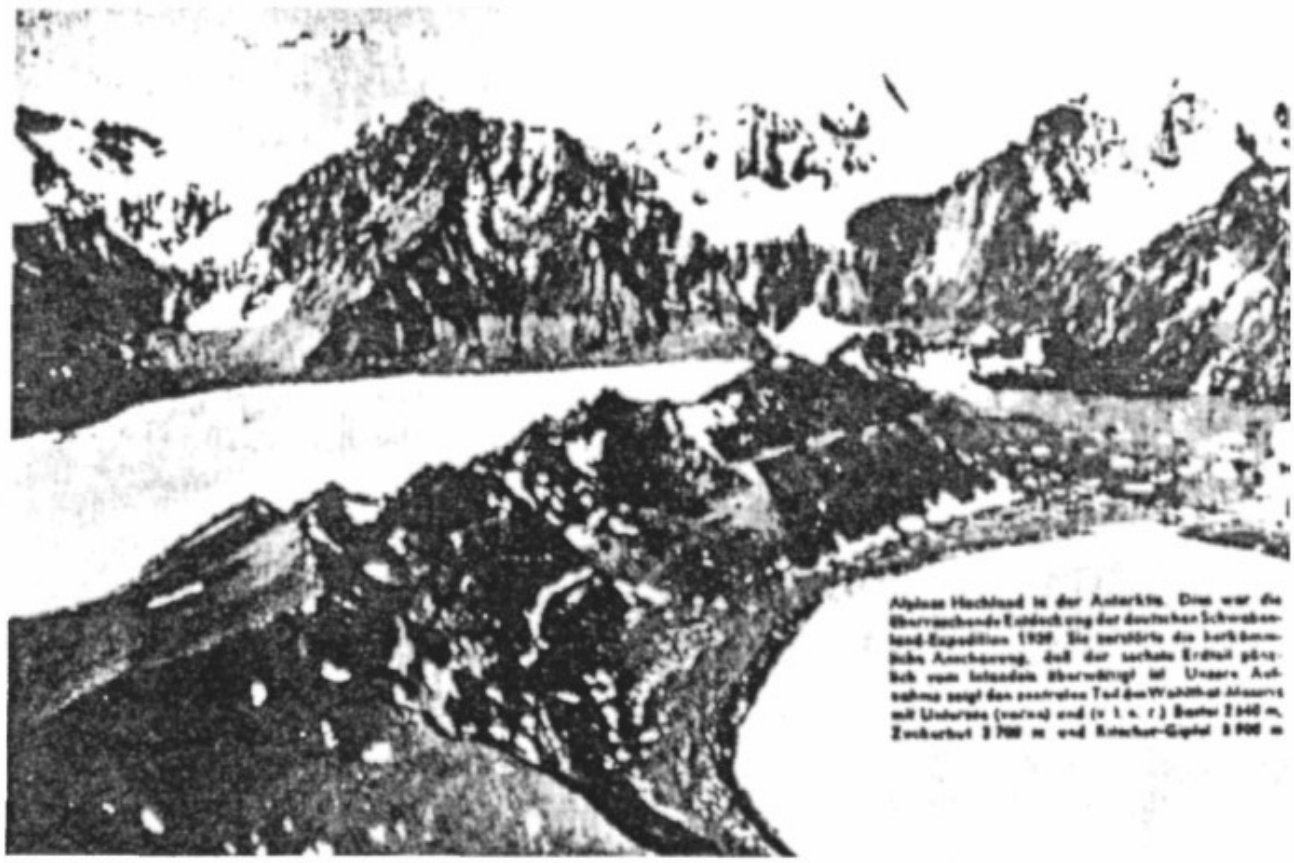
It is not generally known that the entire Reichsbank Treasure, (All of Germany’s reserves) disappeared from the bank vaults in Berlin, before the end of the war. Guinness “World Records” book lists this story under **“The greatest unsolved robbery!”**

During the U.S. balance of payments crisis, Time magazine carried an article about discussions taking place at the Headquarters of the World Monetary Fund in Basle, Switzerland. They found that 15 Billion Dollars were in circulation, which should not really exist. One wonders where that amount of money came from?

TOP-SECRET NAZI EXPEDITION

Let us now turn our attention to the location of the bases. Again, even in this area Hitler had planned far ahead and at long range. Obviously guided by the possible occupation and subsequent loss of Germany itself, he had cast around for land still available for colonization and found that Antarctica was, at that time, the only continent still unclaimed. With his usual dispatch, a polar expedition was organized,

the preparation of which was kept secret. The force consisted of several large vessels, at least two of which were aircraft carriers, not the present-day type but rather large ships with float-equipped airplanes on board. The planes were rocket-catapulted off special ramps at the end of the ships and retrieved out of the water via a crane. This secret Nazi Expeditionary Force was headed by Kapitan Ritscher and took place in 1937-38. The force landed in the area of Queen Maud Land and established bases there. Large float planes of the Dornier-Wal type, with their unusual pusher-puller propellers were used to explore a huge area of Antarctic terrain. Over 11,000 photographs were taken for mapping purposes. Significantly, a Swastika flag was dropped *every* 20 kilometres to substantiate the German claim to that land, comprising over 600,000 square kilometres in all. In this way, not only was a terrain claimed by Germany, larger than Germany itself, but more significantly, for the first time, ice-free oasis (warm lakes) were found by this secret Nazi expedition. They were photographed along with Alp-like mountain ranges of over 4,000 metres in height. Naturally, the explored areas were given German names and so we have today places like “Ritscher Gipfel” — “Ritscher Peak”, named after the leader of the expedition. The hot oasis amongst the eternal ice was called “Schirmacher Seen Platte” — “Schirmacher Lake Group”. The different coloured appearances of these inland lakes were caused by alga found floating in the sweet water. The waters are warm enough to allow swimming and bathing with just bathing suits and swim trunks.

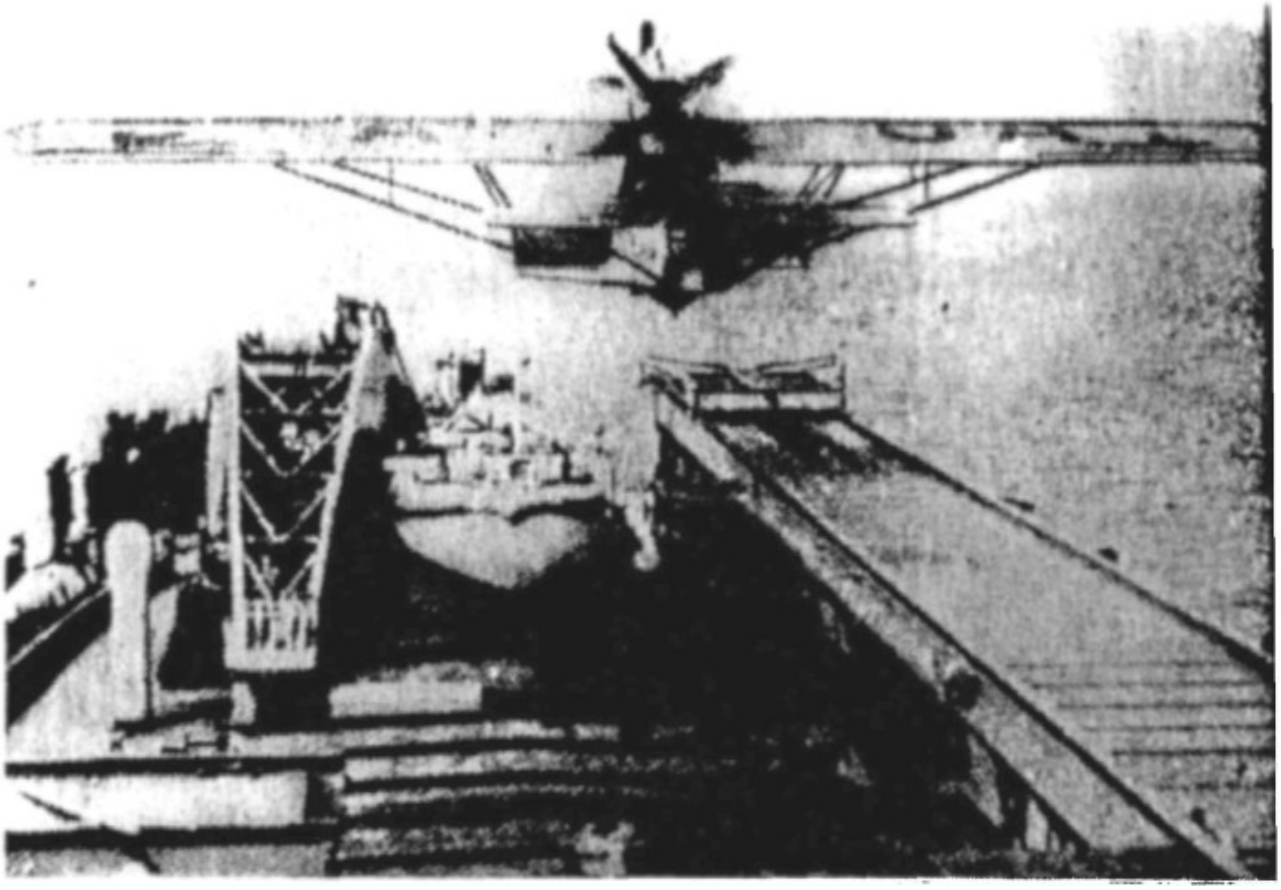


The Alp-like mountain range discovered by Germans; the highest peak over 4,000 metres was christened “Ritscher Peak” after the leader of the expedition.

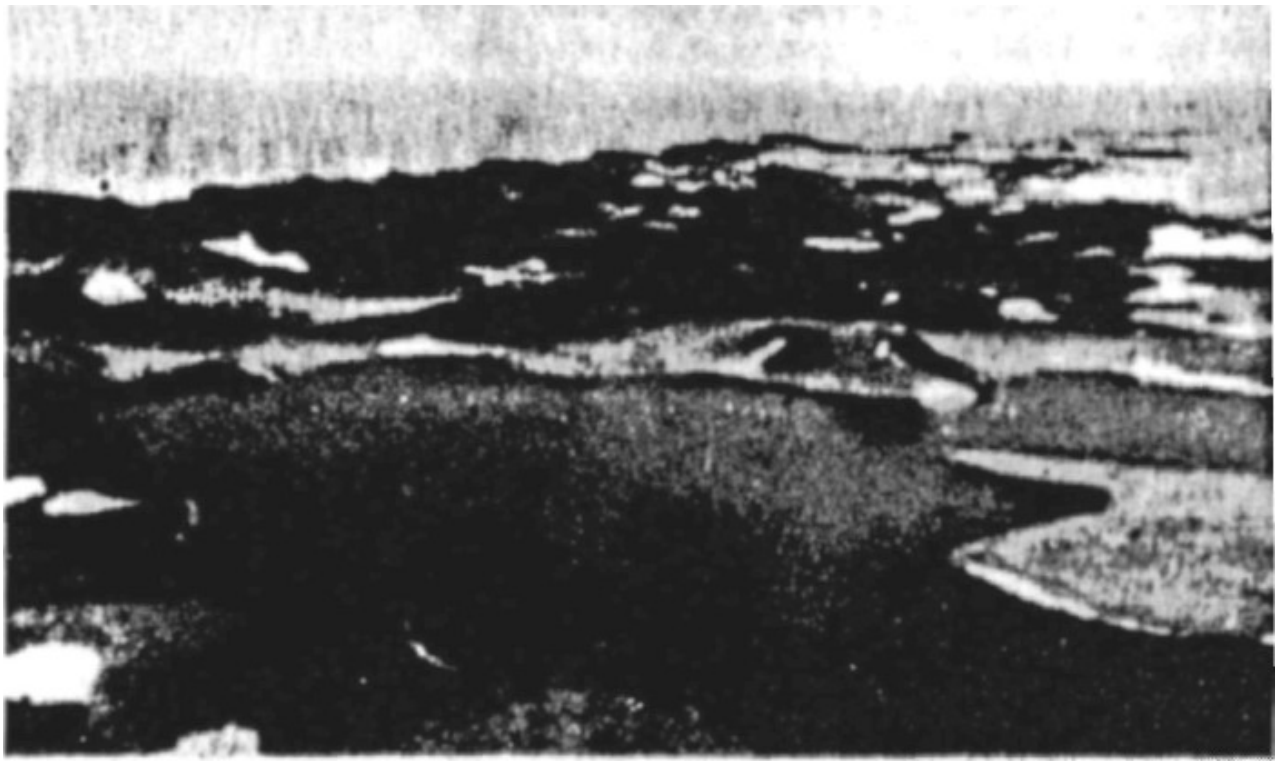
German landing party in rubber dinghy. In background the aircraft carrying ship "Schwabenland"



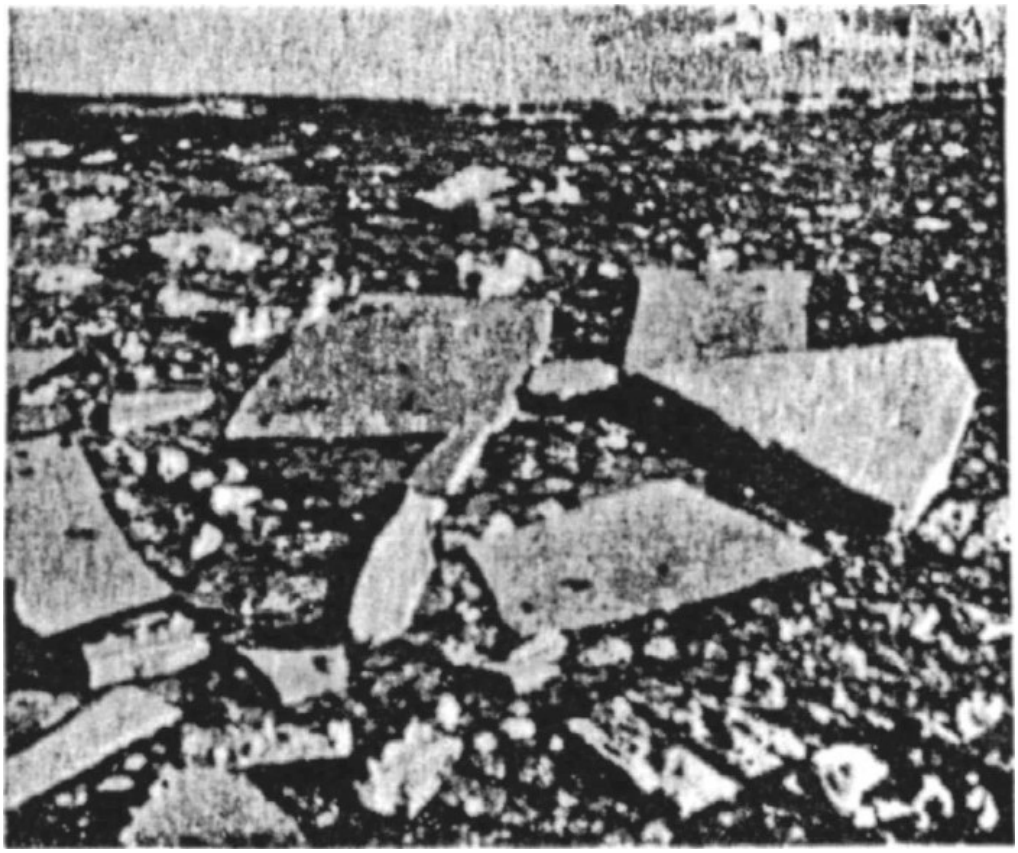
Centre: Expedition members showing one of the Swastika flags, dropped by the mapping planes every few miles to underline Germany's claims.
Bottom: German flying boat on the ice-free oasis, warm water lakes, discovered by the expedition. Note pusher-puller propeller arrangement



The German catapultship One of the large Dornier-Wal flyingboats is just taking off. (Note large motor vessel in drydock area)



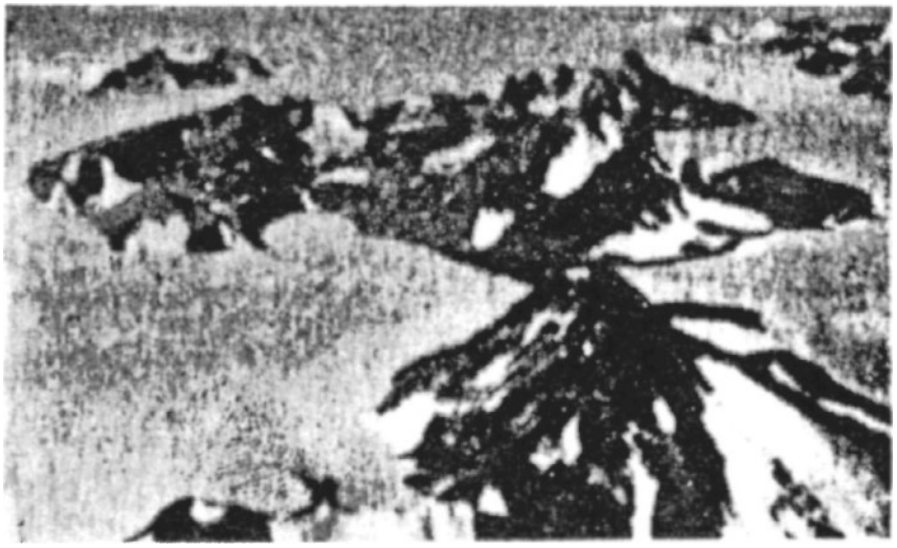
The Expedition took over 11,000 photographs, mapping approx. 600,000 square kilometres. Here is a photo of the "Schirmacher Seenplatte" — the ice-free islands, "Re-discovered" by Admiral Byrd ten years later.



The little specks on the ice are seals and sea lions weighing up to 2,000 pounds and "not too bad to eat" and very plentiful.

THE MOUNTAIN RANGES DISCOVERED

Heretofore never published in the English-speaking world, are actual photographs of this Nazi expedition and some of the startling discoveries.

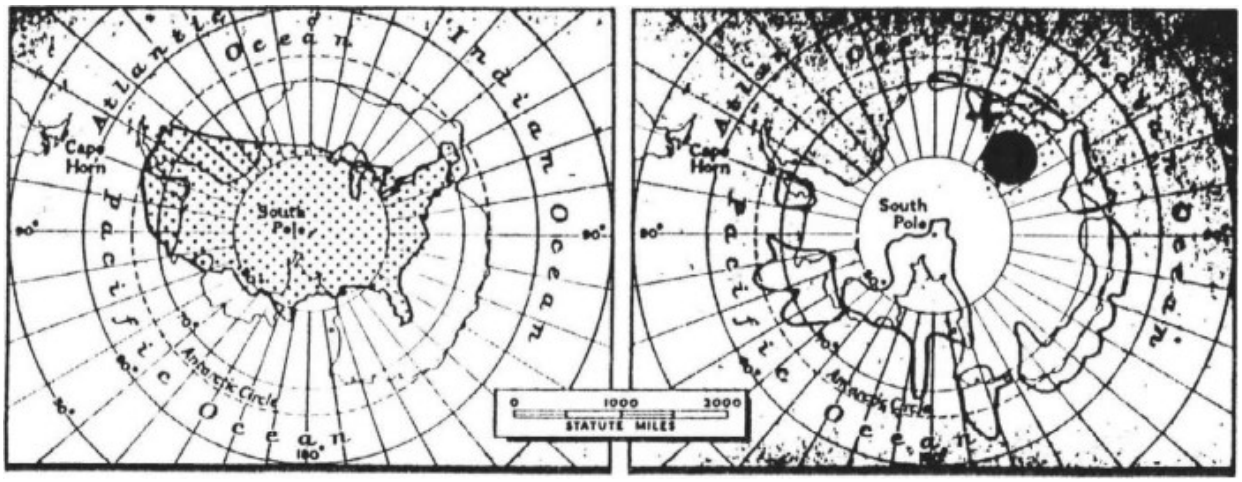


**The Alp-like mountain range discovered by Germans;
Taken from the air**.

Added credence to the secret bases thesis can be found in remarks attributed to Joachin von Ribbentrop at the outbreak of the war. "In accordance with Germany's long-range political strategy, we have taken into firm possession the Antarctic area, called New Swabia (New Schwabenland) to ensure a safe retreat in case of necessity." (Taken from Mattern's previously quoted German edition of this book).

For an exact location of the German area of Antarctica, please look at the map reproduced here, and compare the relative size of the United States with Antarctica. A huge area, indeed.

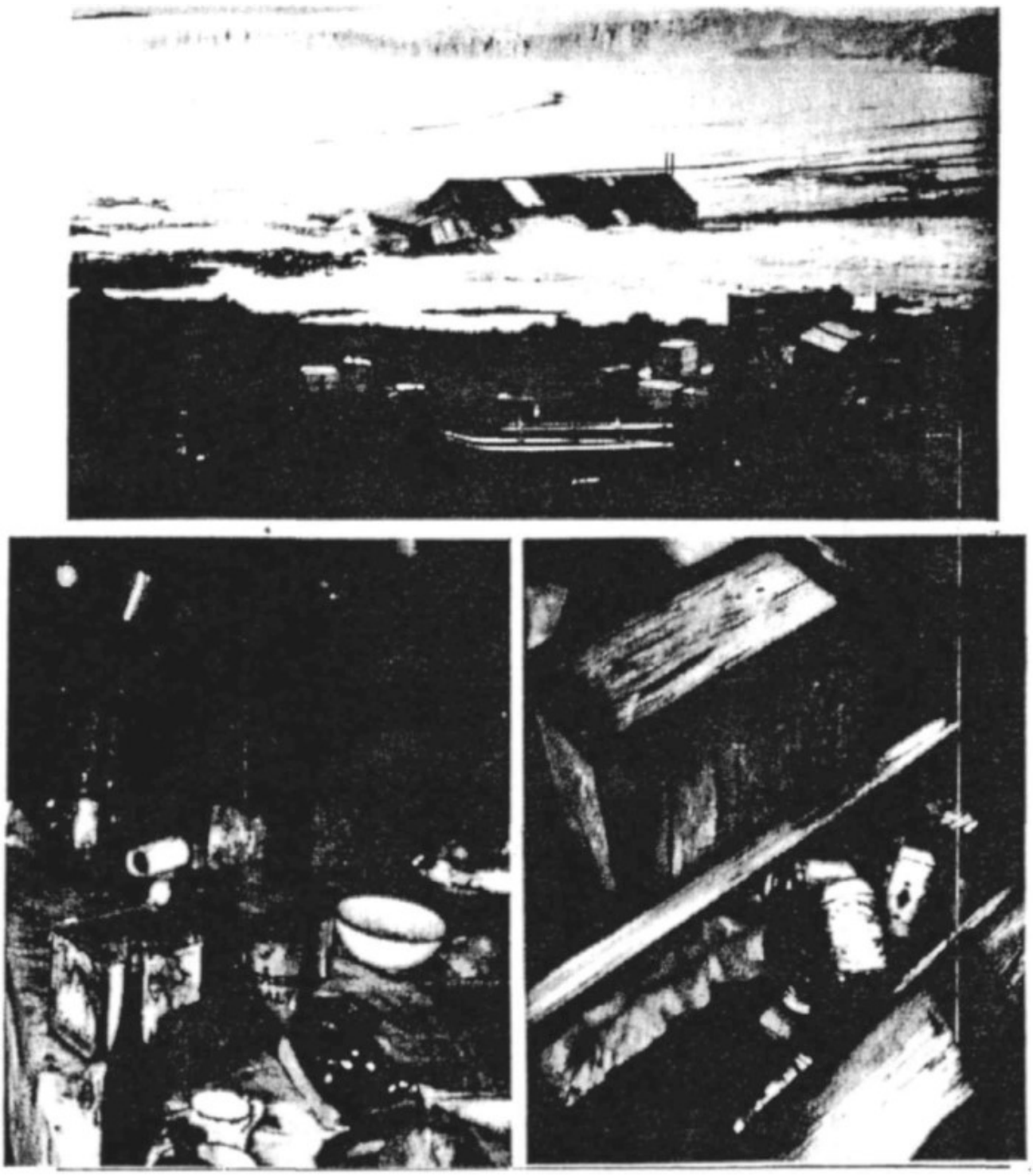
Continental United States in comparison with Antarctica



The Byrd expedition and its mapping mission indicated by wavy lines. Black circles indicates German territory. Byrd's intercepted flight marked X

Other factors make Antarctica an ideal place for these bases. There is no rust, no germs, and consequently very little illness or decomposition. Food remains edible forever it seems, since the whole region acts rather like a giant freezer. For instance, the shed where Scott spent some months pre-W.W. I, before he launched his ill-fated antarctic expedition, was recently discovered. The food which remained in the shed, from almost 70 years ago was still as fresh and edible as on the day it arrived in antarctica, and wooden boxes, tin cans, cups, candle and paper (in fact everything), are as well preserved as if by inanimate suspension. Antarctica has no flies, no bugs, — no bacillus can survive the cold temperatures — not even the common cold can survive.

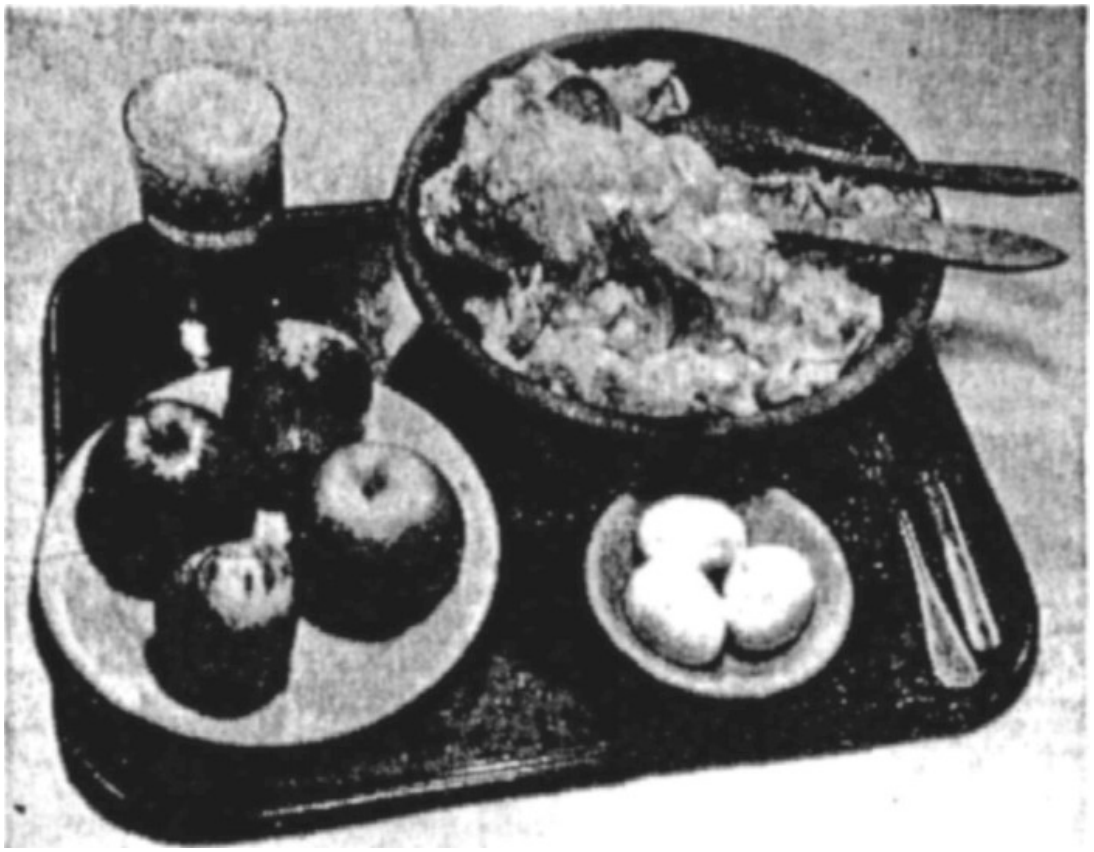
See photographs of Scott's camp.



The camp of Polar-explorer Scott, re-discovered after 60 years. Food supplies which were left were still edible. The table setting was as if just left. No deterioration.

These same non-deteriorating conditions where found in Jan. of 1947 by Admiral Byrd at the headquarters in Antarctica which he had established and lived in for months in the early 30's. From this it would seem safe to assume that human beings too would be subject to the same natural laws and therefore

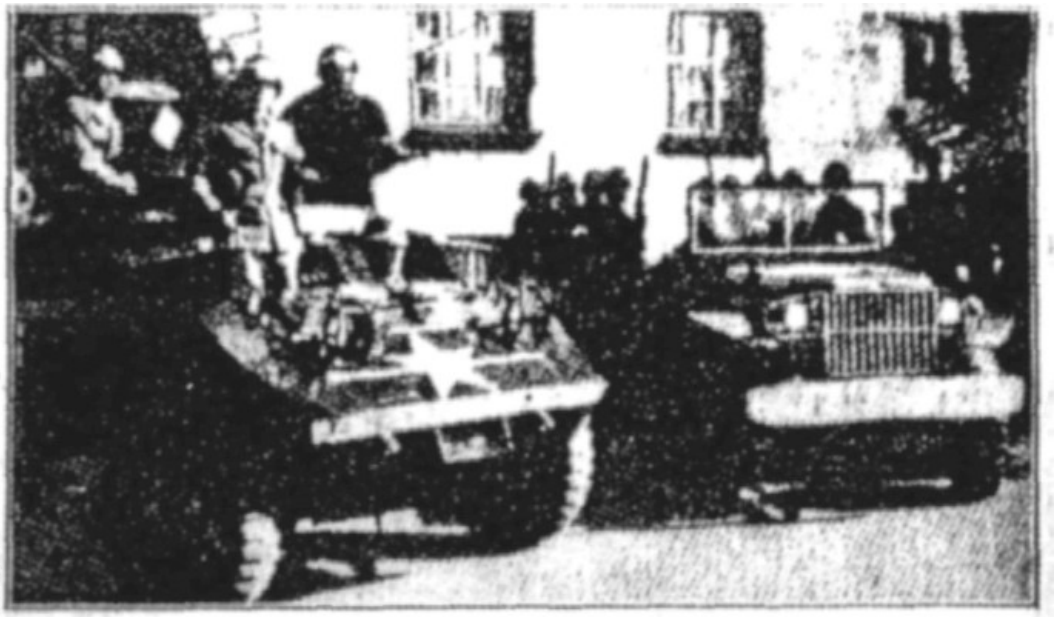
age much less quickly. The significance of all these factors would not have been lost to **a** very health conscious, vegetarian Adolf Hitler.



Health-conscious Hitler was a vegetarian. Here is a typical meal. No alcohol. No nicotine.

Now could all of this have taken place in the 20th century without detection? Hardly! What steps were taken to discover the truth? What has been done about the secret bases now that their existence has been established and established beyond **a** doubt? Why did the world not hear about these incredible events?

Obviously, Hitler's escape was soon discovered, otherwise the statements of Stalin and of Eisenhower and all other quoted sources would be an exercise in insanity. It has been speculated that the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials were staged, to a great extent, in the hope that the "Last Battalion" could be drawn from their impregnable, inaccessible hideouts, and thus force the Fuhrer's hand. A large armed force of elite troops surrounded the whole of the Nuremberg area during the long agonizing months of the typically-Bolshevik show trials. Perhaps there are readers who will be able to recall from newspaper pictures or newsreels the "tight security" that existed in the whole of Germany during these trials. Some S.S. men were actually caught, tried and convicted for attempting to free their leaders, but when the orgy of strangulations and torture was over, the Fuhrer was still nowhere to be found. Some UFO overflights and activities were reported but no actual armed clashes or incidents took place.



(Associated Press Radiofoto)
Manned by U. S. troops, an armored truck and a weapons carrier stand guard outside Nurnberg courthouse while verdict is being read.

Washington, Moscow and London then decided to really "get into the act"; in fact, eight countries in total decided to do some "scientific" work and in Antarctica, of all places!! A large expedition, lavishly financed was quickly put together. It consisted of over 4,000 specially selected elite U.S. navy troops along with an eight month food supply. Thirteen ships under the overall command of Admiral Byrd made up this purely "scientific" expedition, composed mostly of military-types and very few scientists.

The U.S. Antarctic battle fleet left Norfolk, Va. on Dec. 2, 1946 — three distinct battle groups, comprised of the Mount Olympus, Admiral Byrd's command ship, the ice-breaker, "Northwind", the catapult ship "Pine Island", the destroyer "Brownsen", the aircraft-carrier "Philippines Sea", the U.S. submarine "Sennet" and the two support vessels, "Yankee" and "Merrick", as well as the two tankers "Canisted" and "Capacan", an additional floatplane carrying ship, "Currituck" and the destroyer "Henderson".

At the same time it was announced officially that a similar English-Norwegian force was operating in a support capacity in Antarctic waters around Bahia Marguerite. A Soviet contingent was also reported to be participating in the "research".



U.S. Convoy in Antarctica

The Soviet participation is an interesting one, since Winston Churchill had already spoken of an "Iron Curtain" and felt that "they" — the crusaders to Europe had "killed the wrong pig". Obviously Churchill now realised that they should have destroyed Bolshevik Russia not Germany.

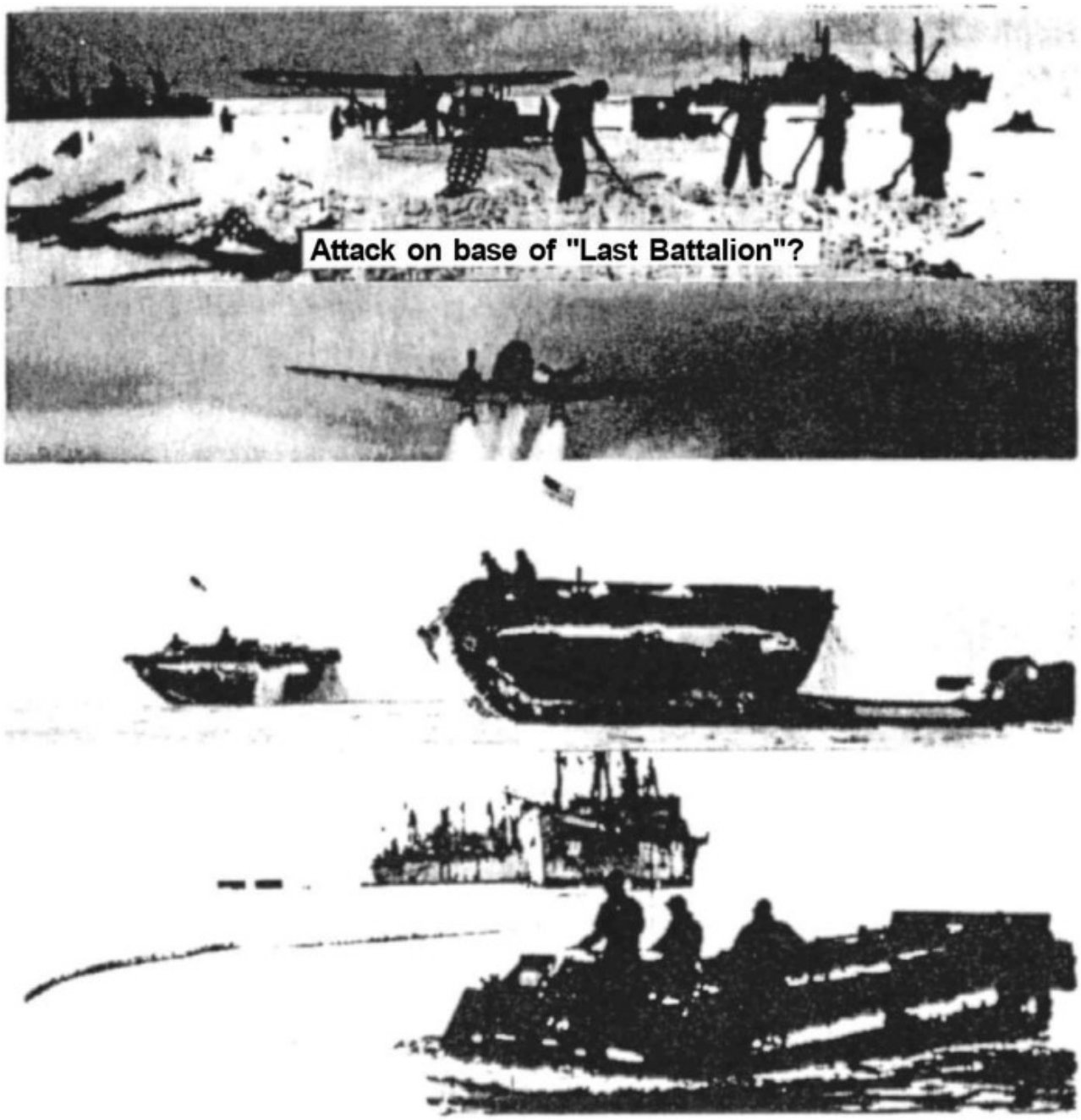
The general public was told that the "RESEARCH" mission was interested in locating uranium and studying the weather. Admiral Byrd, who had already undertaken a similar, though much smaller and speedier, investigation of the north pole was asked why he had recommended the establishment of armed observation camps. His reply, "Because the pole lies between us and our enemies" — El Mercurio, Santiago, Chile, July 7th, 1947. Further questioning as to which enemy he meant, since the Axis powers had just been defeated and had "unconditionally surrendered," brought no response.

However, it was soon learned that as well as the scientific jobs, the mission had the task of "observing the activities of a foreign power in the South Pole Region". Questioned further on this part of the expedition's activities, Adm. Byrd reportedly replied "To break the last desperate resistance of Adolf Hitler, in case we find him in his Neuberchtesgaden inside "New Schwabenland" in the Queen Maud Land region, or to destroy him".

The Spanish book "Hitler esta vivo" page 161, reports that Byrd's expedition was equipped with the very latest devices, amongst them "detectores termo magnetico" — as stated by Ladislao Szabo.

The U.S. expedition duly arrived and landed in Antarctica. With them the very latest in military gear and gadgets, from amphibian tanks to troop carriers, helicopters, floatplanes and every other conceivable military apparatus. Bases were established and quickly expanded. Observation planes were sent out all over the region. Reproduced here is a map giving a flight pattern of all the flights undertaken. Many thousands of photographs were taken and mapping missions flown. One particular flight stands out amongst all those reported and one in which Adm. Byrd, himself, was aboard. The instruments went totally haywire and the performance gauges and altimeters behaved in a most erratic manner, causing

Adm. Byrd to abort the flight and return to base on “visual” control. All instruments returned to normal as soon as open terrain had been reached.



U.S. Amphibian landing

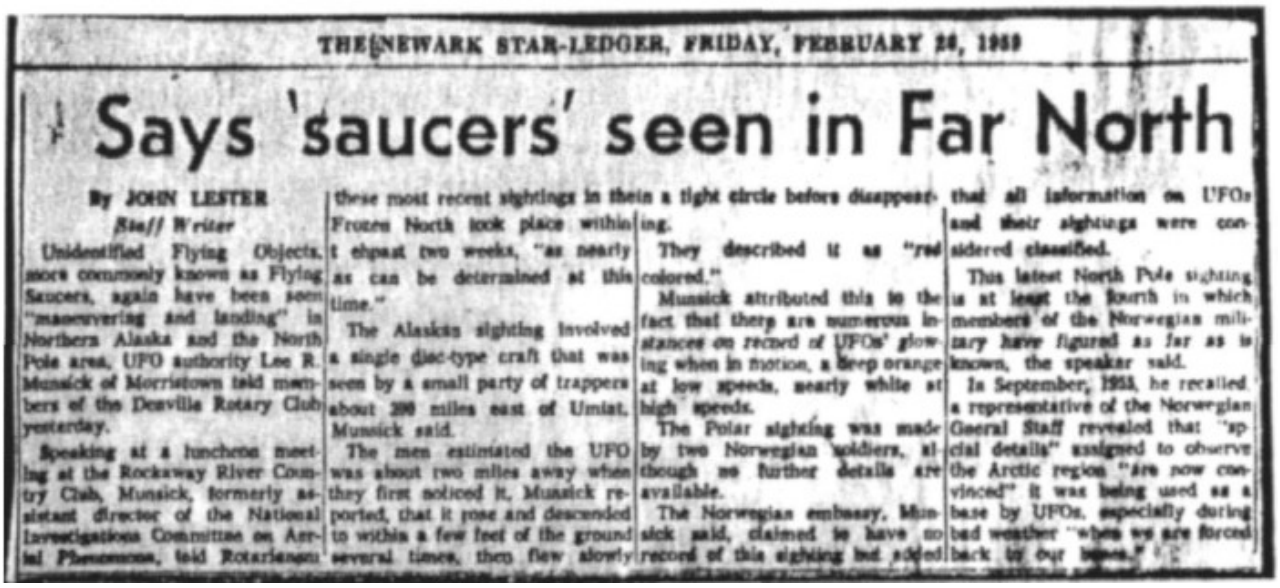
It has been reported by papers and sources previously mentioned here, that Admiral Byrd had located the Secret Nazi Base and was approaching it when the above incident took place causing abandonment of the flight, but not before he is reported to have dropped an American flag (some reports mention **a** bomb) on the approximate spot of the base. Undoubtedly this was done to warn Hitler he was not entirely safe even in his “New Berchtesgaden” or, as one writer calls it, Hitler’s Shang-ri-la.

Vengeance was apparently swift and it seems the Fuhrer was not to be humoured. Within 48 hours, four of Byrd's planes had been lost, some without a trace and others without any survivors. (See crash sites marked on map). Adm. Byrd hastily abandoned all his efforts and disembarked, with all his force, for home.



German Base? German defenders? Red Alert!

On board his flagship "Olympus" he gave the following startling interview, translated from the Spanish as it was reported in the paper El Mercurio, Santiago, Chile on March 5, 1947. It appeared on the front page under the headline "On Board the Mount Olympus on the High Seas". Apparently Adm. Byrd granted an interview to Lee van Atta. "Adm. Byrd declared today that it was imperative for the United States to initiate immediate defence measures against hostile regions. The Admiral further stated that he didn't want to frighten anyone unduly but that it was a bitter reality that in case of a new war the continental United States would be attacked by flying objects which could fly from pole to pole at incredible speeds. (Earlier he had recommended defence bases at the North Pole). Admiral Byrd repeated the above points of view, resulting from his personal knowledge gathered both at the north and south poles, before a news conference held for International News Service".



THE NEWARK STAR-LEDGER, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1959

Says 'saucers' seen in Far North

By JOHN LESTER
Staff Writer

Unidentified Flying Objects, more commonly known as Flying Saucers, again have been seen "maneuvering and landing" in Northern Alaska and the North Pole area, UFO authority Lee R. Munsick of Morristown told members of the Denville Rotary Club yesterday.

Speaking at a luncheon meeting at the Rockaway River Country Club, Munsick, formerly assistant director of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, told Rotarians these most recent sightings in the Frozen North took place within the past two weeks, "as nearly as can be determined at this time."

The Alaskan sighting involved a single disc-type craft that was seen by a small party of trappers about 200 miles east of Umiat, Munsick said.

The men estimated the UFO was about two miles away when they first noticed it, Munsick reported, that it rose and descended to within a few feet of the ground several times, then flew slowly in a tight circle before disappearing.

They described it as "red colored."

Munsick attributed this to the fact that there are numerous instances on record of UFOs glowing when in motion, a deep orange at low speeds, nearly white at high speeds.

The Polar sighting was made by two Norwegian soldiers, although no further details are available.

The Norwegian embassy, Munsick said, claimed to have no record of this sighting but added that all information on UFOs and their sightings were considered classified.

This latest North Pole sighting is at least the fourth in which members of the Norwegian military have figured as far as is known, the speaker said.

In September, 1953, he recalled a representative of the Norwegian General Staff revealed that "special details" assigned to observe the Arctic region "are now convinced" it was being used as a base by UFOs, especially during bad weather "when we are forced back by our bases."

During this press conference the Admiral also stated that in a quickly shrinking world the United States could no longer derive any sense of security from its isolation or on the geographic distance of the poles or oceans. The Admiral affirmed once again his belief that the entire Antarctic continent should be closely watched and surrounded by a "wall of defence installations, since it represented the last line of defence for AMERICA". (These defence measures have since been taken). Admiral Byrd further stated that no one could give a more accurate accounting of the true significance of the situation than he could, since he had had occasion to employ the latest scientific developments and from what he had learned he could make comparisons. (Meaning he had encountered the effect of the secret weapons?)

When Admiral Byrd had arrived in the United States and the significance of his findings had found their way into the press, he was hospitalized. No hard information was ever unearthed but it seems his frank statements to the press in South America and on board the Olympus were not appreciated by the powers that be in Washington. Was he thus the first victim of a long string of prominent people "removed from circulation" for their honest belief in Unidentified Flying Objects, flying at incredible speeds from pole to pole?

Many definite and also very important conclusions can be drawn from the previous reporting:

1. The final outcome of W.W. II is yet to be decided. This is borne out by the late General and former President Eisenhower's statement—"The second world war has not yet ended" and corroborated by Admiral Byrd's alarming phrase "in the case of a new war". Hitler's Last Battalion is waiting for its golden opportunity to be "the tip of the scale" in any conflagration yet to come.

2. The over forty-four small wars since 1945 including Korea and Vietnam, were supposed to provoke a premature "showing of hands" by the Last Battalion.

3. Hitler has defended his secret lair as successfully against Byrd as he had his numerous headquarters in Europe, during the war against the Allies. Byrd was forced to retreat and to acknowledge the superiority of the UFO's, and their secret weapons.

4. The "New Third Reich" has maintained its crucial time — technology advantage over its W.W. II adversaries — possibly even increased it.

5. Idealism (spirit) has triumphed already over Materialism (money), since only the German state was destroyed but not the ideology of National Socialism.

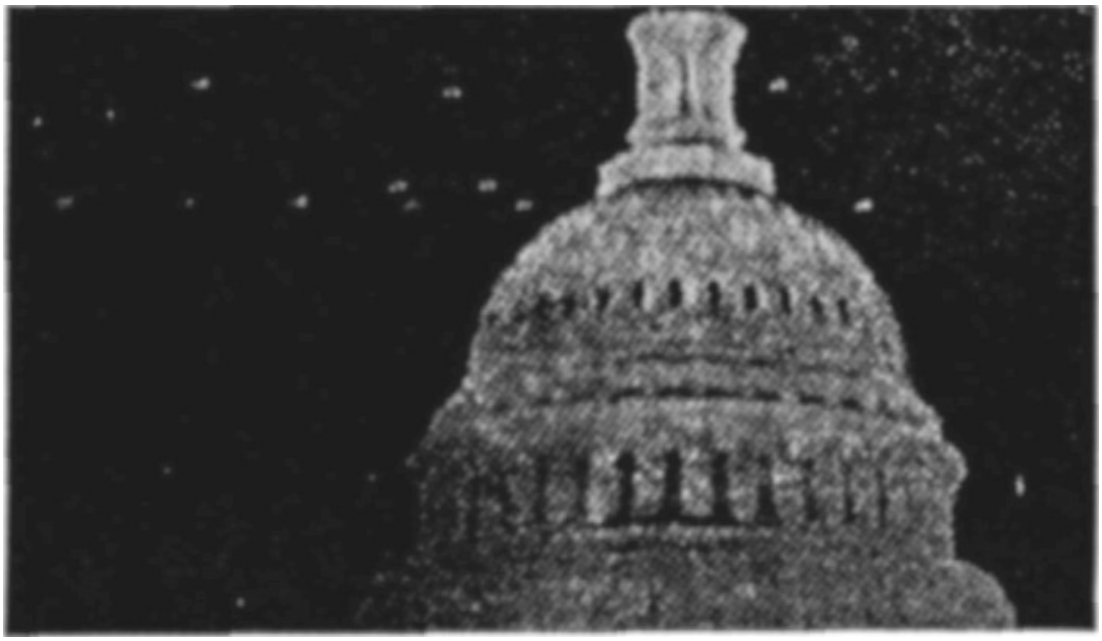
6. There has been a 30-year cover up by brain and more often by brawn, about the true identity of the UFO's or at least many of them. Their origins have been known, but deliberately suppressed by the rulers of the Unholy Alliance of 1939-45.

7. The real and only reason for the insane UFO cover up, now falling apart, is to be found in most UFO's German origin. The Allies in East and West have told so many lies about the barbaric, sadistic behaviour of the Nazis, that they now fear wide-spread panic amongst their populations, should the truth become known. After all, if the Nazis are still around, would it not be logical and natural for them to take revenge one day? With U.F.O. power!

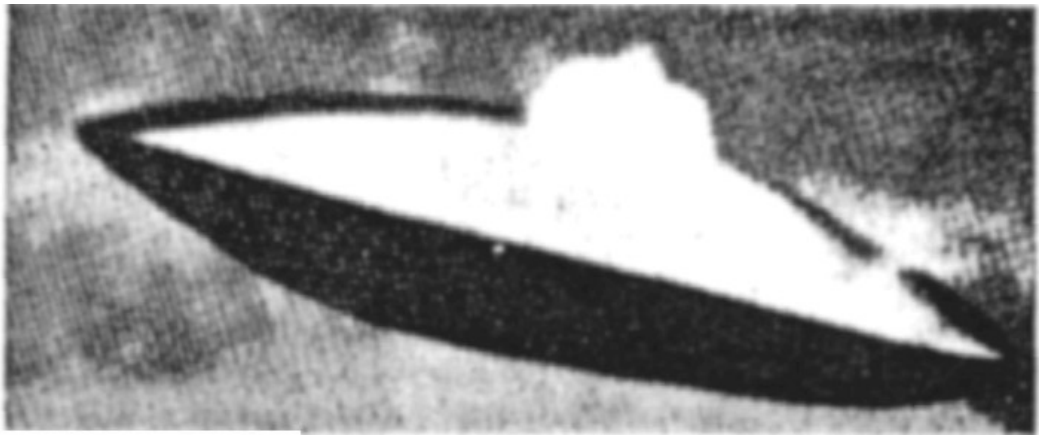
WHY THE BIG UFO COVER-UP?

For 30 years some of the world's most imaginative people have wondered about the "strange" behaviour of their governments when it came to the questions of the UFO's. If the UFO's are extra terrestrial and the humans on this planet have no "defence" against them, then why annoy these beings by orders to "shoot to kill?" It is interesting that once again we see perfect harmony of approach between the U.S. and the Soviets. Recently there was a very detailed report about the Soviet Air Forces having stumbled upon some secret UFO bases in far off Mongolia. Apparently the Soviets went in in their usual barbaric style, bombed and burned everything to the ground, as reported by Dipl. Ing. A. Schneider in the Viennese newspaper, K. Die aktuelle Serie, P.a. Sat. Sept. 14,1974. ". . . the following remarkable report reached us today from the Soviet Union: April 24, 1970 was a day that all hell broke loose. A supersonic Soviet jetbomber in a secret mission from Moscow to Vladivostok was lost without a trace over Siberia. The pilot was in voice contact with ground control stations when suddenly the transmission was interrupted. An intensive search by nearly two hundred planes was quickly organized over the area where the pilot was last heard from. Almost simultaneously a number of pilots reported to ground control "we are not alone up here, above us are flying objects, may be 25 or even more. They are huge, they are so high we cannot get near them". That same afternoon in Krasnojarsk, red alert was sounded and troops were deployed around the city because an entire formation of these silvery, silent visitors circled over the scared town. Apparently, entire salvoes of ground to air missiles were fired at hundreds of flying discs which crowded the airspace of the Sino-Soviet-Mongolian frontier area. There was a concerted action by the strange intruders against the town of Ulan Bator, where all flights seemed to emanate from and end. A spokesman for a group of touring German students said after returning from Mongolia, where they had been at the time of the "UFO invasion", that the Soviet Union had destroyed a secret UFO base of immense proportions consisting of many miles of subterranean tunnels, and dozens of pyramid like structures in the northern area of Mongolia." However no photographic proof or documentary evidence exists. The Soviets are always very secretive.

After Admiral Byrd's hasty retreat from Antarctica he not only suggested bases around both poles and a ring of armed camps, but offered this plan: Turn Antarctica into atomic test ranges where atom and hydrogen bombs could be dropped to be "tested". No sooner had the idea been advanced and announced in the press than a strange thing happened. Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. received an official visit. There is not a UFO fan who has not seen this historic photograph of an entire "swarm" of U.F.O.'s flying over the nearby Congressional Buildings and the White House in perfect, "typically-German" formation. Many UFO researchers have been puzzled about that particular flight. Was it a demonstration of strength? Strength calculated to show that open cities such as Washington or New York, with the many skyscrapers, were far more vulnerable to havoc than the continent of Antarctica with its three to four mile thick ice cap. Interesting too, that the Antarctic test site idea was never again seriously considered. Perhaps we should score another victory of the Fuhrer's "Last Battalion"?



Many sightings took place around the world from Japan to Korea, where we have a particularly good example of a UFO de-materialising in front of the cameras. (See photo.) One must ask "Why do these UFO's always show themselves, but why do they not land"? If one accepts the normal theory that they are extra terrestrial then the behaviour is certainly strange. Did the crews of these UFO's travel for so many millions and millions of miles and now not be able to make up their minds to land or not to land? Hardly sensible. Surely it makes more sense to assume they are from this earth, consequently they don't have to land since they know what earth is all about, and that they are, in fact, reconnaissance aircraft of some earthly power and have no need or desire to communicate. After all, they can tune in and monitor all radio, T.V. and telephone conversations without too much effort, and this would be "old hat" to people who have lived with this, our own technology, all their lives.



A book which makes very interesting reading is "Incident At Kearney" written by a German American who claims, and claims most convincingly, that he was taken up in a UFO on several occasions. He writes that the entire crew spoke German and behaved like German soldiers. He was taken on a flight to the pole. (Why to the Pole and not to the jungles of Africa or Brazil???) They were friendly and correct to him. No sooner had this author, Reinhold Schmidt, landed in his native America than he was

put through a regular hell on earth. Soviet methods were used to persuade him to "shut up" including the K.G.B. tactic of "insane asylum" treatment as reported by Solzhenitsyn and others. One further note of interest is that Schmidt was taken up in a UFO which matches exactly the shape and design of at least two German design UFO's. Just coincidence? I am inclined to think not.

The UFO cover up is similar in action to those other unholy alliances such as the mass murders of Operation Keelhaul, at Katyn, Dresden and Hiroshima. Let anyone dare to "not conform" with "the establishment's" version of things and we see people being hounded, defamed and persecuted.

The same pattern that applied in politics globally, when the non-conformist Hitler threatened to upset the international applecart, is still being applied' to the UFO cover up and has been applied for the last 30 years. Why?

Finally even N.A.S.A. seems to have caught on that rocketry is a rather old fashioned method of spaceflight and according to "Das Neue Zeitalter", of 5th August, 1967, is now ready to "drop rocketry in favour of flying saucers for flights beyond the Sun and Jupiter". However, not too much has materialized in that direction to this date.

It is here that another question must be asked. At the speed of our own space vehicles, the nearest "base" for visitors would be 170,000 years away. Well, that's quite a distance. Even granting a superior technology which could increase speed ten-fold, it would mean that the saucer crews would have to have taken off 17,000 years ago, when we barely had hairy Neanderthal "ancestors" grunting their way through caves along the "corocodile" invested Rhine. At that time, we had not even invented the wheel, hardly fire, never mind rockets. The only aircraft around at that time on this planet were, at best, birds and may be a few fire-flies. The space people could hardly have been worrying about us and our atomic experimenting — not when they left their bases, so perhaps we should stop making ourselves the laughing stock of the universe. Undoubtedly there is life out there in space amongst all those lovely stars in the sky. Not to believe this would be the height of ignorance and arrogance. Most of the UFO's we are hearing about on this planet are **earthlings!**

In 1959, in three separate large circulation newspapers in Santiago, Chile, it was reported on the front pages that UFO's had been seen, had landed, and that the crew members behaved and talked like "soldados alemanos". When the big UFO flap was on in the Catskills and in New York and in New Jersey in the early sixties, farmers repeatedly spoke of the crew members as addressing them in German or in English with a German accent. The power of the UFO's was pretty well demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt by the great "black out". Many people still insist the black out was the work of UFO's. There certainly was a rash of sightings at the time over and along hydro lines and power stations.

Often, UFO fans advanced the theory that the strange flying objects come from distant planets and galaxies to check on our "atomic experimenting", and some people state "contactees" have been told that the UFO's would prevent an atomic war on the planet earth. Why should they? Why should they care? They certainly do not demonstrate any great desire to colonize the earth — at least not in any great numbers. However if they are from earth, this attitude makes sense.

Unknown Object Sighted in Argentina

11/14/64

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — (Reuters) — Argentine astronomers Sunday were puzzled over a red, unidentified flying object which sped across flattened, and red crossed the observatory's telescope range in four minutes, whereas normal artificial satellites take roughly 18 minutes.

But there are other reasons why the UFO's will not allow atomic devastation to wreck this planet:—

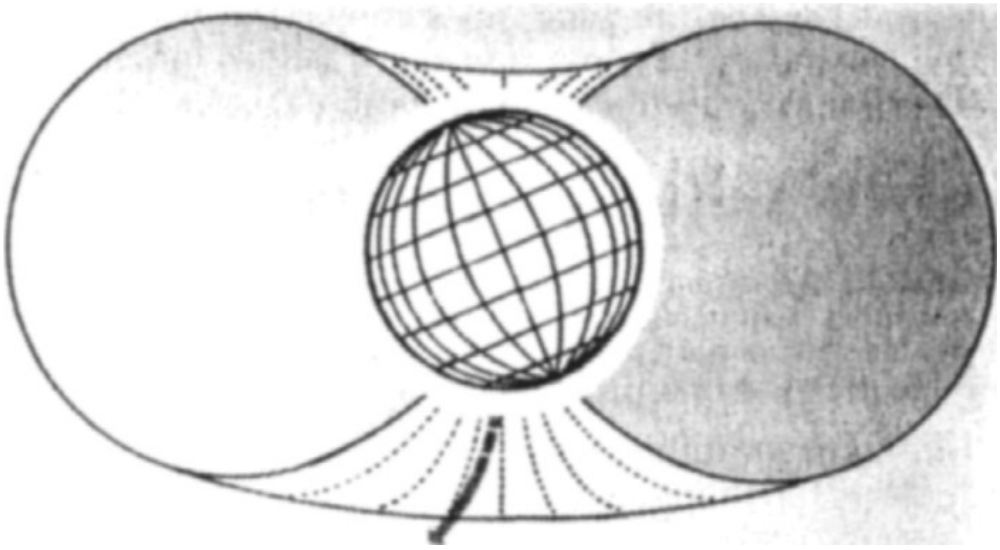
a) The UFO's are, by this time, driven by electro magnetism, consequently all secrets surrounding electric power have been discovered. Since all modern communications and guidance systems are based on electronics, it is an easy task to "listen in", decode and prevent the start or to re-direct whilst in flight, any vehicle or space craft, now in use by the "allies".

b) The destructive power of atomic weapons is therefore much more of a threat to the powers who possess them and have them stored in silos, in subs, in planes or on their own soil than to those countries who do not have these weapons at all, since they could quite easily be set off by remote control from the UFO's, before they were even launched.

c) The UFO's will undoubtedly prevent atomic war to prevent the extinction of the White Race. At the moment the white people are outnumbered ten to one on the planet and should there be an atomic exchange the ratio would be a hundred to one in our dis-favour.

No man of the calibre of Adolf Hitler, deeply committed to the survival and resurgence of Western Culture, would ever allow this tragedy to happen to the White race.

There is an interesting aside to this UFO Antarctic business and spaceflight. Perhaps a few of our readers know that in the region of the South Pole (Antarctica), and to a lesser extent the North Pole, it is possible to escape from the earth's magnetic pull and death through radiation because the Van Allen Belts open up, funnel-like, at both of these extremities. It is possible to launch a spacecraft, with very little radiation protection from this area avoiding enormous weight, a crew needs no radiation-protection gear.



The Van Allen Belts; radio active death belts surrounding the planet earth. They are open funnel-like at the north and south poles, permitting flight into space without heavy lead shields and protective suits.

We must also remember Hitler's feasibility studies of space stations, based on Prof. Dr. Oberth's ideal, 2-hour trajectory. An artificial satellite was to be rocketed into space in 1947 with the A9-A10 rocket, in a steep angle away from the axis of the earth, and counter to the earth's rotation. From this point it would have been possible to:

1) Observe any spot on earth within any given two hour time period.

2) Hit any spot on earth with accurate missiles, bombs, radar-guided or other gadgets such as "mirror beams" or "death rays".

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg mentioned these platforms in their testimony during their espionage trials. They called them "Warships of space". Where did they get this information about these top secret plans, not realised by the Allies until 25 years later? From the same documents that gave them the atomic bomb? But all of this is an indication that spaceflight was already known to a mysterious group of beings.

The American astronomer, Prof. Dr. James Greenacre and four of his colleagues made an astounding observation from Flagstaff, Ariz. Observatory and reported it to a Conference on "Moon Problems" in New York City in May of 1964. Because of the UFO cover-up policy still in force by the U.S. government, Prof. Dr. Greenacre was only able to give his report verbally to colleagues who were present at the Conference. Here is roughly what he said "On 29th Oct. 1963 we observed several colourful spots on the Moon, the spots moved in formation across the motionless face of the moon. One month later Prof. Dr. Greenacre observed the same phenomena. The May 1966 issue of "UFO Nachrichten" Vol. 117 reproduced what Dr. Greenacre had stated he had observed . . . "Prof. Dr. Greenacre saw on or close to the moon at least 31 space craft of gigantic size. Some were from 300 metre to 4.8 kilometres long. They were in motion while being observed through the telescopes. Also, clearly discernible were numerous

smaller craft approximately 150 metres in diameter, which moved past or alongside the huge craft, the "mother craft" occasionally changing colour, as in the often-reported, pulsating style." (The distance from the earth to the moon is 384,000 kilometres). End of report.



The American Professor thought at first the Russians might have beaten the Americans to the punch but as it turns out, the workers' paradise has not managed to land even a man on the moon — last report was that they were seen improving the brand barbed wire used in their more than 1,000 slave labour and death camps on earth, not on the moon. So, who is out there in the wild blue yonder? Prof. Dr. Phillips of Berlin, Hitler's wartime comrade claims he knows! He even sent the author of this book some charts and times tables of his flights. They match!!

Before we leave this area of investigation, we have to look into the repeatedly reported "glowing" or "pulsating" lights emanating from U.F.O.'s. We find an interesting reference to this phenomena in the previously-mentioned book "We want You" — "Is Hitler Alive?". On page 17 the author reports about a brilliant German metallurgist who had created "a metal harder than diamonds" called appropriately enough "Impervium". This metal glows alternately in the colours of the rainbow when heated to a high degree. This seems to tie up another loose end. Again the timing is interesting. The metal was used for the first time commercially in 1935-36. The laboratories were located not at Schramberg as Michael X reports, but at Starnberg and Starnberger See. However, this could be a simple spelling error by someone not too familiar with the German language.

Now it is time for us to get deeper into the state of actual German UFO research and development. Some is based on hard evidence, other areas have to be pieced together from bits and pieces.

German research and science were once the envy of the world. Every time Nobel prizes were awarded, one could find half a dozen Germans amongst those honoured. That was for achievement, real honest effort; recently, the only Germans so honoured were for betraying the interests of their country, usually to the Reds, in the east. When German scientists were given proper encouragement, sufficient funds and lofty goals their creative output was truly amazing. In the few short years from the time Hitler

achieved power, the Germans graduated from W.W.I-type airplanes to jets. The first all jet-powered plane was aloft in 1938 — a Heinkel. Since Germany was forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles to build large planes or military planes, research and development was taking place clandestinely in Russia for a time, but Russia being the type of country it was and still is, this work did not amount to very much.

In National Socialist Germany as soon as Hitler gave the directive, things got rolling. A tremendous amount of experimental work was carried out in several fields of development, namely:

a) conventional propeller-driven planes, usually all metal skin.
b) experimental, all-wooden, to scale delta wing airplanes, and all wing designs.
c) jet-powered planes and rockets, as well as turbo props.
d) the futuristic designs, such as flying disc and boomerang-type aircraft, powered various ways; flying platforms, people, tanks etc.
e) the helicopter, rotating wing, the gyrocopter designs as well as U-Boat pulled kites and gyroscopes etc.

During peace time all this work was carried out at regular aircraft plants near airports of major aircraft producing towns such as Munich, Augsburg, Stuttgart etc. These places were safe from aerial attack until America got involved in the war. Then the designs on the more futuristic designs were transferred to Silesia, East Prussia, the Sudetenland, Bohemia etc. The laboratories were usually underground in abandoned salt or coal mines, in some cases, however, entire mountains were honeycombed with a maze of tunnels, shafts, elevators and underground railroads. Smoketacks were camouflaged as medieval castle turrets. Entrances were so well camouflaged by entire forests that had been transplanted and in one such case it took playing youths six weeks after the war to stumble on a secret jetbomber factory the Americans had overlooked.



One case, known to the author's father, is the airfield in the Sudetenland, without any runway. The entire airfield, in effect, was built into a mountain. The planes touched down on what looked like the extension of a regular highway and were immediately gobbled up by a yawning crack in the side of the mountain. On the opposite side of the mountain, the jets would roar out at almost the speed of sound whenever they took off. Eventually, the Allies stationed 20 fighters on an around-the-clock basis always circling the "hole in the ground", hitting the elusive German fighters at that crucial time when forced to slow down to aim for the hole in the mountain. It is in bases like the above-mentioned, that some of the UFO experiments were conducted. All areas were guarded by electrified barbed wire, constant patrols and minefields. It was only possible to enter with special passes granted only by Himmler's Headquarters, all were consecutively numbered and had a picture of the bearer affixed. All security arrangements were in the hands of the S.S. Troops. Often when rumours got around to flying discs,

wings etc. amongst these S.S. Troops, they referred, in hushed tones to “Himmler’s baby”, leaning on a play in words, since Himmler in German means sky — “Himmelskind” or “child of the sky or heaven”. Why this strange nomenclature? Actually it is not so strange at all. The German “Landser”, the popular nickname for the German version of the G.I. had always developed short, but very fitting descriptive titles. For instance, when the Russians introduced their feared rocket batteries which sent a salvo of 12-16 projectiles screaming across to the German lines, it sounded like discordant organ music, therefore it was immediately nicknamed the “Stalin-organ”. So to the S.S. men the flying saucers became known as Himmler’s babies”, just as the Americans quickly called them “Krautmeteors”, appropriately enough, since they were fast as meteors and just as silent.

Let us visit one of the German saucer bases as described by the late Prof. Dr. Friedrich Kuhfuss, who died in Barcelona, Spain, in exile, having never been captured by the Allies. Prof. Kuhfuss had for years been involved in all manner of experimental flying activities. His family was wiped out by an American air raid and he vowed he would rather take his knowledge on flying saucers to his grave than to ever share them with “those barbarians from across the seas or those peachy complexioned hypocrites along the River Thames”. From Dr. Kuhfuss we at least know how one of these bases looked . . .

BASE X

Deep among the near-primeval, dark and foreboding forests, somewhere in one of the many hilly areas of Germany, there was a secret base simply called X. To the outside world it looked like an ancient hunting lodge, perched atop a small hill. Only two meandering winding roads led up to the “Jagdschloss” as German woodsmen and small farmers of the nearby village (about 8 km. distant) would simply call it. Apparently some gruesome murders had taken place in centuries past at the castle and local woodsmen insisted that on certain nights one could hear the frightful din and clash of arms and the shrieks and cries of the wounded and dying. Therefore the spot was treated with a peasant’s healthy respect, for stories of this type were never taken too lightly in Europe. However, someone in high places had apparently not heard of the ghosts and had decided that because of its strategic location at the end of the world, the Jagdschloss would be a good site for some far out experimentation and before the peasants and woodsmen knew what was happening, their forest area had been declared a restricted area. They were told that for the duration of the war the entire area was under the direct control of the S.S. All villagers were issued with special passes, with photographs; no outsiders were allowed to visit them and they were sworn to secrecy. War was war, and this was not the first time in their lives they had had to restrict their lives because of special circumstances and besides they found a ready market amongst the soldiers for some of the few things they had to offer for sale, such as eggs, the occasional chicken, goat, rabbit and perhaps even a pig. They observed, however, bus loads of people driving through their village usually sombre looking men, very few women, but many of them uniformed and an exceptional number of higher rank officers.

Since there was only one Inn in the village, The Gasthaus zum Goldenen Ochsen (The Golden Oxen) occasionally some of the heavy Mercedes and Opel automobiles would stop and their occupants lunch or partake of snacks. The men behaved in a most peculair manner. They all took their briefcases with them to lunch, many of these cases being of a size larger than the usual German briefcase. They were chained and locked to left wrists and time and time again the local peasantry stood open-mouthed with amazement as these people from “the outside world” descended upon their peaceful Inn, asking for dishes with which they were not familiar and asked for in German dialects which they could hardly understand.

However, the hand motions of the eaters, sometimes shooting into the air, or weaving back and forth, sometimes hovering and the occasional word fliegen (flying), schweben (float in air), aufsteigen (climb up) which they could understand, they began to realise that something to do with flying was being discussed and obviously in connection with the Jagdschloss.

One day, one visitor even asked the proprietor's daughter to fetch some old saucers from the kitchen with which a very serious group of men piled out into the courtyard and watched with much excited discussion and nodding, how saucer after saucer was hurled into the air like today's "Frisbees", to demonstrate to the assembled guests (obviously scientists) the flight peculiarities of Saucers, all of this much to the chagrin of the young woman, because dishes were a pretty precious commodity during war. However, the guests paid well for them, more than the "new" price and after the demonstration they roared out of town.

There was relative quiet for a number of weeks and then one day S.S. men asked the local burgermaster to call together the local inhabitants. An officer was introduced, he announced that close to the Jadgschloss an auxilliary to a concentration camp was to be set up and that the inmates were war plant workers engaged in extremely important work. Nobody was to fraternize with these people and all strangers or strange happenings were to be immediately reported to the S.S. Ortskommandatur. The inhabitants were thanked for the exemplary manner in which they had treated their "uninvited" guests and hoped for future good relations. He raised his arm, everybody said "Heil Hitler" and he walked out, leaving the townspeople talking excitedly amongst themselves. A few days later, truck after truck loaded with construction equipment of every conceivable description rolled through the village. Then followed wood lumber, many rolls of tarpaper and finally barbed wire. Later, followed a few buses, with windows painted over, followed by truckloads of steel-helmeted soldiers with carbines. Quiet settled again on the village. A few weeks later, where there had been meadows was now a hustling, bustling camp.

Soon loud and frightening blasts could be heard day in and day out, reverberating through the valleys. After a few months they ceased. Then huge, slow-moving, flatbed trucks began to arrive carrying loads, covered with tarpaulins all chained to the platforms and guarded by soldiers. This went on for many, many weeks. By now the whole village was rife with the most unbelievable rumours.

One night, the entire village was awakened and terribly frightened by sound of such high pitch and frequency that had commenced only as a hardly audible humming, that it was soon realised that something very unusual was happening. They rushed outside and to their utter amazement and bewilderment they saw a brilliantly illuminated "thing" hovering in the air in the general direction of the Jagdschloss. Then, just as violently as it had announced its arrival the sound died down, the light faded and the strange "thing" settled behind the treetops, out of sight of the relieved, yet still shaken local people. Eventually, this strange sound became familiar to them and only the children became excited about it everytime a "thing" started or landed. Soon, several of these strange vehicles, each a little different from the other, were flying about, at first slowly but later at such fantastic speeds that it was difficult to follow them with the naked eye. But now a new annoyance frightened the farmers. They had observed that their cows and dogs seemed to be affected by the high whine of the engines of these "things". Sometimes, when flying so fast, they made frightful noises, big bangs, that reverberated around the valleys rather like heavy thunderclaps. All in all they were beginning to be a little

“unheimlich” (scary) and there was talk of asking the mayor to protest again these shenannigans to the S.S.-Ortskommandantur.

In the meantime, two of the local boys who were in the Army, came home on leave. When they were told what was going on they mentioned to their folks the nicknames “Himmelskinder”, and how it was thought that they were the miracle weapons the Fuhrer had spoken of several times in the last few months. This consoled the local population for after all reports from the front were none too rosy and if their valley could help to turn the tide of events and be of aid to the Fuhrer then it was alright with them. So, the months became years, then one day long columns of trucks clogged the roads. Since there were two roads into and out of the Jagdschloss it was difficult to know what was transpiring, but soon they knew. Les and less flying “things” were seen and soon the camp was only a shadow of its former self. One day all work ceased, tremendous explosions ripped, once again, through the valley, smoke rose from the area of the Jogdschloss and a few weeks later the Russians rode into town, unopposed, raping and looting everything in sight. They found only ruins at the Jagdschloss. When they were told, during interrogation, what had been seen, they just stared over their vodka bottles disbelieving the Germankis. Little did they realise that in those caved-in caverns, with electrical cables and wires dangling from now damp ceilings, on the debris-littered floors, in seemingly endless halls, with strange burn marks on the concrete floors, walls and ceilings, had taken place one of the wonders of the world. Now all lay wrecked and mute, only worthless bits of pieces of metal, nuts, bolts, steel rods, rubber tires, some leather and some strange-looking and feeling “slacklike”, greyish substance was to be found amongst all the rubble. There was the usual amount of rusty and burnt bunk bends, with their half-rotten straw sacks, broken down tarpaper shacks, half burned, empty cans, containers, some empty munition boxes, guard huts and two or three abandoned, cannibalized trucks. And that was all. No records, no evidence, only destruction.

THE U.F.O. PUZZLE

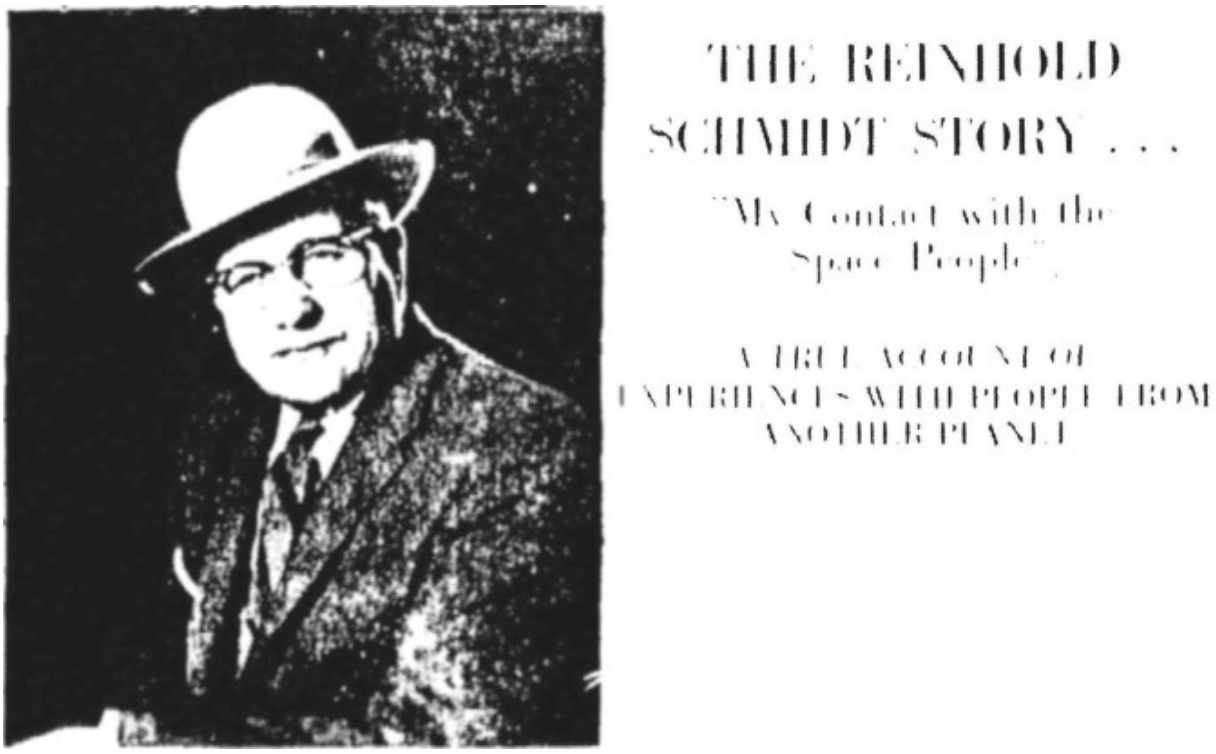
Technical Details

One could safely state without fear of contradiction, that the UFO origins and their technical aspects, such as method of propulsion, guidance, metallurgical composition of the craft themselves, and the origins of the crews, human or non-human, have perplexed an entire generation of people.

Much has been stated in this book that has never been looked at before in the light of German operated UFO’s. Now it is time to look at the available data, real hard facts.

Most people interested in the UFO phenomenon know the Reinhold Schmidt story, so we will only summarize here that he was an American, born in America, but who could still speak some German which his parents had taught him. He has stated that he was taken into a flying saucer on several occasions and actually taken for rides as far away as the poles. The crew spoke German and behaved like German soldiers. Certainly a remarkable story. The crew leader claimed he was from another planet, which could certainly be true, and it could mean that Germans have inhabited other planets. Then comes the obvious question — how did Germans get to other planets? Reinhold Schmidt forgot to ask. However, we do have a sketch of the flying saucer he was taken up in, and it certainly resembles the German UFO’s that follow,

a photo of Schmidt's saucer and the Bellonzo-Schriever-MietheModel which actually flew. There are two authorities who can vouch for the actual flights and some of the details as to propulsion, size, speeds reached in actual flight etc. One is the late Major Rudolf Lusar, author, and an engineer by profession who worked for the German Air Force Ministry and in the patent and discovery evaluation section during the war. We reprint his account of the Flying Disc experiments from his definitive work on German Secret Weapons of W.W.II, pages 165 and 166 of the English edition, published by Neville Spearman, London, England.



Photograph of Reinhold Schmidt and front cover of his book

Mentioned in other pages of this book

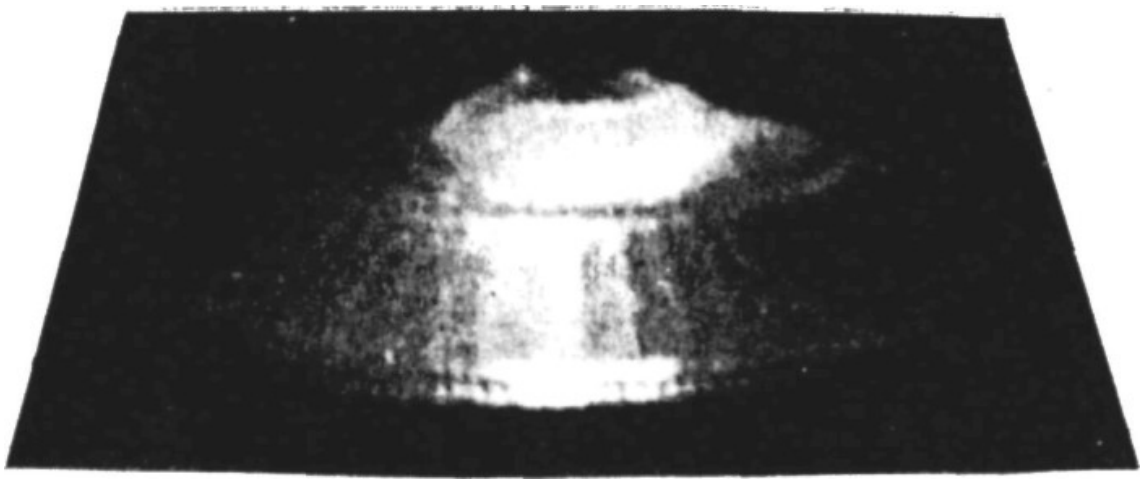
There are a number of speculations which Lusar makes as to the postwar whereabouts of some of the scientists and their plants, equipment etc. which have since been established to be erroneous. However, in 1953 when he wrote this book, that was all that was then known and all that could be surmissed. In conversations with the author just before his death, Lusar mentioned that he was going to update the 6th German Edition; his premature death prevented such updating.

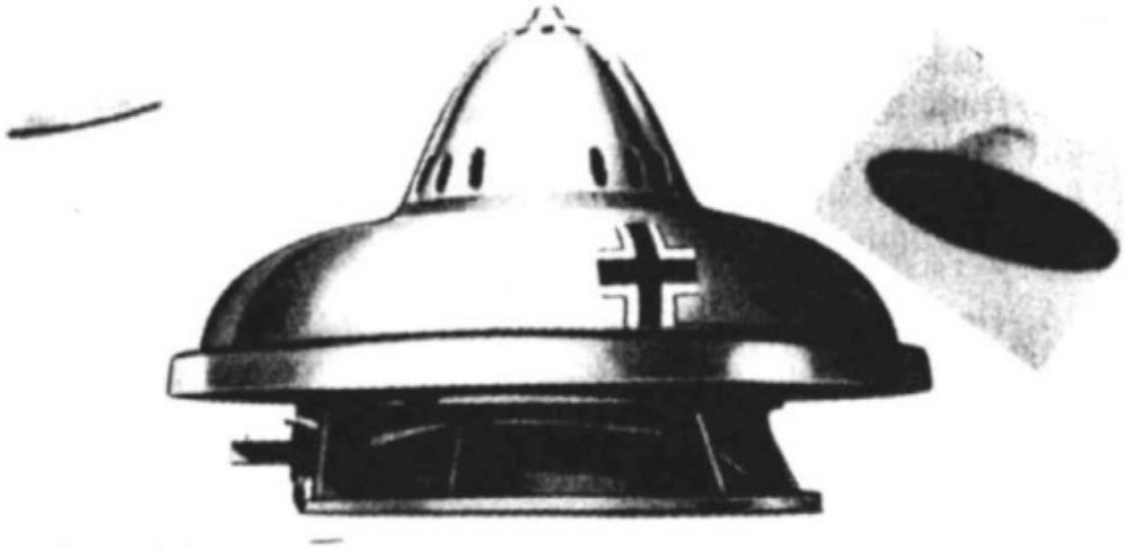
Now we must turn our attention to another man who has been closely linked with the German UFO story — Victor Schauberger. Reproduced here are photos of two of his electro-magnetically powered "Flying Hats" and some photographs that show how strikingly similar they are to actual UFO's photographed flying over the United States. Victor Schauberger lived for some years in the United States after the war where he was reported to be working on UFO projects. Apparently he was well financed and supported by a group of mysterious, but obviously wealthy people. He received wide publicity in

the middle 1950's when he first published his work on "implosion" instead of "explosion", which is a concept as revolutionary as saying "not nuclear fission but nuclear fusion" is the way of the future. His articles were greatly discussed and then one day in Chicago he just vanished. His battered body was found and as to who killed Schauberger or why has never been solved. One version has it that gangsters tried to beat his revolutionising secrets out of him and accidentally killed him. However, Schauberger did experiments early in 1940-41 in Vienna and his 10 foot diameter models were so successful that on the very first tests they took off vertically at such surpriing speeds that one model shot through the 24 foot high hangar ceiling, damaging not only the roof but also causing the first UFO casualty, namely itself, for it was blown to bits. After this "success" Schauberger's experiments received "Vordringlichkeitsstufe" — high priority and he was given adequate funds and facilities as well as help. His aides included Czechoslovakian engineers who worked at the concentration camp af Mauthausen on some parts of the Schauberger flyinq saucers. It is largely through these people that the story leaked out. There is a further witness to all this, he is a Diplom-Wirtschaftsfachmann (Economist) named Hermann Klass from Muhlheim a.d. Ruhr who wrote extensively about his wartime involvement in the UFO development in the "Bergische Wochenpost" a regional paper in his area. We reproduce here a few of his photo copies which date back as far as 1941.



These are the famous smokeless, soundless, Schauberger Models. Note similarity to real U.F.O. shown in Photos









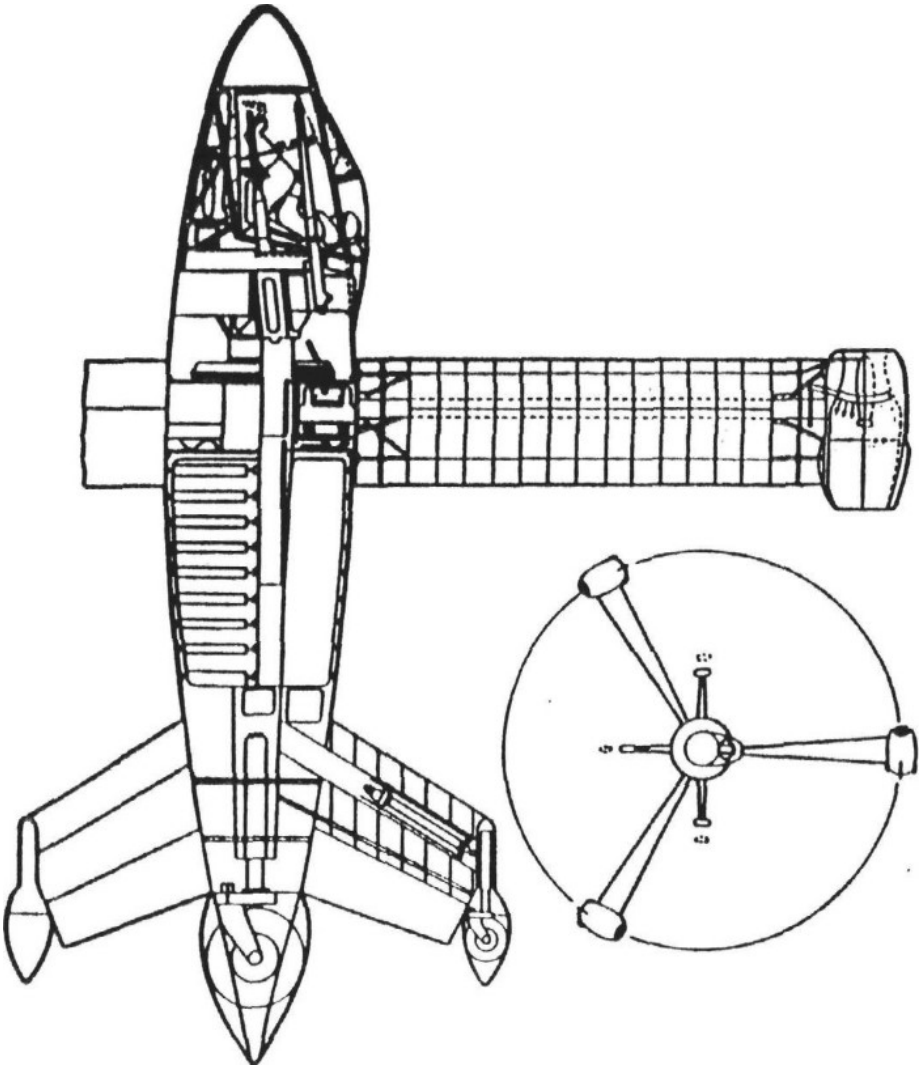


SPOT FLYING SAUCER—Above is an artist's conception of an unidentified flying object spotted low over the horizon near Chantry Island in Lake Huron Thursday night. David Powell of Paris, Ontario, an artist, along with his brother, Steve, 8, and two cousins, Carol Powell, 23, of Ingersoll and Terry Hook [illegible] from Southampton. They continued observations until it disappeared into the distance 45 minutes later. The object emmited a greenish glow "like a light bulb" said Mr. Powell. He estimated it to be about the size of two or three stars, moving in a northerly direction. (Sketch by David Powell)

The Owen Sound Sun-Times

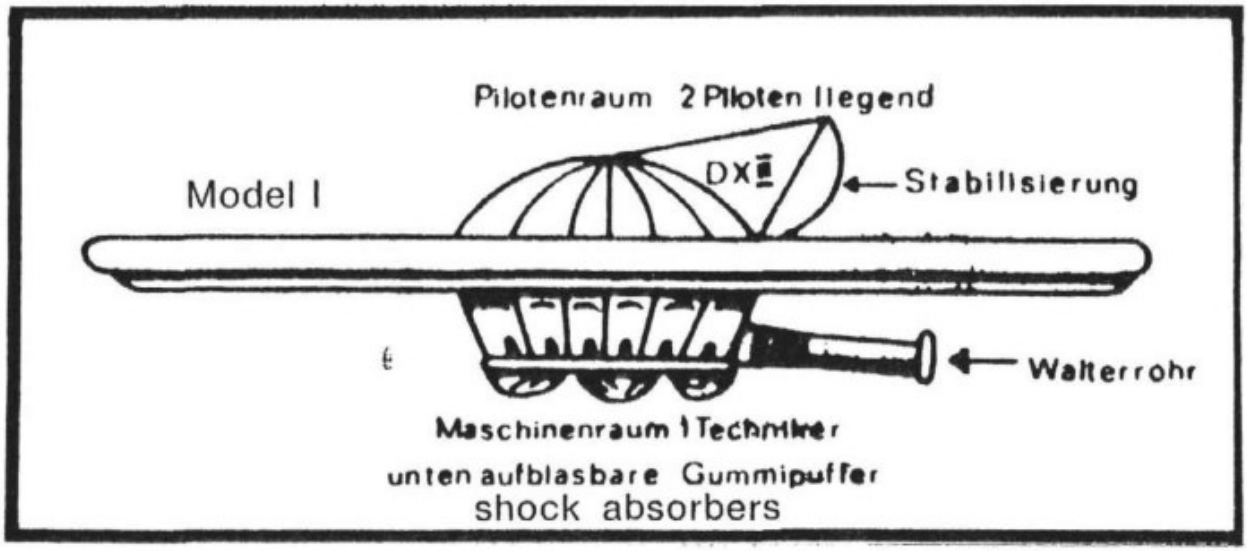
Photographed by Dean Margan Red Bud, III. 1950

Hermann Klaas knew Victor Schauberger personally and transported U.F.O. parts from Mauthausen to Vienna and most likely to the factory named Kertl which is mentioned in the book "Flying Saucers over South Africa" written by Sievers. The director of this Viennese firm complained once to Klass about the fantastic speed and silent take-off of Schauberger's invention which had caused the hole in the roof — earlier reported.

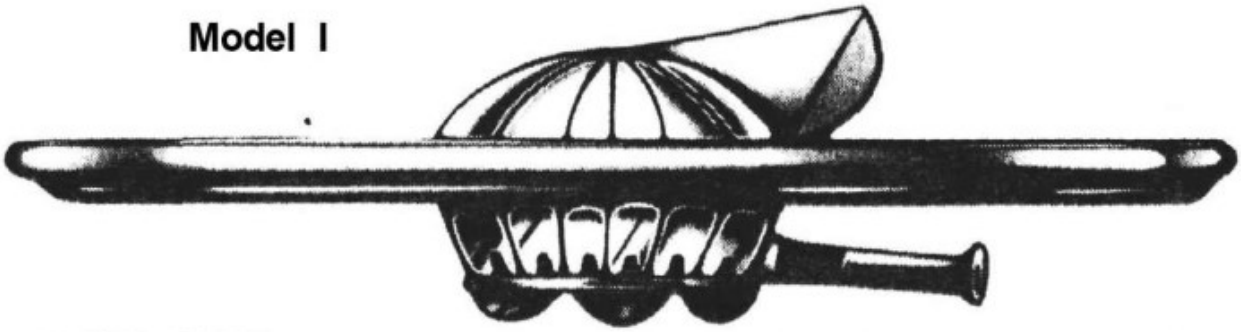


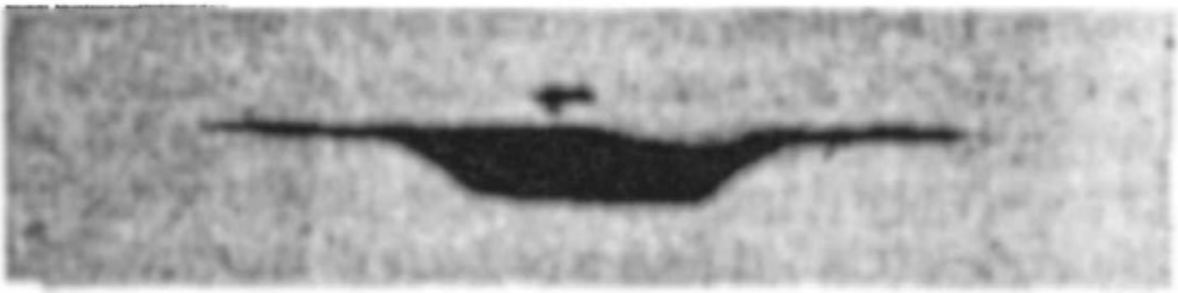
The "Verlikalzugschraube" principle as well as tillable rotating jets in wing tips incorporated in unusual "plan". Many elements were used in German Flying Saucers. Note: Pilot's seating arrangement.

Let us now examine each saucer in detail. We leave the original German descriptions and add English translations on the engineering drawings.

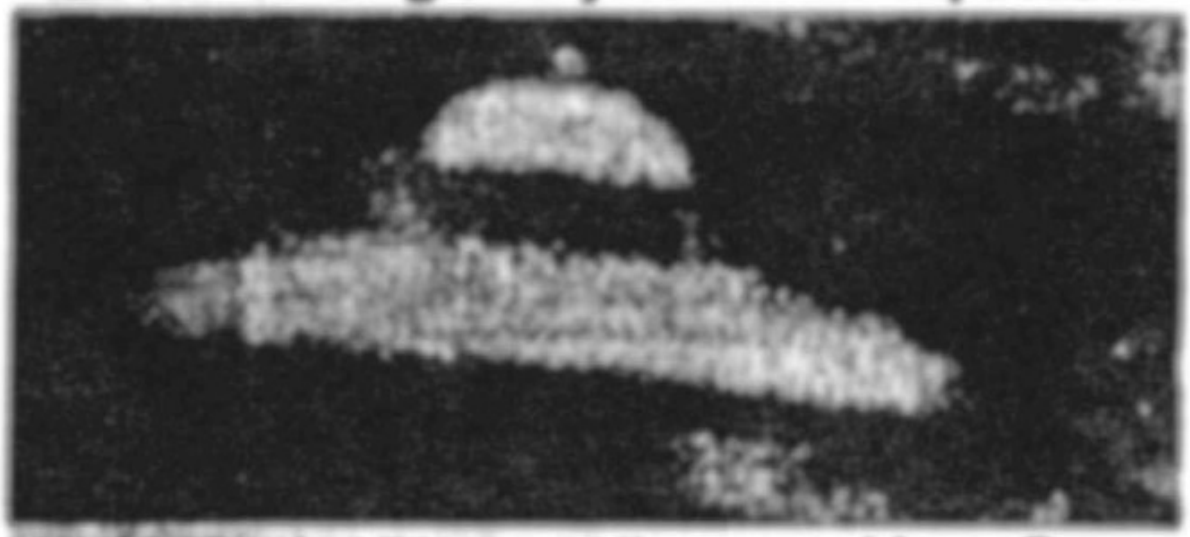


Model I

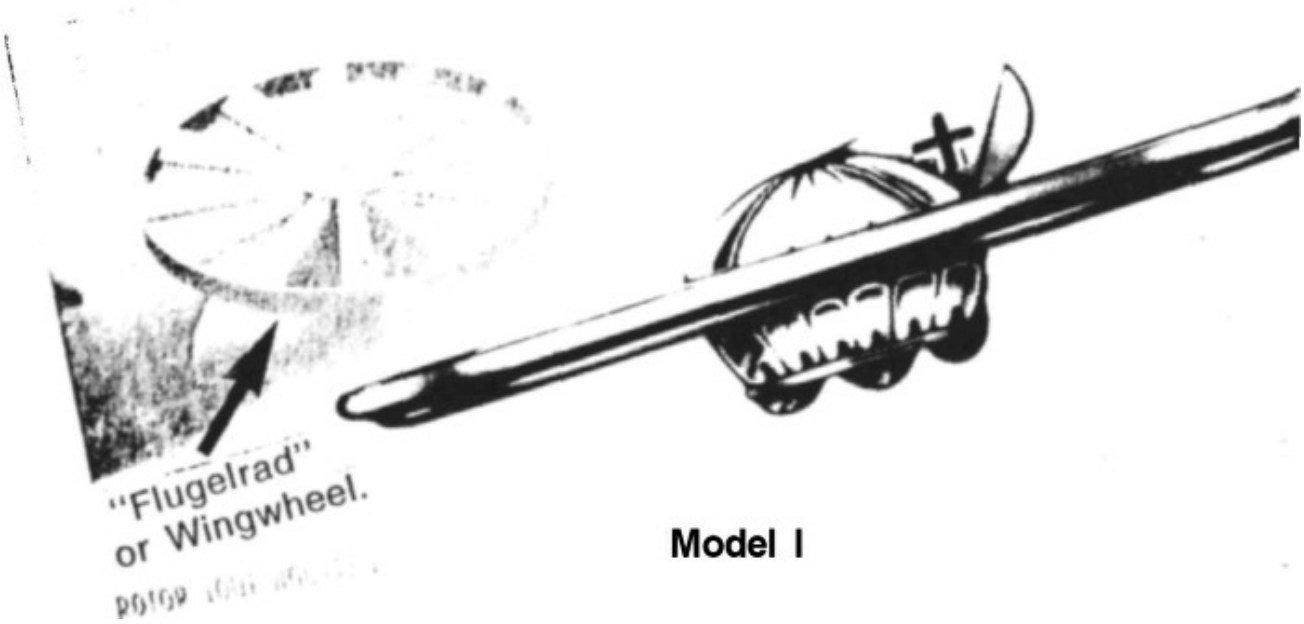




1969: A single object in Goias, Brazil.



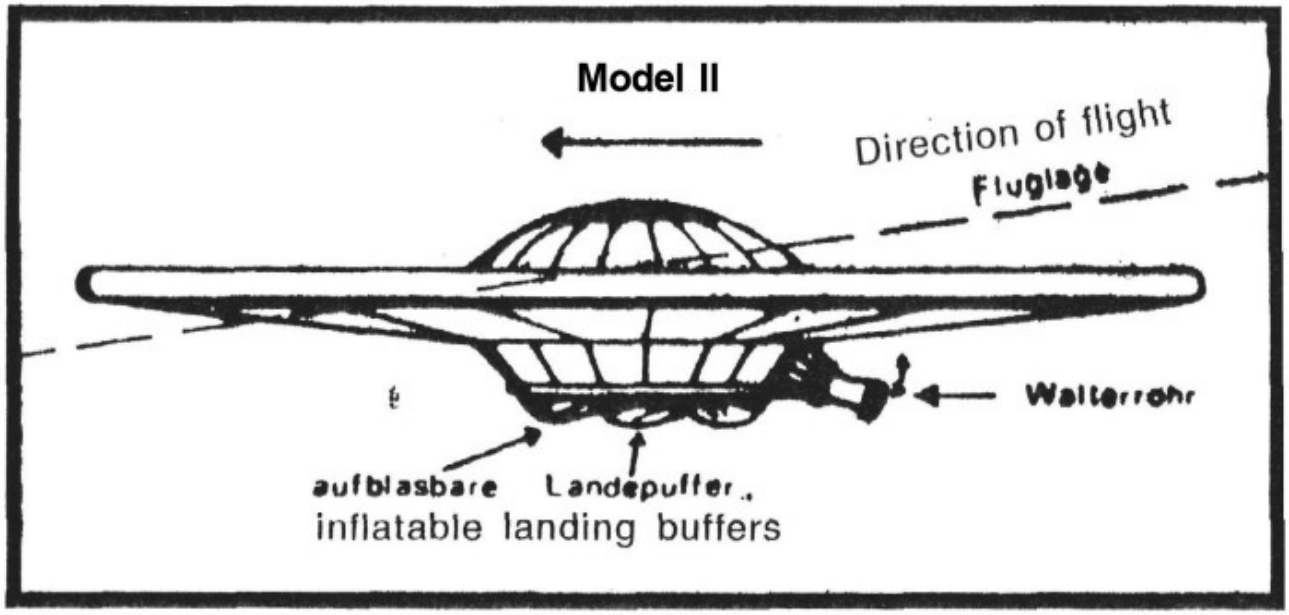
1973: In the Rimac valley near Lima, Peru.

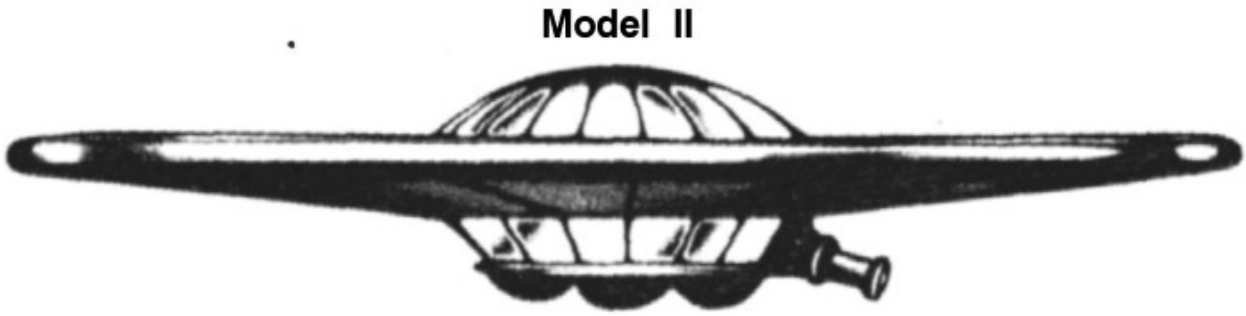


Model I

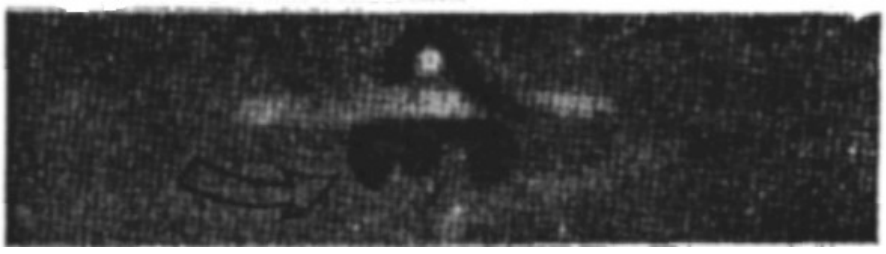
This prototype was first test-flown in 1941-42; it is also the world's first vertical takeoff flying vehicle. It has similar flight characteristics as the Schauberger models but it was less stable. The wings which issued from the centre of the craft like spokes towards the outer rim, were tillable. The Germans called that "Flugelrad" or Wingwheel. This caused the designers immense problems because the smallest imbalance caused the wingwheel to vibrate and this vibration increased at high speeds and was the cause on many occasions of wrecked machines. Perhaps the best comparison is to the tire of a car that is not properly balanced or is unevenly worn. Since the r.p.m.'s were so utterly fantastic, the problems faced by the designers can be easily appreciated even by the layman. Whilst car wheel balancing can be corrected by adding lead slugs to the rims of the wheels, German UFO scientists could employ no such crude remedy and so it was repeatedly "back to the drawing board" and it was absolute perfect workmanship which finally eradicated the problem. This model was test-flown with the standard German Rocketmotor then in use and called the Walterrohr. Because of its tremendous speeds, fuel consumption was very high and there was not sufficient tank space on board. At first, the pilot sat in a reclining contour seat as in an airplane. Later the position was changed to lying flat. Provision was made for one flight mechanic whose compartment can be seen below the "Flugelrad". The jet engines on all conventionally propelled flying saucers were manouverable or tillable in order to achieve what is called the "Coandaeffeckt" which results in the vertical take-off of the craft. Many improvements were naturally made in the course of the experiments and flight trials.

More German hardware

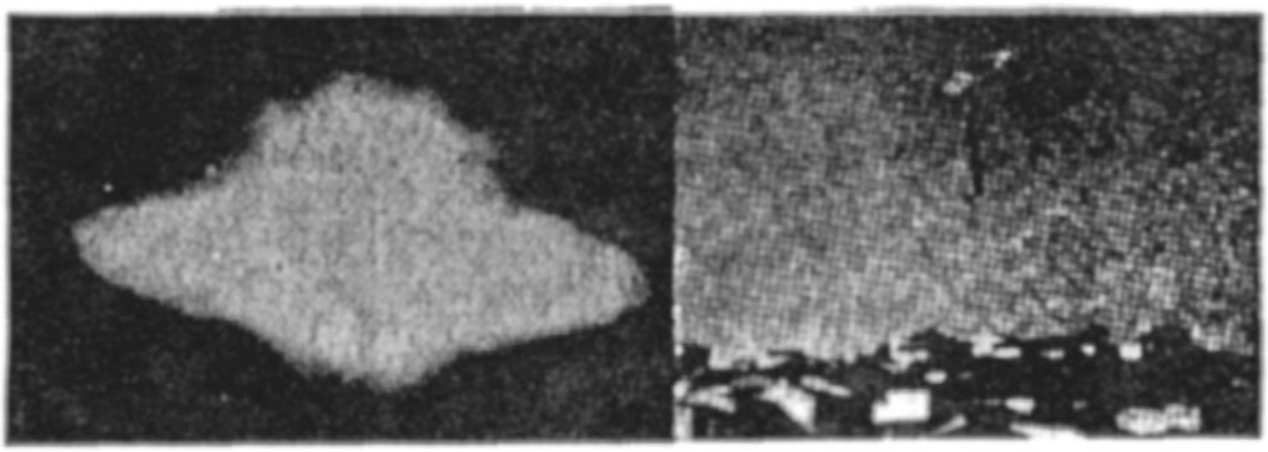




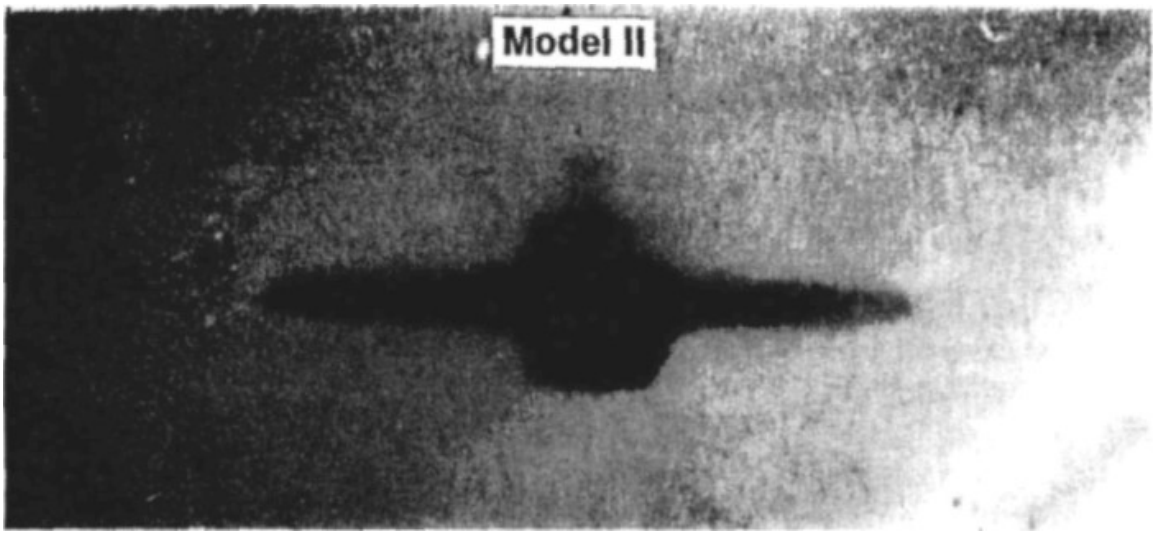
These photographs are identical to the German craft, even including the "inflatable" airbags or cushions that were lowered when coming in for a landing (photos from Australia)



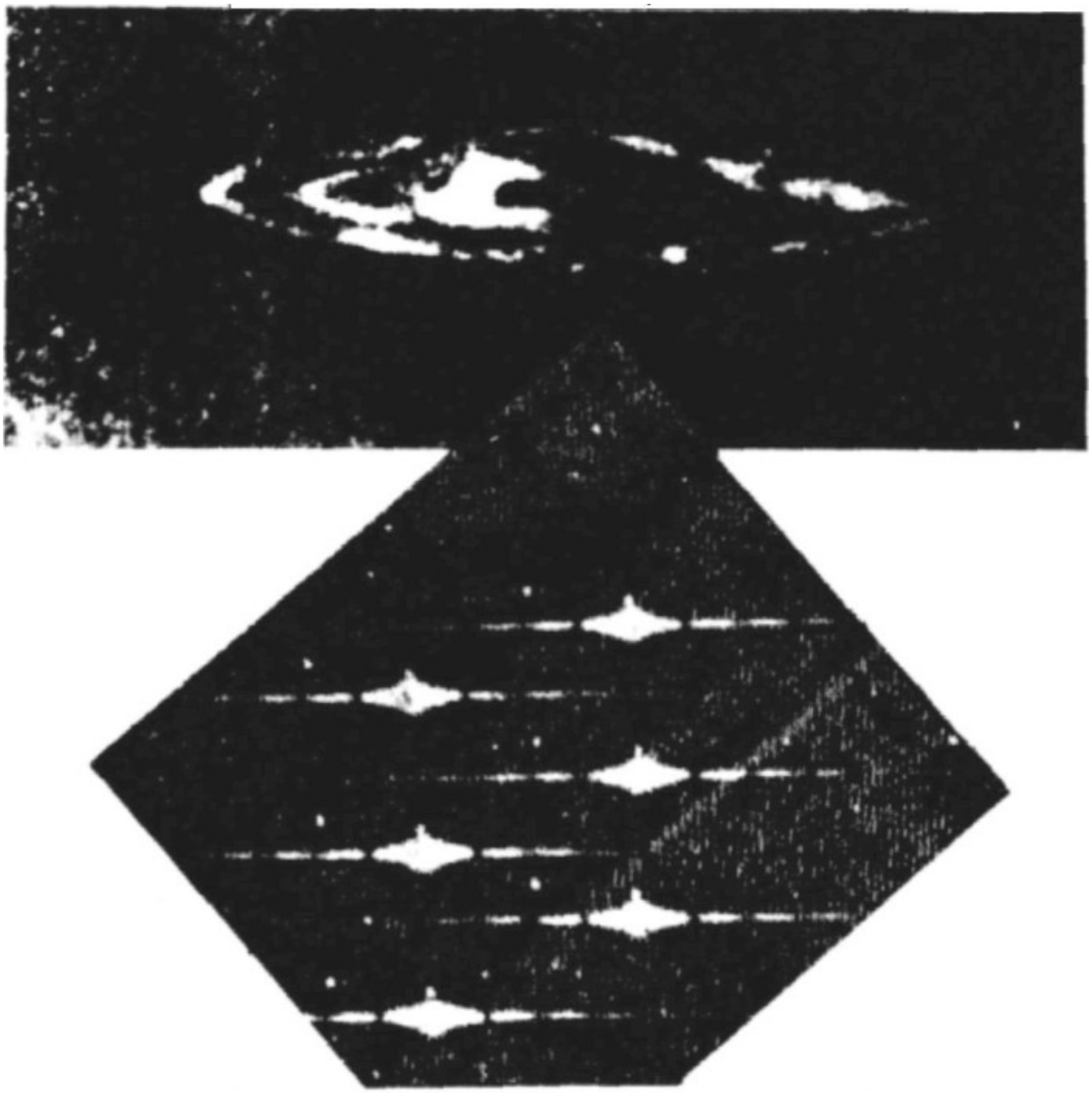
Another U.F.O., closely resembling the German type.



German spacecraft?

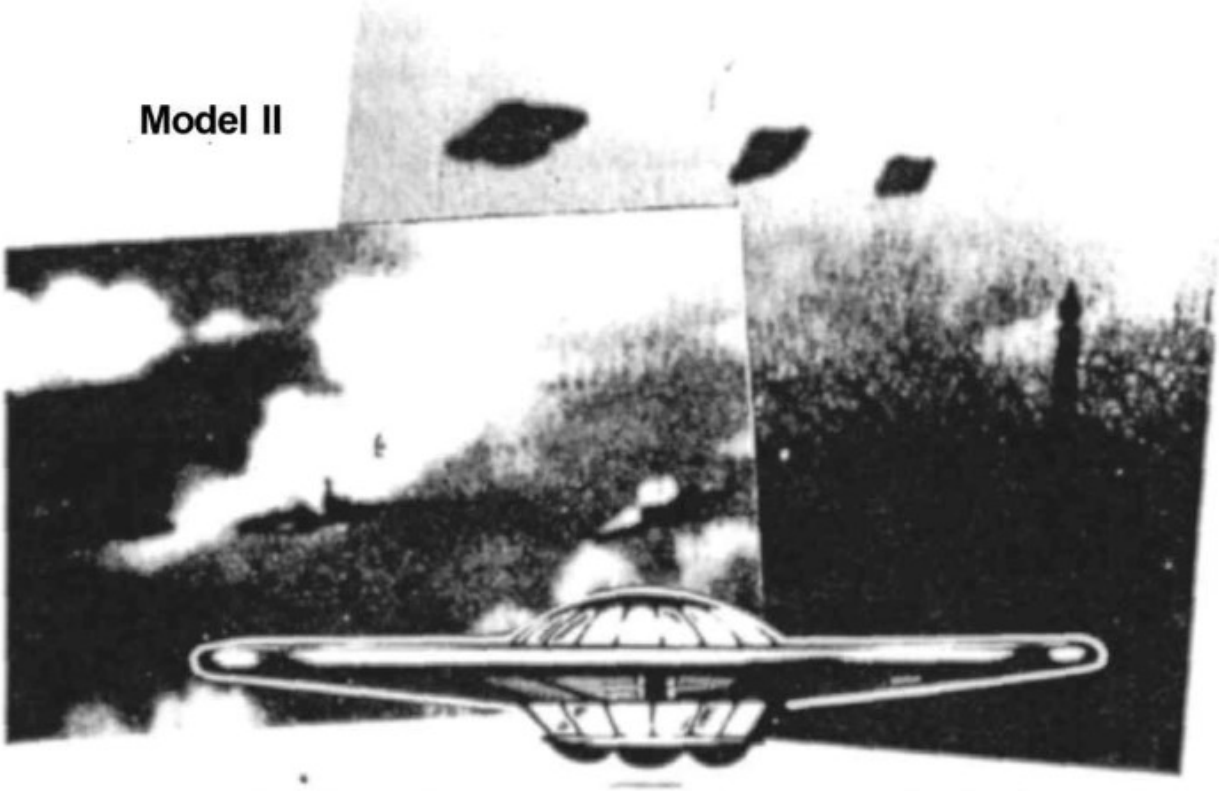


Photographed by Jose Martinez Carrasco June 1969. Serra Dourada, Brazil



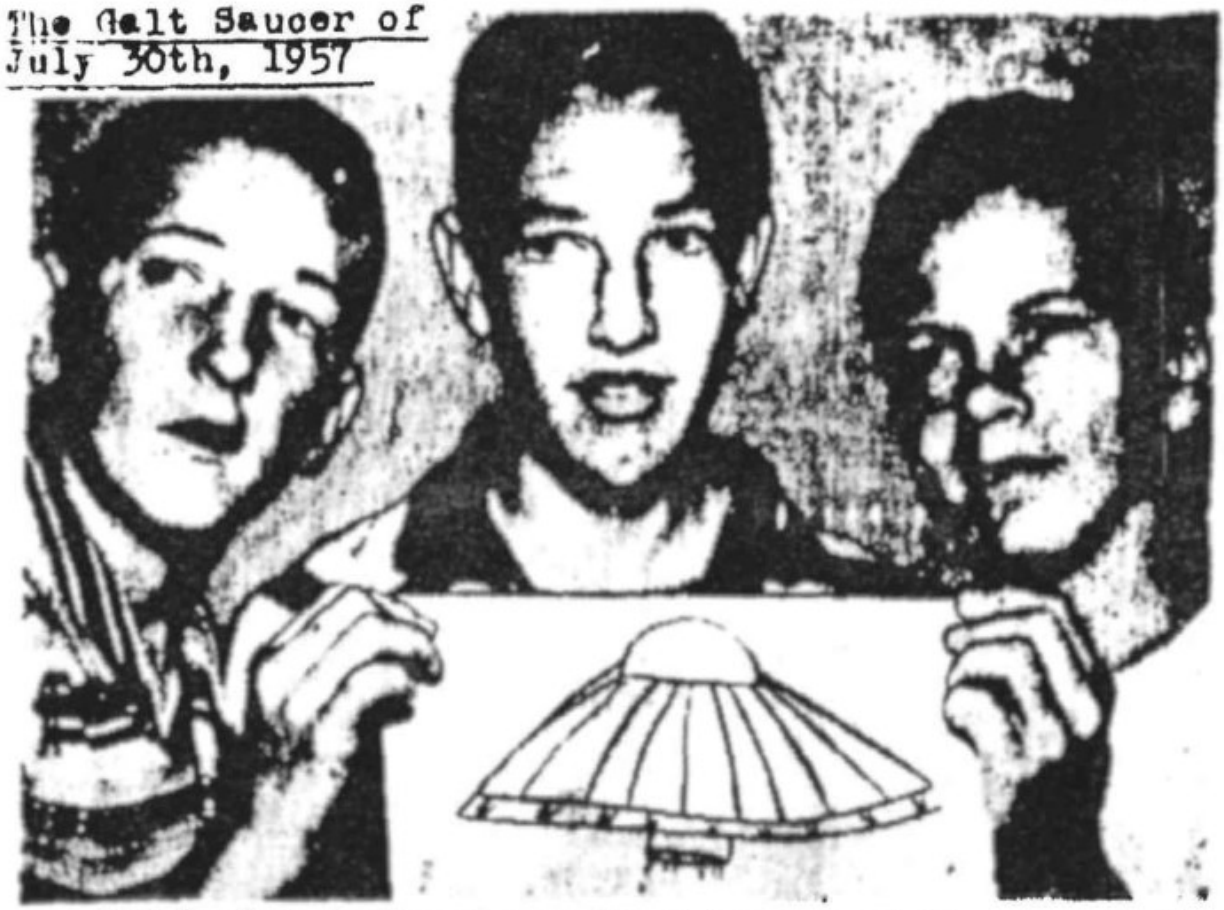
This picture of six flying objects was taken near Vienna in Austria. T he National Aeronautics and Space Administration said: "We have no conception of what the phenomenon is."

Model II



GIANT PRINTS PRESSED INTO EARTH AT SCENE WHERE BOY CLAIMS SAUCER LANDED

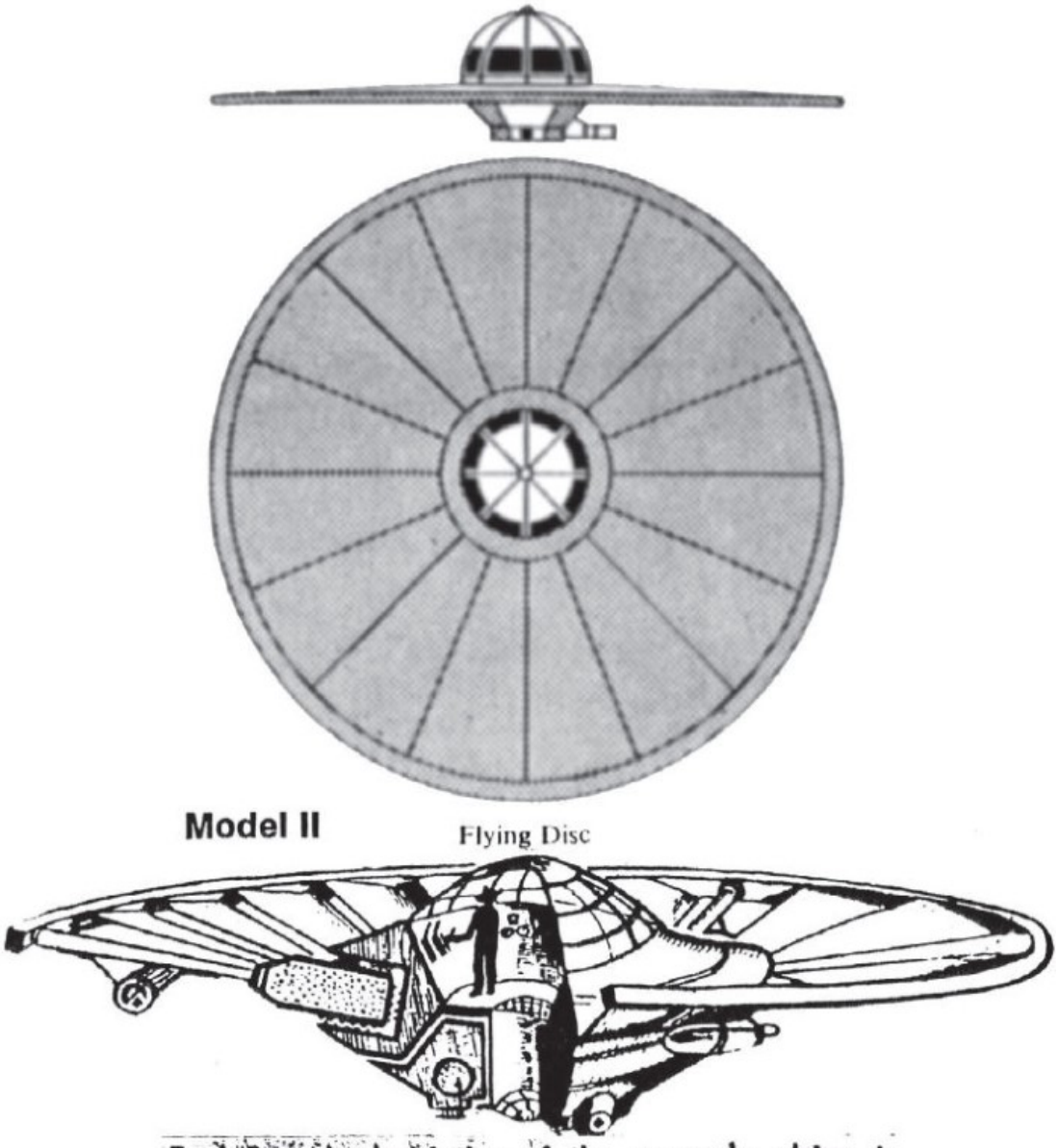
The Galt Saucer of July 30th, 1957



Jack Stephens (centre) who says he watched a round silver-covered object hover for 40 minutes before landing, shows a sketch of what he saw to chums Jerry Pawelko (left) and Danny Oliver. He said the saucer was about 35 feet in

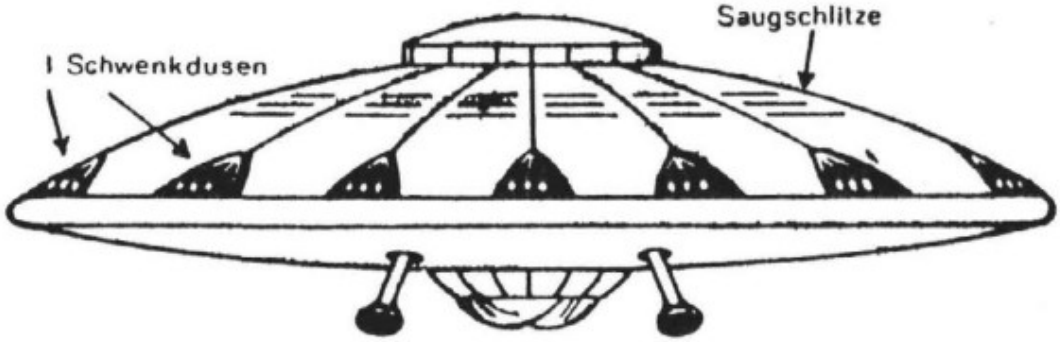
Model II embodies some of these changes. The size has been increased to accomodate two pilots lying in a prone position and the engine compartment as well as fuel carrying capacity have been increased. This model also used an airplane-like rudder steering-assist mechanism for stabilization. Speeds of between 1000-2000 km/hour were reportedly achieved. The problem of wheel balancing had been solved and the wingscrew or wing propeller arrangement worked to satisfaction. The German terms coined at the time were "Vertikalzugschraube" or vertical pull propeller. As soon as the desired height was reached the propeller blades were adjusted to a very flat angle and now the pull up propeller became the "Tragschraube" or carrying propeller — very similar to the principle of the helicopter.

Mentioned in other pages of this book



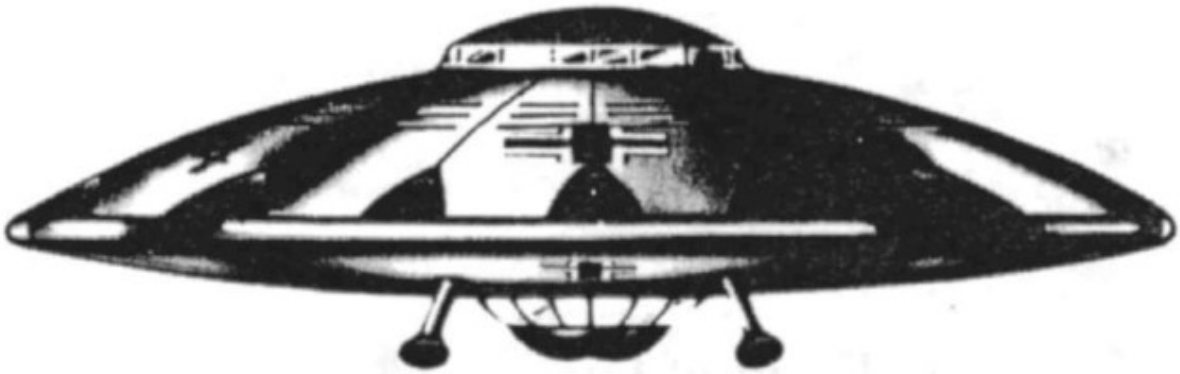
Fred Regan's description of the saucer he claims to have been in is very similar to a design by Schriever.

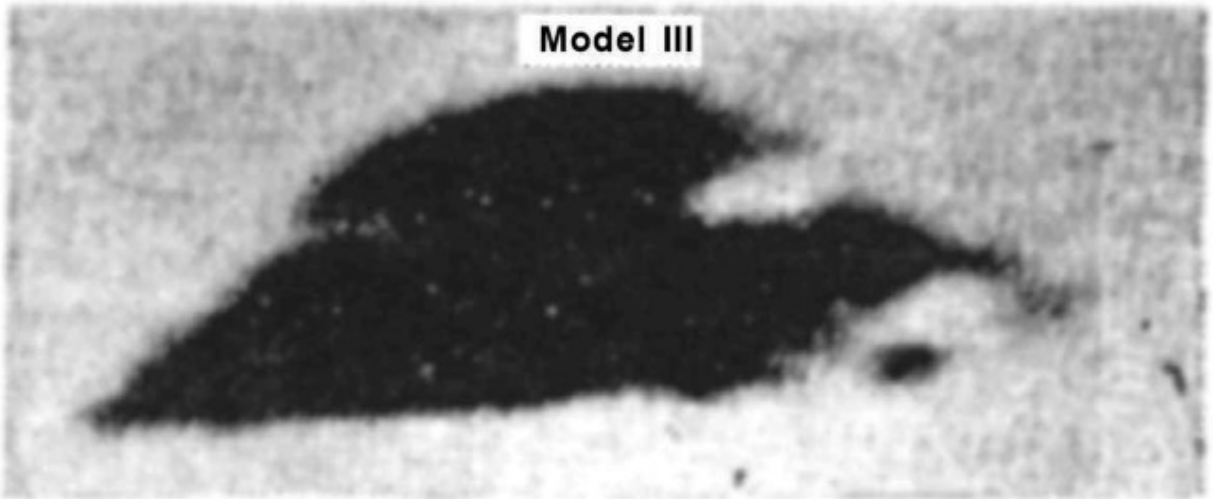
Model III



Ballenzo – Schriever – Miethe – Diskus"

Start - und Landebeine, unten aufblasbare Gummipuffer, ein- und ausfahrbar

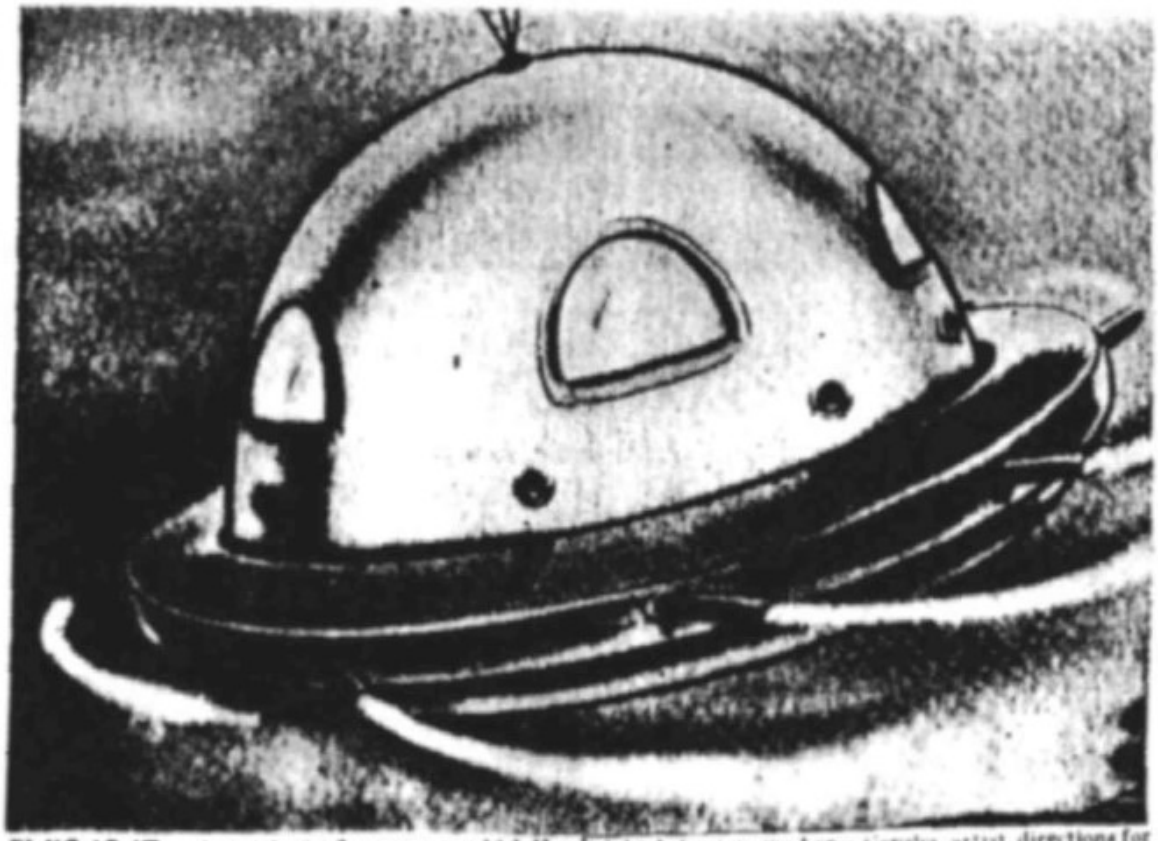




1951: Over a mountain near Riverside, Calif.



Saucer over Rouen, France



THIS IS IT

'Saucer' in Front of Car

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SIGHTED BY 7 GIRLS

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Pa., contends

He's shown

right, below, giving Lorin Gonsler, artist, directions for sketch. At board, officers of Reading discount recent saucer sightings in that area. (AP Wirephoto)

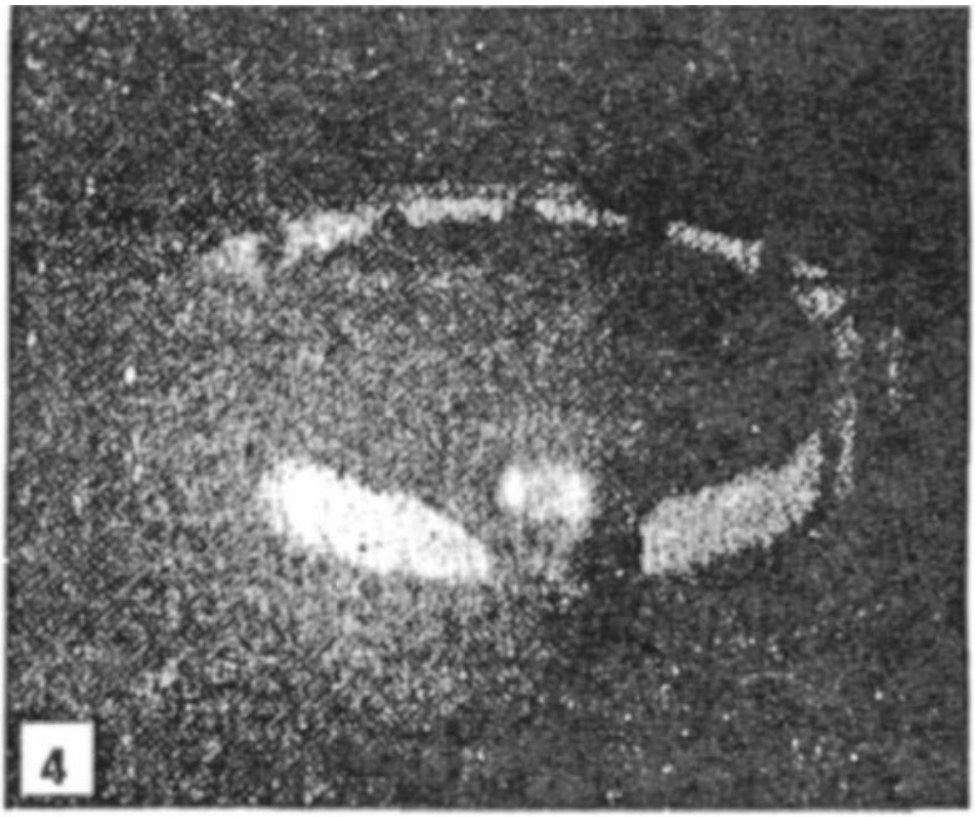


TURNING OUT SKETCH OF A "SAUCER"



Model III

The previous few pages and some of the following ones show quite clearly the trend in U.F.O. development. Significantly some of the best photos, originated in South America and Europe. They span over 30 years.



This disc-like craft was photographed over Alberton, South Australia. Experts say it could not be an aircraft or a satelite.

"Sightings" Boom in Mexico



A REAL FLYING SAUCER, at least that's the claim, shows clearly in this photograph taken by a businessman during an otherwise routine trip in Northern Mexico. It was one of dozens of such sightings during a 2-month period.

Illuminated cupola of German Model II or III?

INTELLIGENCE MANUAL SHOWS FLYING DISCS

U.S. Intelligence Manual talking of saucers

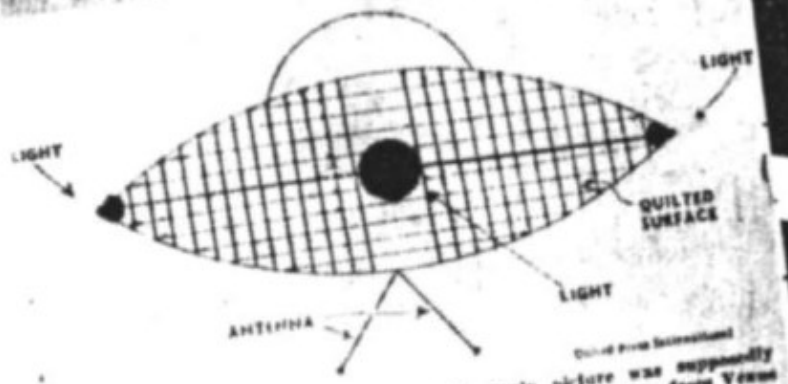
Pilot Chases 50-F
Saucer









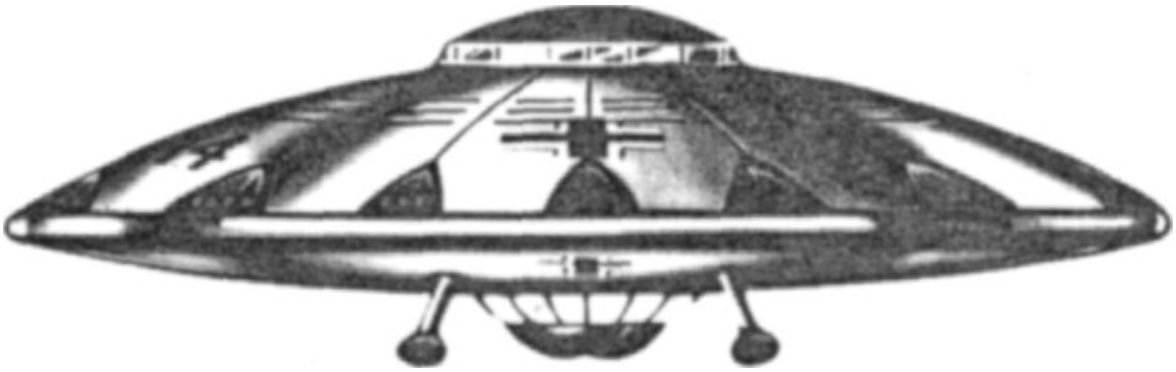


PICTURE OF A SAUCER: The top diagram, from a book published in 1953, shows a spacecraft that bears a close resemblance to the composite drawing (below) of an unidentified flying object which many people reported seeing last week in Michigan.

The early picture was supposedly produced by a creature from Venus who visited saucer buff George Adamski in California, took away Adamski's negative of his spacecraft, and returned with this substitute photo with an undecoded message.



Photographed by Henk Beverloo, 5th April, 1959. Rotterdam



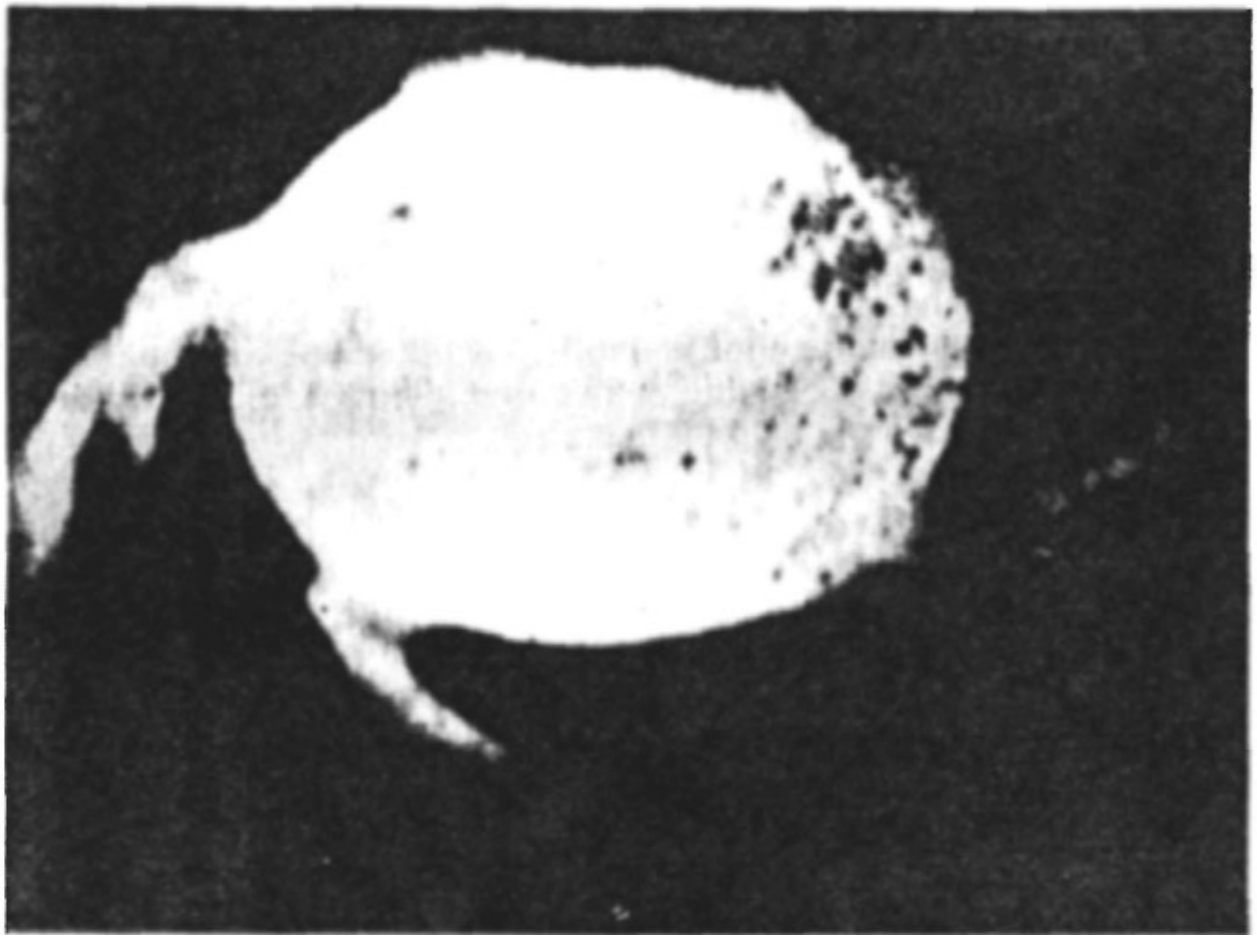
Model III last known German prototype

Model III This is the final model; some experts refer to it as the Bellonzo-Schriever-Miethe Diskus. This version was produced in various sizes, some as large as 135 feet and even 225 feet in diameter. Actual speeds recorded were over 2000 km/hour. Conventional rocket motor speeds of up to 4000 km/hour were anticipated. As is clearly visible, this model already incorporated a very aerodynamic shape and for the first time also had retractable stilt-like shock absorbers. The craft is ringed by a sophisticated arrangement of tiltable directional jets which guaranteed not only a tremendously increased manoeuverability but also increased speed and better fuel utilization. The top of the craft was ringed by suction openings which had a dual purpose; a) to cool the engine and b) to create a near vacuum into which the craft could glide or ascend into with much less effort. The flight mechanic or flight technicians' compartment was retractable during high speed flying and was only lowered during slow flying or upon landing.

In this advanced, conventional, design can clearly be seen all the basic ingredients of just about every subsequent UFO type which has been sighted and photographed around the world. Undoubtedly, these models were also powered by Viktor Schauberger's flameless and smokeless implosion motors. However, to date, no German technicians who ever worked on these advanced machines have volunteered their knowledge.

We reproduce here many photographs and drawings of UFO vehicles which have been sighted and photographed and any interested UFO investogator can readily compare them with the Model III German flying saucer.

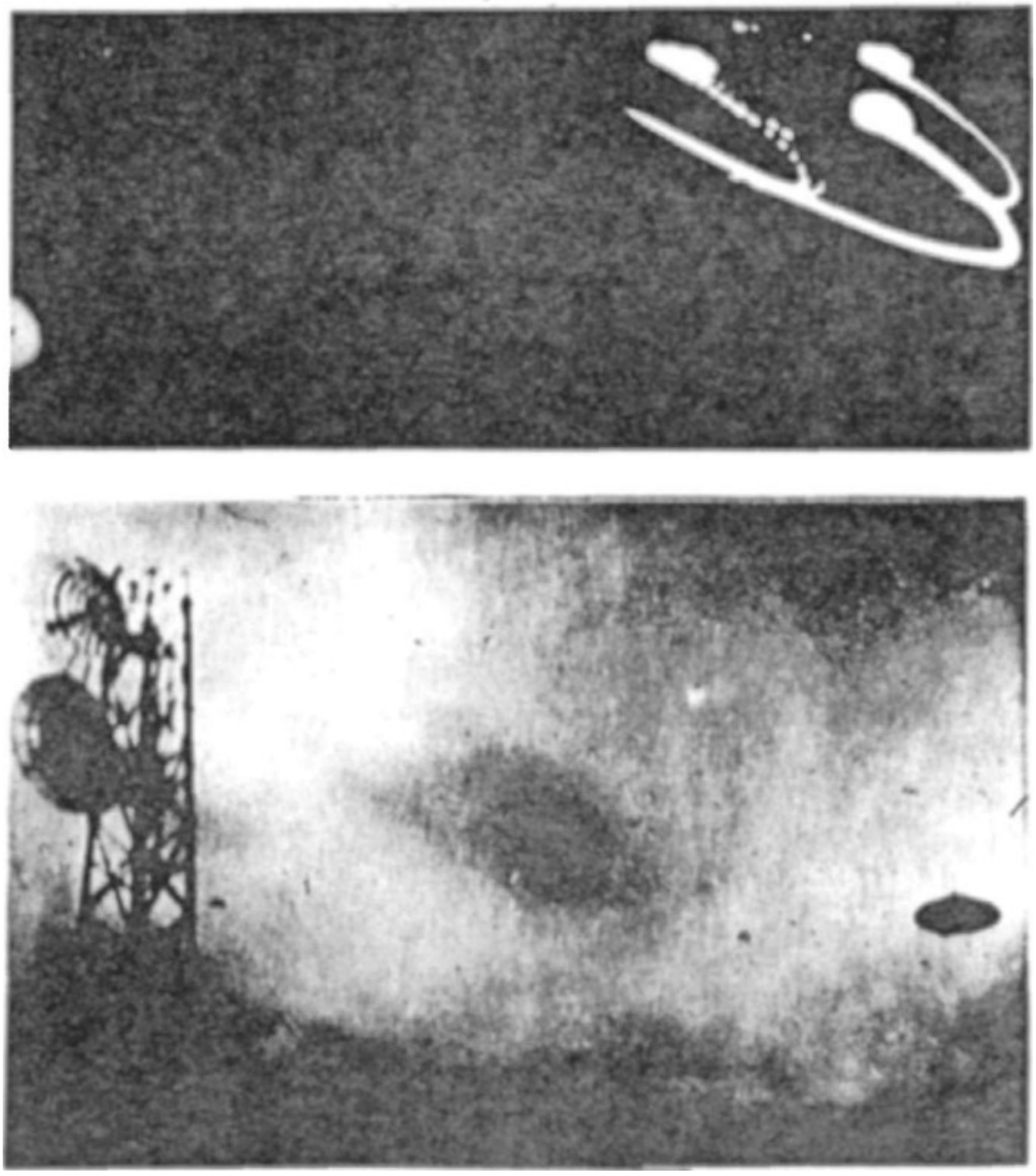




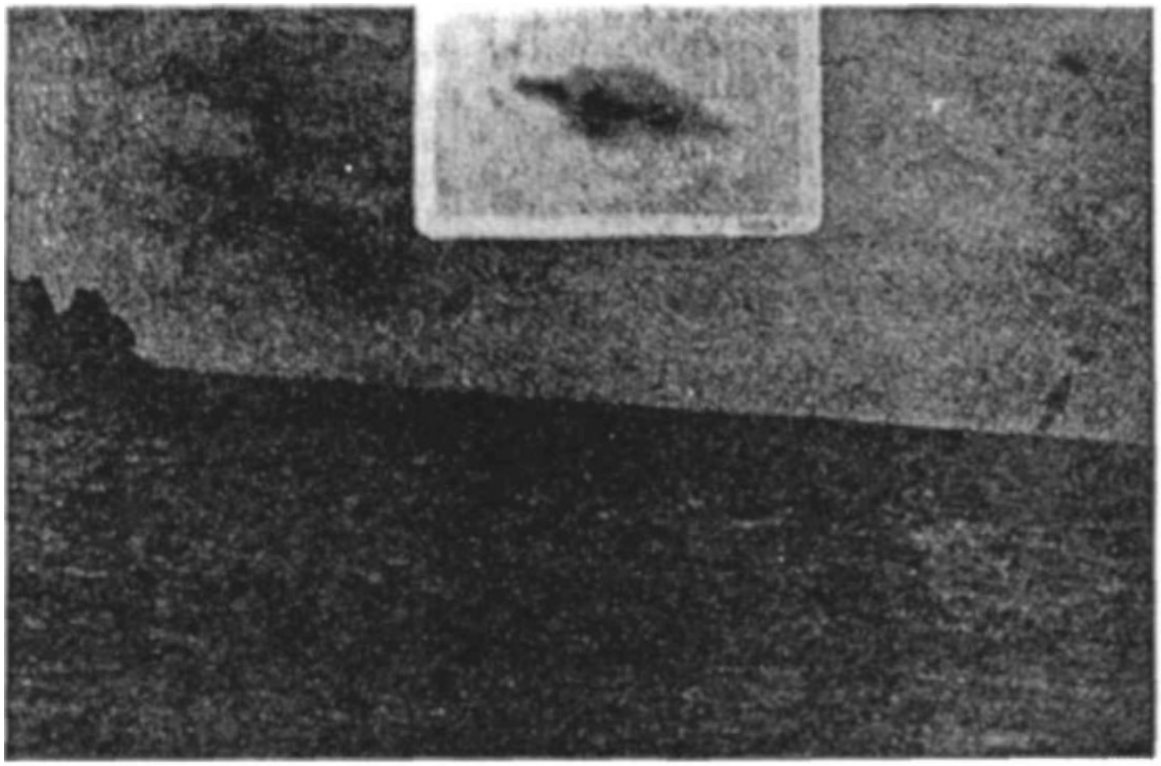
Photographed by Enrique Hausemann-Muller, April 24th, 1950. Spain “Wirbelrad” effect; caused by jet emissions on outer rim, clearly visible.



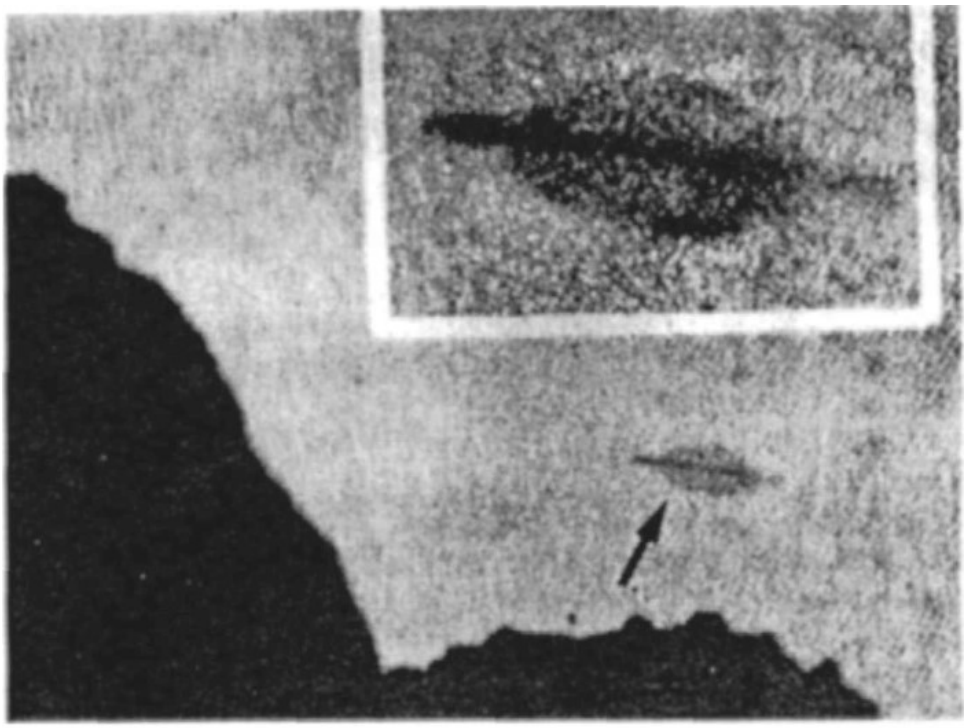
Rouen,France

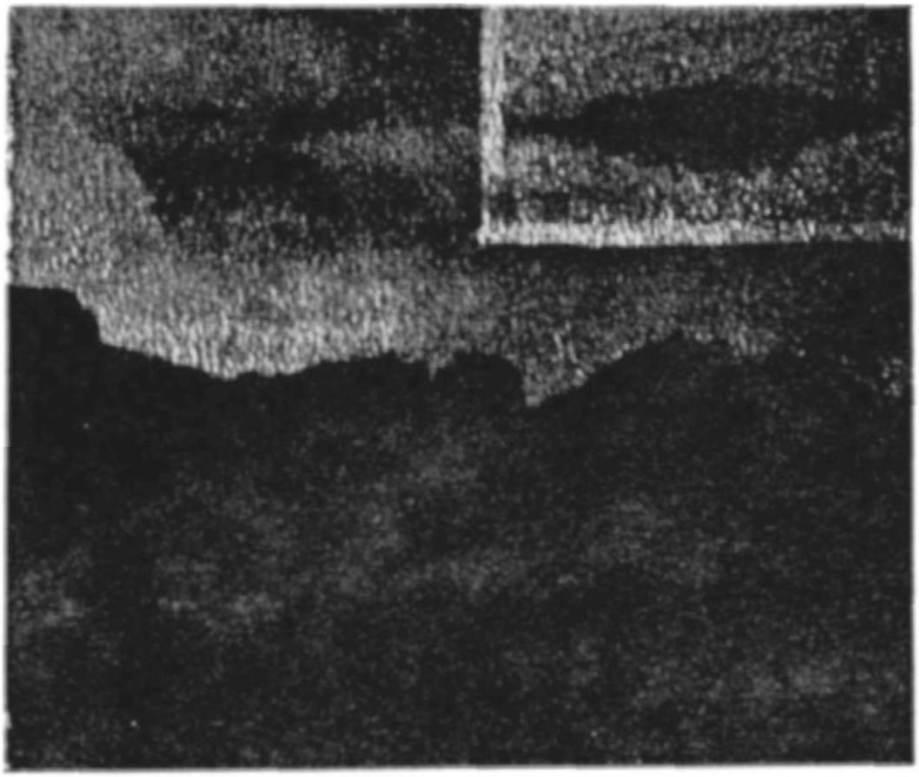


Pescara, Italy. 1957

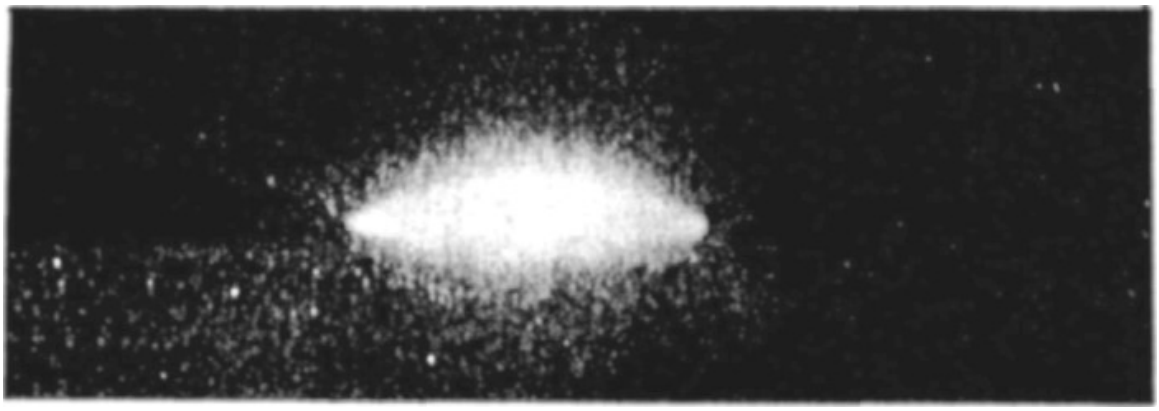




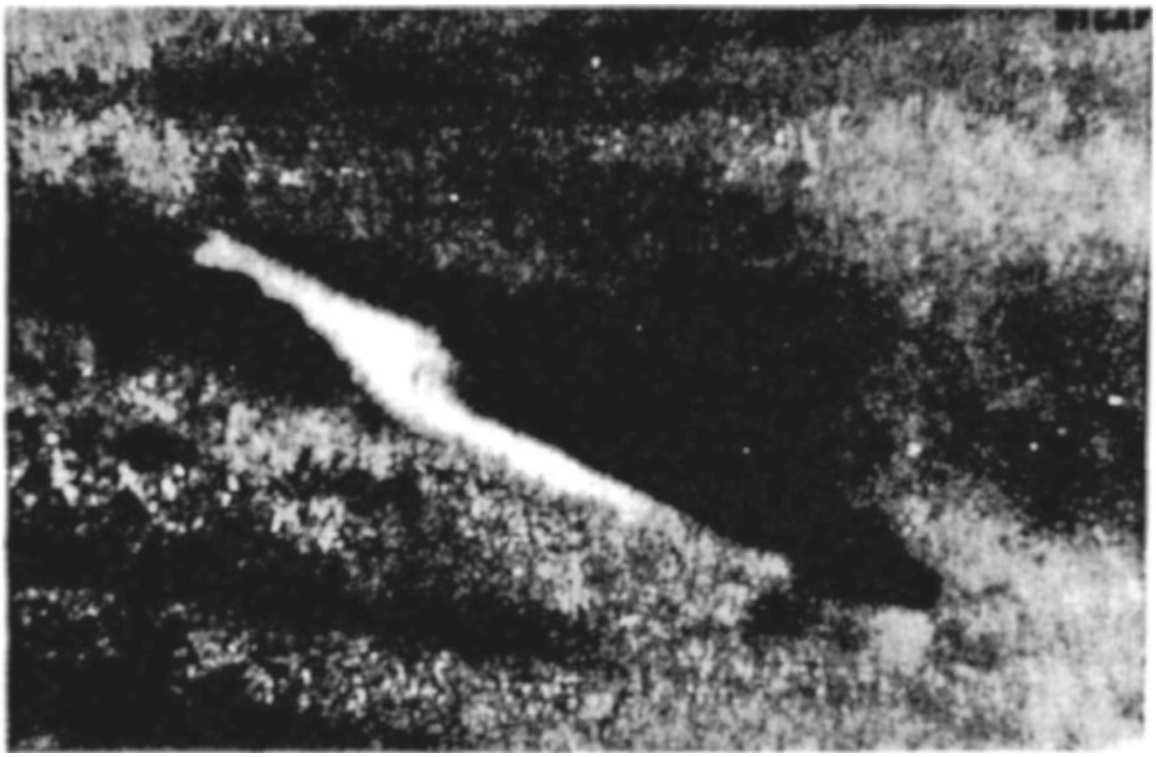




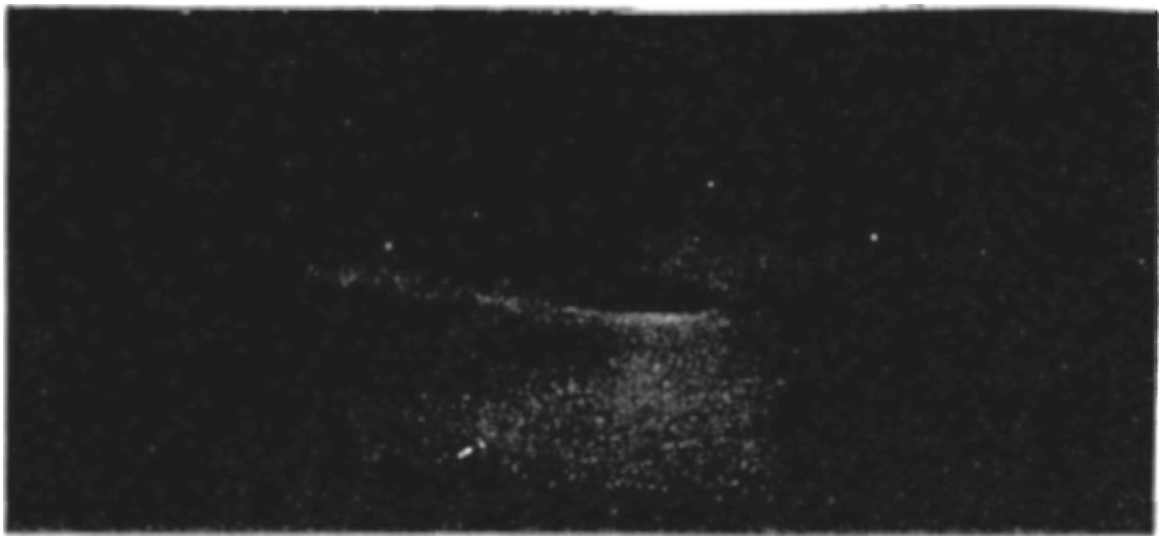
These four photographs by Almiro Barauna, Jan. 16th, 1958. Island of Trinidade, Brazil.



Sub-U.F.O. surfacing near pole.



NICAP Photo of U.F.O. observing jet test flight

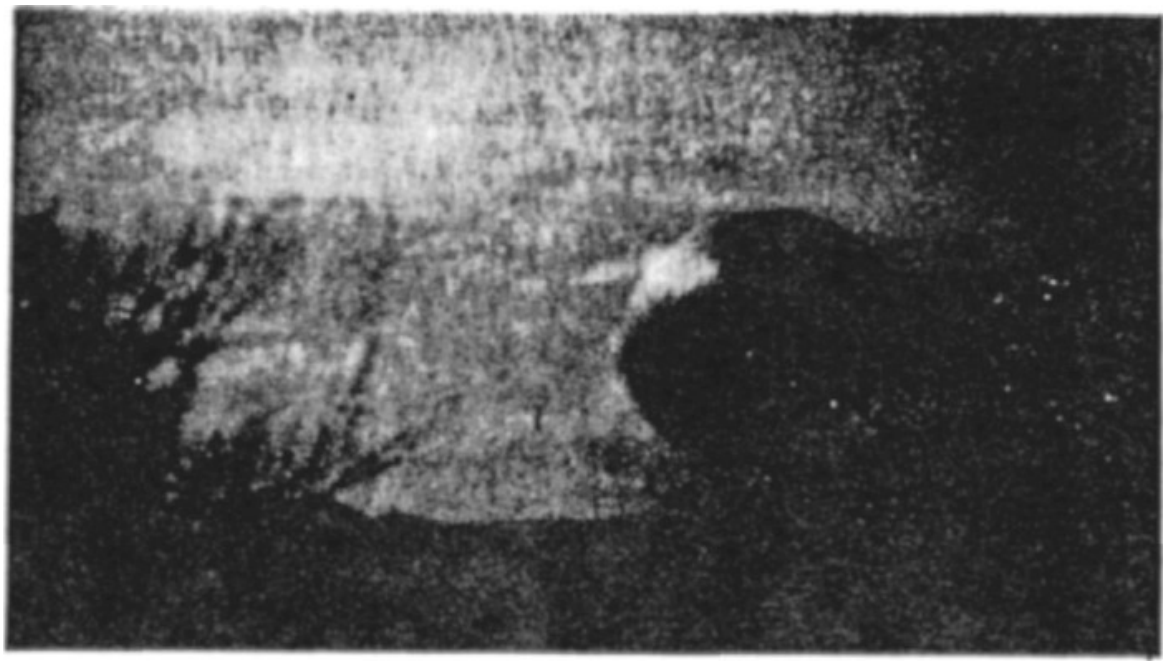


Photographed by Gunther Wildemann, 23rd November, 1966.
Benidorm, Spain.

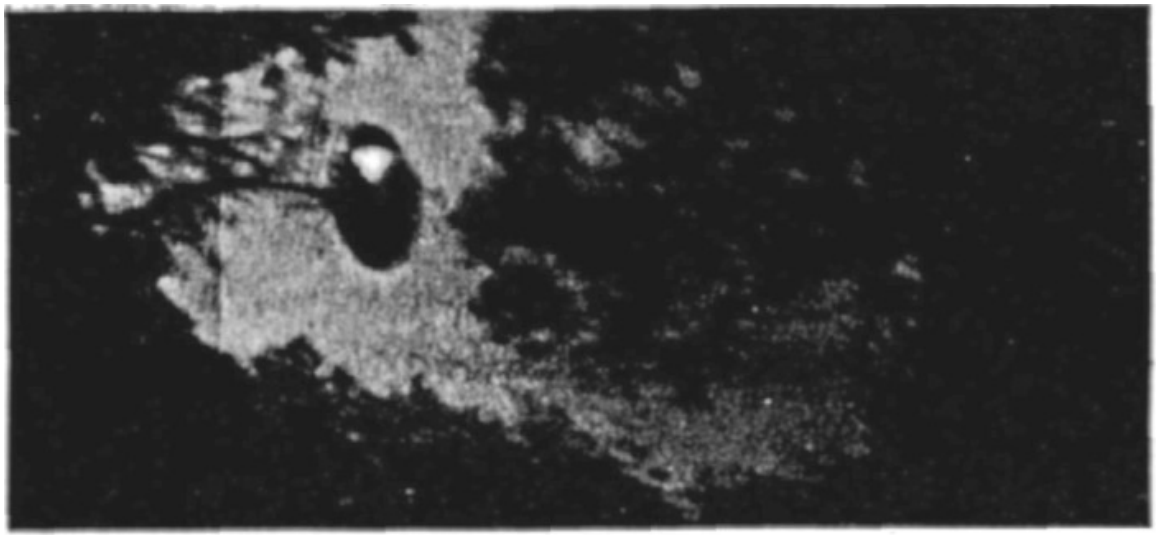




Photographed by Dick Blevens, August 30th, 1964. Seville, Ohio



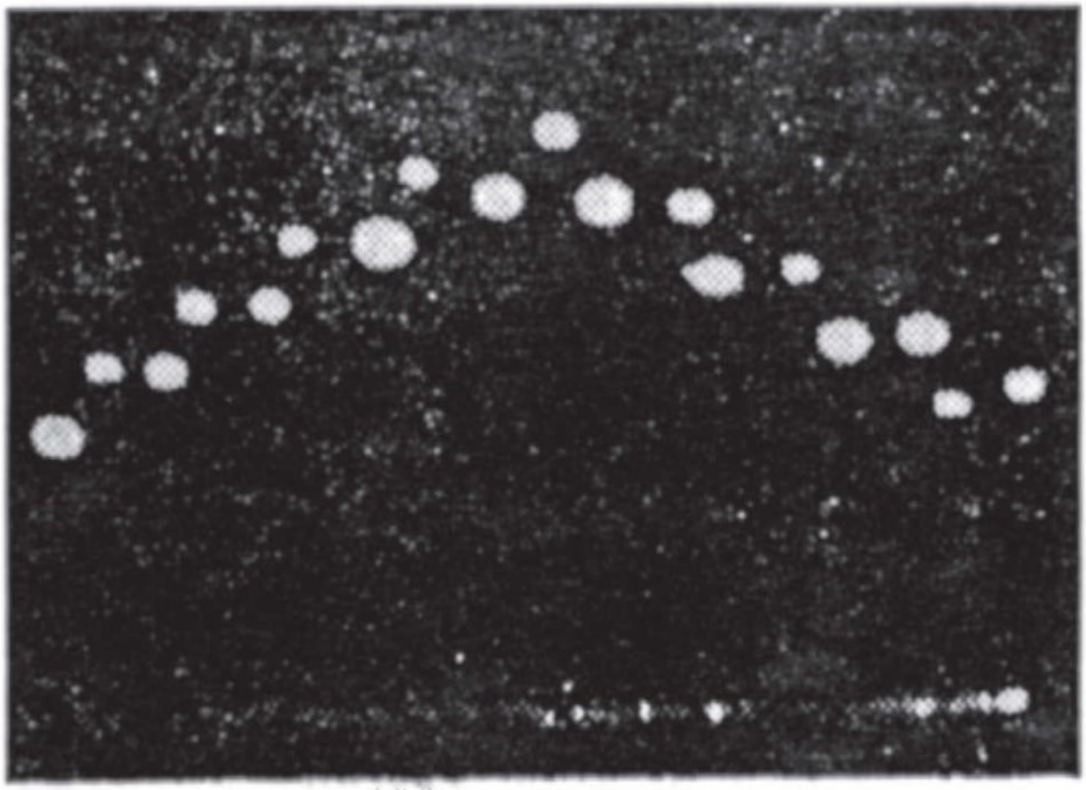






Copyrighted coloured postcard of these photographs available from:
Ventla Verlag, Postfach 17185

Wiesbaden, Schierstein, Germany



1951: Formation flight over Lubbock, Tex.



Photographed by Paul Paulin, 29th Dec. 1953. Paris, France

Please Post in Radio Room and on the Bridge

FOR EARLY WARNING IN DEFENSE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT

MERINT
RADIOTELEGRAPH PROCEDURE

1. WHAT TO REPORT

Report immediately all airborne and waterborne objects which appear to be HOSTILE, SUSPICIOUS or are UNIDENTIFIED.



Guided Missiles

Surface warships positively identified as not U. S. or Canadian





Aircraft or contrails which appear to be directed against the United States Canada, their territories or possessions

Submarines





Unidentified Flying Objects

2. SEND TO ANY

United States Naval Radio Station
Canadian Naval Radio Station
United States Coast Guard Radio Station
United States Commercial Radiotelegraph Station
Canadian Department of Transport Coastal Station

Receiving station will relay to military destination

3. HOW TO SEND

* MERINT MERINT MERINT (Coastal Station) DE (Own Signal Letters) K (Own Signal Letters) DE (Coastal Station) K
EMERGENCY (For U. S. or Canadian Naval or Coast Guard Radio Stations) or
RAPID US GOVT COLLECT (For U. S. Commercial Coastal Stations) or
RUSH COLLECT (For Canadian Dept of Transport Coastal Stations)

4. SEND TO ONE DESTINATION

ComAsDeForLant Norva
ComWestSeaFron Navy SFran
NavyCharge Halifax
NavyCharge Esquimalt

Select destination nearest to your receiving station

5. SEND THIS KIND OF MESSAGE

Content—	Example—
a. Begin your message with the word "MERINT"	MERINT
b. Give the reporting ship's name and signal letters	SS TOLOA WHDR
c. Describe briefly the objects sighted	TWO UNIDENTIFIED SURFACED SUBMARINES
d. Give ship's position when objects are sighted, also TIME and DATE	5034N 4012W 071430 GMT
e. If objects are airborne, estimate altitude as "low", "medium", "high"	(not applicable)
f. Give direction of travel of sighted objects	HEADING 270 DEGREES
g. Estimate and give speed of sighted objects	15 KNOTS
h. Describe condition of sea and weather	SEA CALM
i. Give other significant information	ELONGATED CONNING TOWERS

6. SEND IMMEDIATELY

a. DO NOT DELAY YOUR REPORT DUE TO LACK OF INFORMATION
b. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO OBTAIN ACKNOWLEDGMENT FROM RECEIVING STATION THAT MESSAGE HAS BEEN RECEIVED.

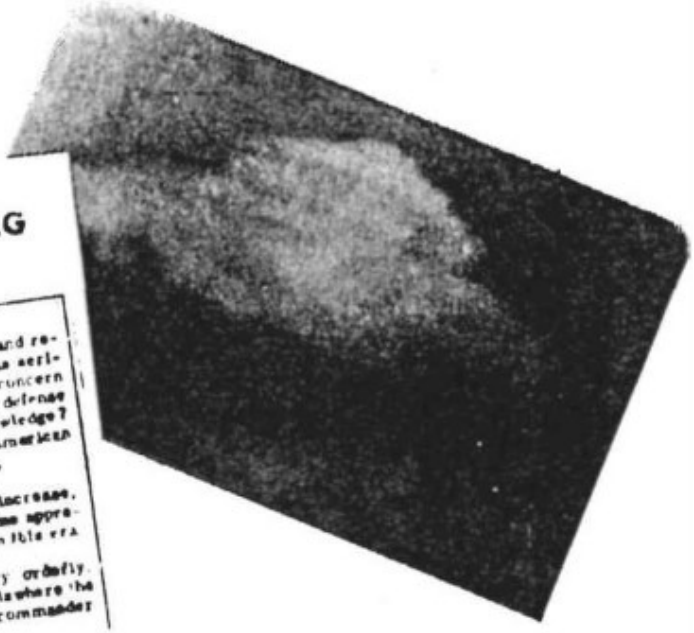
* *The International urgency signal* (XXX XXX XXX) may be used as an alternate to clear circuit.

Authorized by Secretary of the Navy

OPNAV 94-P-38
0420 062 0000

Posters put out by United States Government, Secretary of the Navy, about U.F.O. reporting procedure.

Stephen Derbyshire, England



OPERATIONS & TRAINING

UFO'S SERIOUS BUSINESS

Unidentified flying objects - sometimes treated lightly by the press and referred to as "flying saucers" - must be rapidly and accurately identified as aerius USAF business in the ZI. As AFR 200-1 points out, the Air Force concern with these sightings is threefold: First of all, is the object a threat to the defense of the U. S.? Secondly, does it contribute to technical or scientific knowledge? And then there's the inherent USAF responsibility to explain to the American people through public-information media what is going on in their skies.

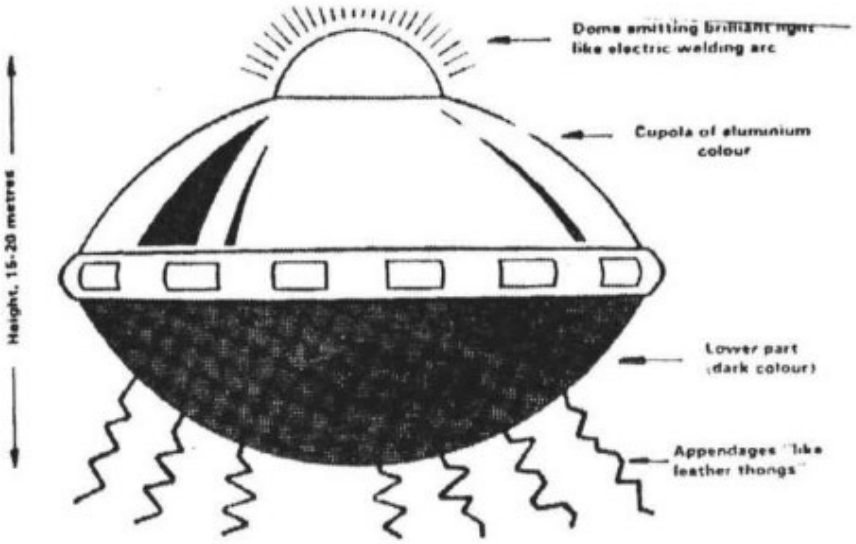
The phenomena or actual objects comprising UFO's will tend to increase, with the public more aware of goings on in space but still inclined to some apprehension. Technical and defense considerations will continue to exist in this era.

Published after three months study, AFR 200-2 outlines necessary orderly, qualified reporting as well as public-information procedures. This is where the base should stand today, with practices judged at least satisfactory by commander and inspector:

- Responsibility for handling UFO's should rest with either intelligence, operations, the Provost Marshal or the Information Officer - in that order of preference, dictated by limits of the base organization;
- A specific officer should be designated as responsible;
- He should have experience in investigative techniques and also, if possible, scientific or technical background;
- He should have authority to obtain the assistance of specialists on the base;
- He should be equipped with binoculars, camera, Geiger counter, magnifying glass and have a source for containers in which to store samples.

What is required is that every UFO sighting be investigated and reported to the Air Technical Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson AFB and that explanation to the public be realistic and knowledgeable. Normally that explanation will be made only by the USAF Information Officer. It will help us to get all the facts of being experts in our own domain.

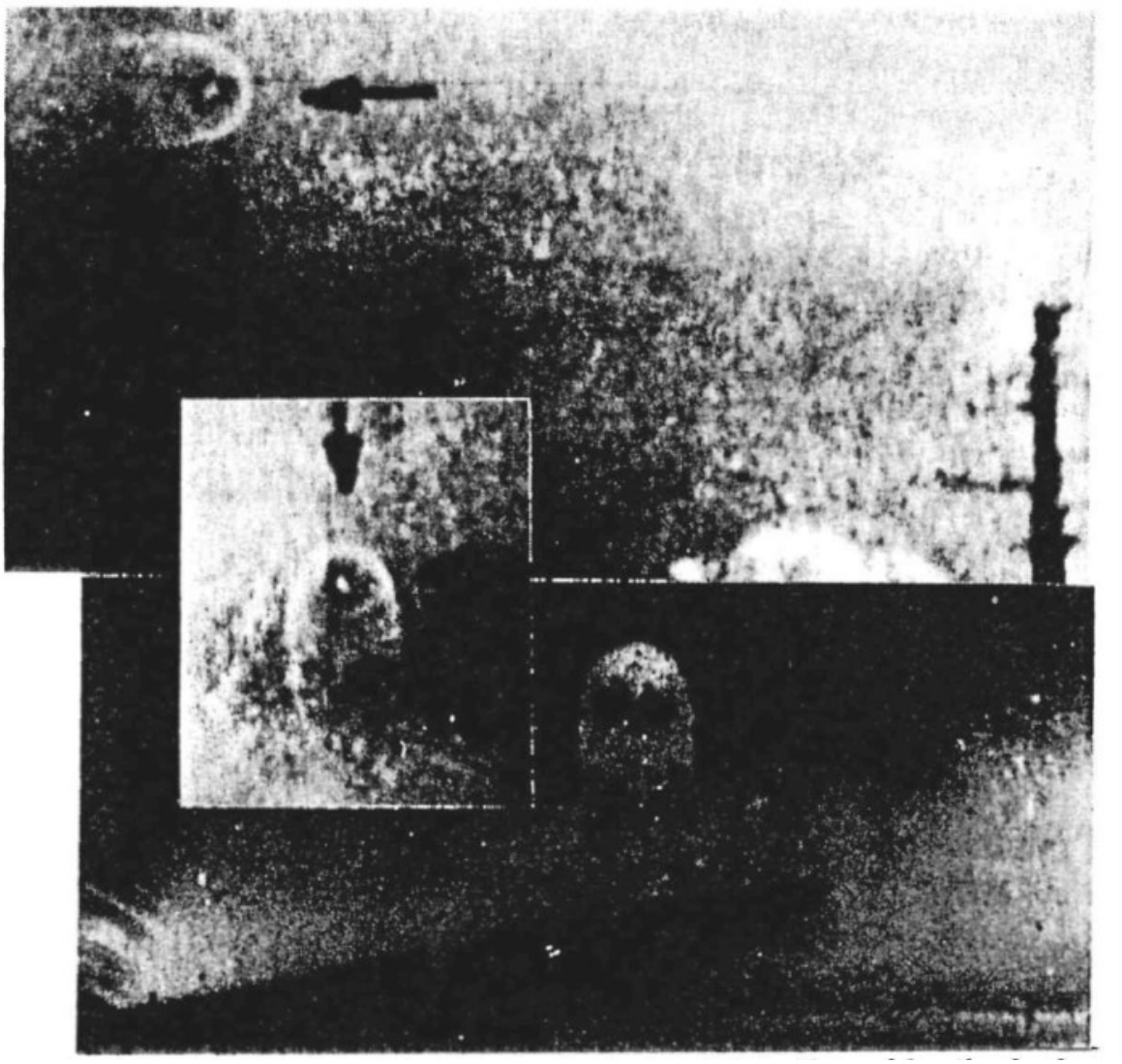
Official U.S. Government poster, recognizing existence of U.F.O.'s and detailed instructions of what to do in case of their appearance.



Frequently reported shapes of U.F.O.'s and how they function.



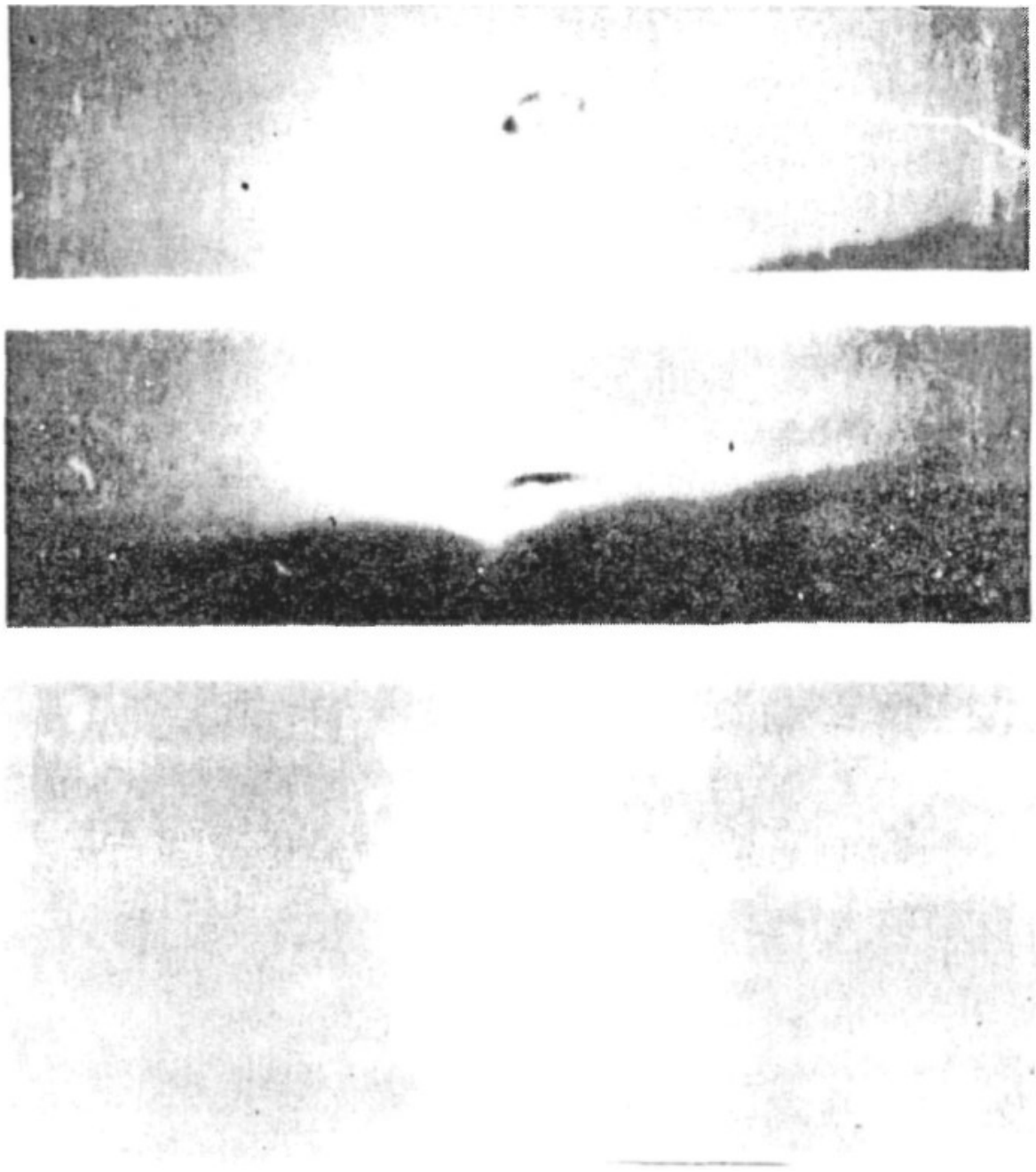
German U.F.O. Base? Flight Control Area?



U.F.O. in flight over Washington State 1950. Note identical shape as U.F.O. photographed by German W.W. II Focke Wulf fighter pilot In 1943-44.



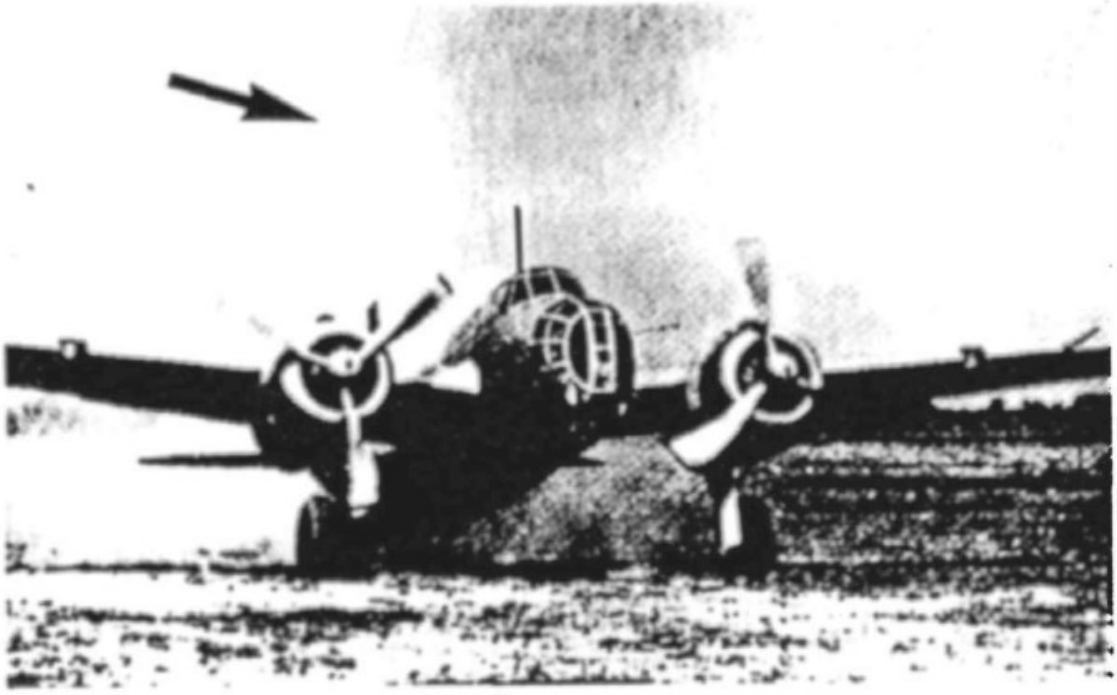
U.F.O. formation photographed June 24th, 1965 on World U.F.O. Day, Hokkaido, Japan



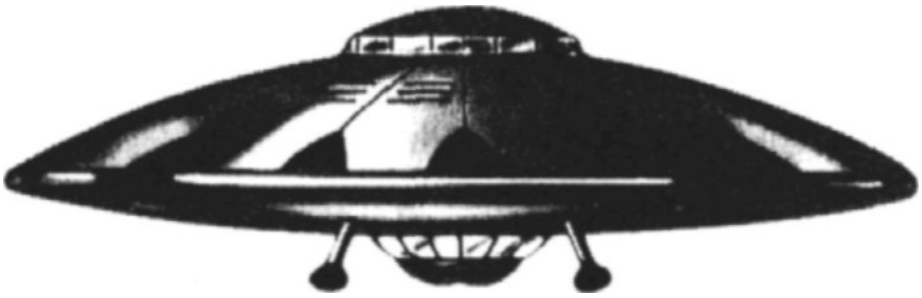
U.F.O. performing like the one at left.



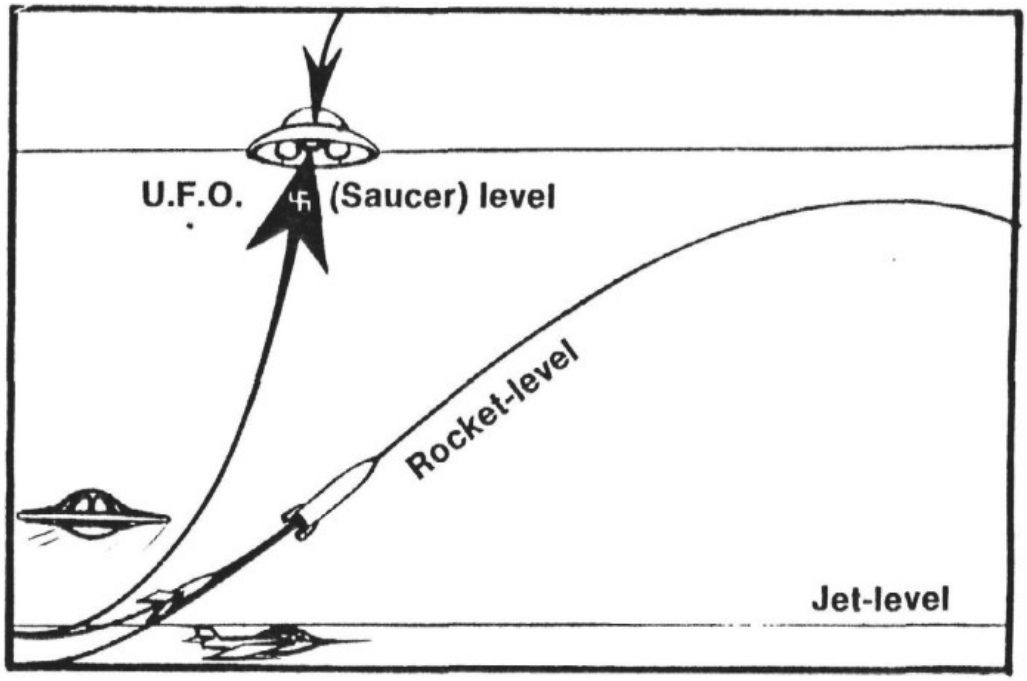




U.F.O.'s appearing over the Japanese battle fronts after the war in Europe was over. Called Foo-fighters!



Undoubtedly, tremendous advances must have been made on these flying machines by those who knew the secret of flying saucers, and any unbiased reader must admit that the German Flying Saucer development ushered in a new age in travel. However, because of the new technology we have to ask ourselves some very searching questions.



Did the Germans have help from "real" U.F.O. people because their technology was the most advanced?

Did Hitler's scientists perform their "miracle" alone, unaided or did flying saucer "people", perhaps visitors from other galaxies give them a helping hand because they had mastered the new technology and consequently spoke the same or at least similar technological language? Could this be possible? Another question could be, did the Nazis discover some long-hidden deep secrets during their lengthy and exhaustive expeditions to the Himalayas and ancient Tibet? Intriguing and fascinating volumes have been written about these mysterious activities which had the active support and blessing of men such as Heinrich Himmler. It has been reported that the S.S. had an extremely large collection of occult books and medieval transcripts of alchemy and sorcery. Apparently over 20,000 volumes were, at one time, housed at the Ordensburg, Sonthofen, in Bavaria.

Perhaps there are elements of truth from all these stories. Did the Nazis establish secret bases in Antarctica? Did they perfect there a far-advanced flying saucer programme? Did they accidentally discover during their many expeditions that there is indeed an "Inner Earth"? (Nordic legends and Sagas have long recounted very inspiring tales of a perfect society of blue-eyed, blond Germanic giants who dwell in the inner earth). Was the world not astounded when it became known in 1945 that many of the Nazi leaders had been early members — 1918-20 — of the Secret Order of Thule!? It is known that Dietrich Eckhardt, Hitler's brilliant poet friend, had introduced him to this organization in Munich. The great expounder and father of geo-politics, Haushofer, friend and mentor of Rudolf Hess (Hitler's comrade and cell mate of Landsberg) Hess himself and Hitler were all steeped in the ancient mysteries of the Nordic world. It is therefore quite conceivable that the Nazis were the outer earth representatives of the "inner earth" or "outer space" blond, blue-eyed giants who spook through Nordic, Inca, Aztec and even North American Indian legends.

Perhaps Erich von Danniken has uncovered the tips of an iceberg? Are we about to have shattered our comfortable world picture that God created the earth in 7 days etc. etc. And so, again and again we have to come back to the same questions which can only be answered by the same answers. Every government on earth seems to be frantically engaged in suppressing the UFO story. Films are confiscated, pilots instructed to intercept and shoot to kill UFO's. People, are railroaded into hospitals and eventually insane asylums because they have seen or even been contacted by UFO's. Why? Why? Why, the UFO crews themselves give most of the answers to the questions. If they were from other planets and had come here to investigate or make contact with earthlings, they would hardly waste their precious time and tremendous expense and effort just to fly around and treat us to pulsating lights in some remote swamps or hills in the backwoods of the world. They would do what we would do if we had some crews of astronauts investigating some distant planet. Our astronauts would have been given some detailed orders, such as go and make a flypast, take photos, films and make visual observations. Test for radioactivity, air oxygen content etc. Radio and teletype all your findings back to earth and then return home. Even more conceivable would be that orders would be given for them to land, if they found conditions "bearable", and especially if they had the technology (which UFO's obviously have) and investigate everything in sight and take soil and rock samples; if you find "beings" talk with them, film them and perhaps even kidnap one.

Now let us look at how the flying saucer people have behaved:

Technologically they are certainly very advanced, move at tremendous speeds, change direction at will, (often denying every known law of motion or gravity. They can seemingly appear and disappear from human vision or radarscreens with great ease. Theoretically and also practically they could land, take samples, kidnap people and leave for home, and almost unimpeded! So we must assume the obvious. These UFO's from other planets, (and on purely a mathematical probability there are habitants on other planets), have come, have seen, have sampled and returned home. Why would any representatives of any civilization advanced enough to come the tremendous distances involved, just play cat and mouse with a few hillbillies in Mississippi? The answer is self evident, they just would not bother with such a farce and over a period of 30 years!

So there has to be an equally simple answer to why UFO's behave the way they do. They have to be either from earth itself which can only explain their lack of curiosity and also accounts for their linguistic skills. Reinhold Schmidt states the crews of the flying saucer he flew with, spoke German, and those Adamski and others met, spoke English. They apparently looked like us and pretty well behaved as we do — undoubtedly because they are "from us".

Now it is not inconceivable that in the never-ending stream of time our race has either gone from here "out there" or we have been landed here or stranded here from "out there" eons of time ago. Legends and sagas of old can supply many pointers.

Could it mean that the German nation is indeed a colony, either from the German-speaking "Saturnians" with whom Reinhold Schmidt conversed or are they the outer-earth beach head of the inner-earth civilization previously mentioned? Is this perhaps the answer to the vexing question of why the Germans are "different"? Is this the explanation for their superb performance and genius as soldiers? Are they leading the world in precision engineering and in technology because they have dwelling amongst them a disproportionate number of "Saturnians" or "Atlantians"? Could this be the reason why they always rise stronger and Phoenix-like from the ashes of defeat? Was Hitler planted on this planet earth to pull back Western civilization from the brink of degenerate self-extinction — peacefully, if at all possible — through war, if necessary?

Should the above question be answered in the affirmative, then "The Last Battalion", when the time is ripe, will spring into action. With racial strife and economic disaster looming, how far away can "Der Tag" actually be? And finally, will the "Saucer Nazis", as a last resort, invade strategic areas militarily?

Members of "The Last Battalion" are already amongst us as soldiers, labourers, teachers, students, scientists — in fact, in all walks of life. Male and female, young and old. So look at your neighbours and your friends — how many of them do you think belong to "The Last Battalion"? Time will tell!



AF BANS PHOTO RELEASE

The Air Force last night banned publication of a photograph of an unidentified flying object seen over Ohio by hundreds of persons and chased 86 miles by police.

Police Chief Gerald Buchert, of Mantua, Ohio, about 25 miles east of Cleveland, said he photographed the object from the front lawn of his home.

Buchert, according to an Associated Press dispatch, said the Air Force told him not to release the photograph or permit pictures to be taken of it. He said the object looked like "two table saucers put together."

An East Palestine, Ohio, police officer and Portage County Sheriff's Deputy W. L. Neff said they "played tag" with the mysterious object for 86 miles through eastern Ohio before losing it near Conway, Pa.



PHOTOGRAPHED UFO—Mantua, O., Police Chief Gerald Bucher, left, gives information on unidentified flying object to Deputy Sheriff Dale Spaur, center, and radioman Robert Wilson after Bucher and several other police officers chased the object 85 miles from Mantua to Freedom, Pa. During the chase Bucher photographed the UFO. The photographs will not be released until viewed by federal authorities.

UPI Telephoto

Eyewitnesses reports! All contain many elements of the Nazi-Saucer designs, technology similar as well as behaviour and flight patterns.

July 24, 1952

Flame-Shooting Phantom Plane
Airline Pilots See Wingless 2-Decker

ATLANTA, July 24.—(AP)—Two Eastern Airline pilots said they met a wingless two deck plane early today southwest of Montgomery, Ala. They said the strange ship shooting red flames and with a blue glow underneath the fuselage, passed the E. A. L. plane at 5,600 feet headed toward New Orleans.

The pilots said the stranger looked like a "Buck Rogers rocket ship."

SEEN AT 2:45 A. M.

The two pilots—Captain C. S. Childs and co-pilot J. B. Whitted—were flying the Houston-to-Atlanta-to-Boston run. They left Houston, Tex., at 8:30 p. m. last night. This morning at 2:45 o'clock, 20 miles southwest of Montgomery they sighted the strange ship.

After reaching Atlanta at 2:49 a. m. EST., the two pilots told of their strange experience. Captain Childs said that they first sighted the object up ahead when nearing Montgomery.

"It was in line almost with our flight," he said. "We veered off to the left and the object turned to its left. When it came nearer to us, within better sight, its fuselage appeared to be about 100 feet in length and about four times the *circumference* of a B-29 fuselage.

2 ROWS OF WINDOWS

"It had two rows of windows, an upper and a lower. They were square. Out of the rear of the ship red flames were shooting 25 to 50 feet. There was a blue glow underneath the fuselage. The ship appeared to be doing between 500 and 700 miles an hour, heading toward New Orleans.

"Of the 20 passengers on board Childs said only one was awake and saw the other ship. He gave this ppassenger's name as C. L. McKelvie, Henelton Pike, Columbus, Ohio.

The E. A. L. ship went on from Atlanta to Boston today on its regular run.

At Montgomery, Maxwell and Dannelly army fields said they knew nothing about the report.

Radar Tracks Zipping Objects Near Air Base

8-2-65

OKLAHOMA CITY (UPI)—Air Force radar tracked four unidentified flying objects zipping along in a diamond formation at high altitude in a 50-mile radius of the sprawling Tinker Air Force Base Sunday night, authorities said.

At least eight law enforcement officers spotted the objects during the two hours immediately after the first sighting report which came just before sundown.

The sightings followed by less than 48 hours a Wynnewood, Okla., *policeman's* report of a UFO that emitted red, white and blue light near Wynnewood. The object was tracked on two radar screens early Saturday before it disappeared and then reappeared about 29 miles south of Tinker Base, officers said.

Wynnewood is about 29 miles south of Purcell, where the UFO's first were sighted Sunday night.

The Oklahoma Highway Patrol said a security officer at Tinker informed the patrol that the base's radar picked up from one to four UFO's at various times during the evening.

The objects were moving erratically, at an altitude of about 22,000 feet, the patrol quoted the officer as saying.

A base spokesman later would neither confirm nor deny that radar had tracked the objects. He said only that the Air Force would investigate the UFO reports.

Paper Unknown Oct. 28, 1955

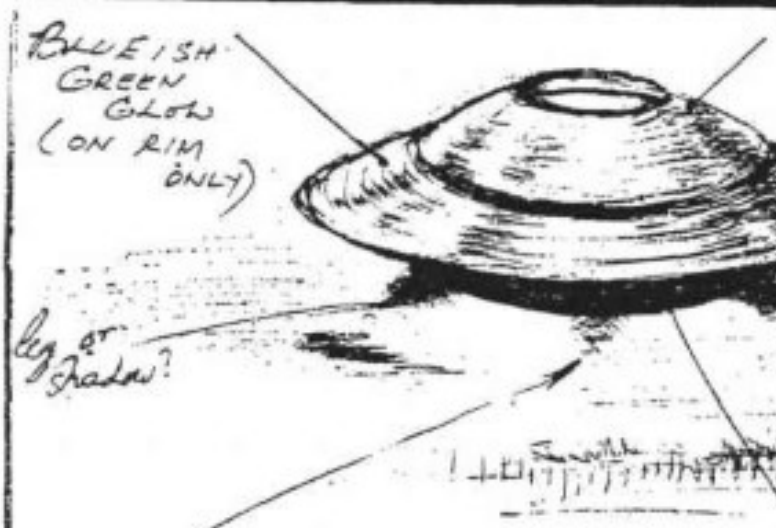
Donald E. Keyhoe, former Marine Corps officer and author of books on flying saucers, on an Air Force statement that flying saucers don't exist:

"It is an insult to the hundreds of radar operators who have confirmed that the flying saucers are solid objects, maneuvering at fantastic speeds under intelligent control."

U.F.O. reports from around the world and from pretty well-known people

Sydney, Australia WEDNESDAY, DAILY TEL

THE THING ON TH



THE SKETCH by Mr. Denis Crowe of the object he saw on Monday nig
the saucer shape as silvery grey on top and darker grey beneath wi
what might have been three or four

GLOWING IMPI

A green, glowing object that took off at high s
on Monday night in no way resembled conventional
said last ni

watched the object in flight for 10 seconds before it disappeared in cloud over Manly.

Mr. Crowe at his home in Coolong Road, Vaucluse, told a *Daily Telegraph* reporter last night:

"It took off with a noise like air forcibly released from a balloon.

"The noise was quite unlike any made by jet engines."

Mr. Crowe said that the object a giant disc, was bathed in a glow.

He saw no sign of movement within the craft or any portholes or doors.

He said he became aware about 5.30 p.m. on Monday of a glow coming from the beach.

He went to investigate and saw that the glow emanated from a huge disc resting on the beach.

Near disc at take-off

He was within 50 or 60 feet of the disc when it took off.

"Its diameter appeared to be about 20 feet," he said.

"I estimate its height at nine feet, including what appeared to be legs protruding from the bottom.

"Its rim was glowing a greenish blue, while the top and bottom halves were dullish silver-grey.

"A hollow in the top could have been a glass dome."

Mr. Crowe said that as the object took off, a yellow or orange glow appeared beneath.

After a take-off run of only 50 or 60 feet, the craft climbed rapidly in the direction of Manly.

"I looked around, hoping to see someone else who saw what I saw, but about a dozen of my dogs," Mr. Crowe said.

"While the object was stationary, they were all barking loudly at it.

"After it took off, they were all strangely silent."



Mr. Denis Crowe

Mr. Crowe said that when he returned home he sat down to collect his thoughts.

He had dinner, then wrote down what was still vividly in his memory, and sketched the object as he recalled it.

The sketch is reproduced above.

[Mr. Crowe, an Englishman who has been in Australia for more than four years, was formerly a technical and illustrative artist with British aircraft companies.]

"At first I wondered whether I should say anything about what I had seen," he said.

"The natural reaction of most people might label me a crackpot.

"But I could not keep silent.

"I felt I had a moral obligation to speak of what I had seen."

UFO Is Reported In Western Area

ARKANSAS GAZETTE, Thurs., Aug. 12, 1965.

SANTA ANA, Cal. (AP)—An unidentified flying object described as round, bright and with a long orange tail was seen by scores of Southern California residents Tuesday night and by at least three airline pilots flying over Arizona's Grand Canyon.

Viewers said the object moved rapidly from west to east in about 10 to 20 seconds. It appeared to descend rapidly, they said, then it would level and disappear to the east.

Three pilots reports a similar sighting and described it as a "large ball of fire with a tail, traveling west to east."

Similar reports came in from airports at China Lake, Palmdale, and Edwards Air Force Base, Cal., and the Albuquerque, N. M., Air Route Traffic Control Center.

Paper Unknown Feb. 21 1956

Huge Flying Saucer Reported Over Paris

Paris (U.P.)—The French government sought today to solve the mystery of the "phantom of Orly" a gigantic flying-saucer-like object which whirled across the airport's radar screen at supersonic speed last Friday.

It was the third time in less than a year that the "phantom" has been charted on radarscopes at the busy international airfield outside of Paris. The object was described as about twice the size of the largest known plane, moved at times at an estimated 2,000 miles an hour, and hovered around the airport for about four hours.

Mystery Object Over Hawaii

HONOLULU (UPI)—An unidentified flying object, traveling west at a "very high altitude and a high rate of speed," was sighted by hundreds of persons in the Hawaiian islands.

Two Air National Guard pilots said they saw the object north of the island of Kauai during a routine training mission in jet fighters at an altitude of 40,000 feet. Honolulu newspapers and radio stations were flooded with calls.

Capt. Jon Parish said he thought the object was "possibly a rocket or some sort of space object flying a predetermined course." Lt. George Joy said he thought it was the Milky Way at first, but then noticed that it left a visible vapor trail.

Witnesses in Honolulu said the object looked like a crescent-shaped moon falling into the sea. They said it was bright, and some said it appeared to be on fire.

ALASKAN TELLS OF MYSTERIOUS STREAK IN SKY

KETCHIKAN, April 15.—(AP) — A mysterious reddish orange streak across the sky over Annette Island was reported to the coast guard at 2 a. m. today.

Earl Leding said he sighted what seemed to be a flaming object hurtling westward at tremendous speed as he was returning by boat from Metlakatla, the Annette Island native community.

He said he and Ray Haldane saw the streak for about 40 seconds before it disappeared.

Navy Radar Spots Mystery Objects

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER — JANUARY 6, 1965

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5 (AP). — The Air Force is investigating the reported sighting of two high-speed unidentified flying objects by Navy radar operators at Patuxent Naval Air Station, Md.

The Navy said Tuesday that the operators observed "two objects on their scope approaching at approximately 4800 miles an hour from 30 to 40 miles south" of the base at 8:30 P. M. Dec. 29.

The objects approached the naval air station, executed a tight turn and disappeared from the scope, the Navy said.

About the fastest aircraft in existence is the X-15 experimental plane, which has flown at 4104 miles an hour. The X-15 is based on the West Coast. It has a very short range.

7/8/65

See 'UFO'

BUENOS AIRES (UPI) — Argentine sailors at two Antarctic outposts saw a multi-colored "unidentified flying object" dawdling across the sky Saturday, the Navy Department announced Wednesday night.

"The object was discus-shaped and predominantly red and green in color, with occasional flashes of yellow, blue, orange and white. . ." The Navy announcement said.

"It was moving generally eastward, but at times it went west . . . at some moments, it appeared to hover . . .

"It was in view for 15 to 20 minutes, allowing ample time to photograph it . . . (the object) was seen by members of the naval detachments at Deception and Orcadas."

Eerie Object Seen Over Antarctica

'65

BUENOS AIRES, July 7. — (Reuters) — Argentines at two Antarctic bases have confirmed reports by British and Chilean scientists of the appearance four days ago of an unusual celestial body over the frozen subcontinent.

The object, observed and photographed by the Argentine Navy men last Saturday night, was shaped like a double-convex lens. It was colored mainly red and green, a Navy statement said.

The object made no noise, and moved generally eastward at changing speeds before disappearing.

An earlier report from a British Antarctic base said the object made geomagnetic instruments wild.

Ten-Gallon UFO Sighted at Sault

SAULT. STE. MARIE, Ont. (CP) — An unidentified flying object shaped like a "ten-gallon hat" was sighted here Friday night.

Darlene Wagner, 15, said she saw the object about 10:20 p.m., silently descending to the top of an oil storage tank across the road from her home. It landed on the oil tank.

The girl said the object was shaped like a hat, the crown glowing red, the brim blue. There were flashing blue and white lights at each edge of the "brim."

London Free Press
May 6, 1966

July 9, 1965

Object Filmed By X15 Still Big Mystery

Aug. 9, 1962

Aug. 9, 1962

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, CALIF. (UPI)—A possibility the X15 encountered strange phenomena in space arose Thursday with scientists unable to identify a mysterious object both sighted and photographed by Maj. Bob White on a soaring flight by the rocket ship.

Scientists said Wednesday they could give no explanation whatsoever for the objects that appeared near the X15 on July 17 when White skyrocketed to a world airplane altitude record of nearly 60 miles.

"It is impossible to explain the object's presence at this time," space agency scientists said.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration, after intensively studying White's sighting report and films from a tail movie camera, on the X15, released photographs of an object that darted above and behind the plane.

The photographs, taken from the movie films, show an object that looks like a fluttering piece of paper and which scientists describe as being "grey-white."

White, from his cockpit near the nose of the rocket ship, reported seeing what looked to him like a piece of paper the size of his hand "going along with the ship" at an altitude of 270,000 feet—over 50 miles high.

July 16, 1952

Pilots Tell Of Saucers Flying In Formation

MIAMI, July 16.—(UP)—Two veteran air-line pilots added to the flying-saucer lore today accounts of seeing eight huge discs zipping in formation at supersonic speed near Norfolk, Va.

W. B. Nash, 35, and W. H. Fortenberry, 30, pilots of Pan American Airways, said the "glowing, orange-red" saucers maneuvered too sharply for human endurance at a speed of "far above 1,000 miles per hour."

"Whoever was in those things," the pilots declared, "had capabilities far beyond our own. Those things absolutely did not contain any human being as we know them."

Nash and Fortenberry said they were flying their DC-4 with ten company officials aboard southward between Newport News, Va., and Norfolk Monday night when the saucers appeared 6,000 feet below them, at about 2,000 feet altitude.

Mystery object

SANTA MARIA, Azores (UPI) — An airport spokesman Saturday said a mysterious flying object apparently stopped all electro-magnetic watches at the Santa Maria Airport when it flew slowly over this island Friday. He said a white cylindrical object was seen flying northwest at an altitude of 33,000 feet and attempts to identify it were unsuccessful.

THE AUGUSTA CHRONICLE-HERALD
SUNDAY, JULY 11, 1965

Pilot believes he saw manned space-ship

Evening Press 23/9/59

THE pilot of a Pan-American airliner, flying almost four miles up between New York and Paris, this morning, reported that he sighted what he believed was a space ship with people on board.

In a brief message from the clipper, Captain J. Cone, said it was visible for only 30 seconds and that the object had vertical tail fins. It was travelling very fast in a south-westerly direction between the stars, Elnath and Castor.

The message was flashed to a U.S. coastguard cutter.

There were 119 people including 12 crew members on board the jet liner, which later landed at Paris. It was flying at an altitude of 20,000 feet when the object was sighted.

Gave position

Other brief details given in the message gave the object's position as 53.40 degrees north, 58 degrees west, which would be slightly north-east of Goose Bay, Newfoundland, about 2,000 miles west of Ireland.

The report has set off speculation in international circles studying space aeronautics, the dominant view being that it was a secret Russian attempt to send men to outer space, probably to the moon.

It is expected that a report will be sent to the United States Government for investigation.

On DEW line

The object was sighted almost on the D.E.W. line, the distant early warning radar screen which protects the entire north-west coast of America and Canada from attack.

Dublin Evening Press

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER.

Mystery Object Buzzes Planes

TOKYO, March 21 (Reuters). —Two Japanese civilian pilots reported their planes were buzzed Thursday by an unidentified flying object, an air safety officer in southwestern Japan said Sunday.

A spokesman for the Air Safety office at Takamatsu on Shikoku Island said the planes were a Convair 240 airliner and a private Piper Apache plane.

The newspaper Mainichi Shimbun quoted the airliner pilot as saying an object about 15 yards in diameter and radiating a greenish luminescence approached the plane at about 20 miles an hour, wheeled abruptly and flew alongside for about three minutes before

PAPER UNKNOWN Dec. 4, 1965

Unidentified Objects Sighted by Astronauts

SPACE CENTER, Houston, Tex., Dec 4 (AP)—Twice in the early part of their space flight, astronauts Frank Borman and James Lovell reported seeing objects that were not explained immediately. On the second orbit, Borman said, "We have a bogey at 10 o'clock high."

There was some static in the transmission and the space center had to ask three times for explanation. Borman said they could see the spacecraft booster "as a brilliant body against the sun," slowly tumbling and that three of four miles ahead of the spacecraft there were "what looks like hundreds of little particles."

In addition, he said, there was the "bogey." That's an airman's term for another object.

On the third revolution, while burning fuel to raise the orbit, Lovell reported "we hit something."

Space Center: "You hit something during the burn?"

Lovell: "Something came forward by the right window. Look-

Nov. 19, 1953

British Radar Tracks Air 'Object'

LONDON, Nov. 19.—(AP)—An object described by observers as huge and glowing and probably metallic has been tracked by radar high over England twice this month, the War Office disclosed last night.

Official reports of the sightings have been made by members of two army radar crews. They estimated that the object's altitude was 60,000 feet.

The reports were on November 3. The first report said the object was kept in sight from 2:30 to 3:10 p. m. A similar report was made that day by two flying officers of the Royal Air Force. They were at 20,000 feet in a jet plane, they said, when the object passed far overhead at "tremendous speed."

N.Y. NEWS MARCH 25, 1946

They're Up There Again

Bangor, Maine, March 24, (UPI)—A Bangor man said today he fired four shots at a glowing, cigar-shaped unidentified flying object late last night and believes he hit it with at least one bullet.

John King, 22, said the craft responded by zooming skyward, almost straight up, and swiftly vanished to the North. He said he thought he saw a similar object some distance away mom-

Report Flying Object In Alexandria Area

ALEXANDRIA (AP) — Three state policemen and several other persons reported they saw an unidentified flying object about 30 miles south of here last night.

Troopers P. E. Lemoine and H. J. Roy said the object "definitely was not a plane" and described it as

UFOs Spotted In Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Unidentified Flying Objects were spotted over parts of Minnesota and North Dakota Monday night.

Dozens of police officers on patrol between 12:20 and 2:30 a. m. reported sightings in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. According to various reports, the objects "bobbed, dipped, hovered, stopped, jerked along and sped away."

An officer in suburban Shorewood radioed his dispatcher: "Boys, I hope you don't think I'm crazy, but I just got passed by a star."

The airport control tower said it had seen nothing on radar. The tower said also that a number of B-52 military aircraft were in the area.

Sky Object Tracked by AFB Radar

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Tinker Air Force Base officials reported tracking an unidentified flying object by radar early Saturday before it suddenly disappeared.

The object was first sighted by Lewis Sikes, a Wynnewood policeman. He said it appeared to emit a red, blue and white light.

The Highway Patrol told Tinker authorities of the sighting and Tinker picked up the object on radar. Carswell Air Force Base at Fort Worth, Tex., also located the object on radar.

The object was [illegible] to a location 29 miles [illegible] Tinker before it disappeared.

Tulsa Daily World, Sunday, August 1, 1965.

'Saucers' Fly Beside Plane

DETROIT — (AP) — The pilot of an American Airlines DC-6 passenger plane said Wednesday three mysterious objects that looked like shining saucers appeared to accompany the plane for 45 minutes last night on its nonstop flight from Newark, N. J., to Detroit.

Capt. Peter Killian of Syosset, N. Y., who has flown passenger planes for 15 years, said "I have never seen anything like it before."

Killian said other members of the crew and the 35 passengers also saw the flying objects. The plane left Newark at 7:10 p.m.

* * *

KILLIAN and co-pilot John Dee of Nyack, N. Y., said they lost the three strange objects in the haze when they started their descent for landing at Detroit's Metropolitan Airport while the plane was over Cleveland, Ohio.

The three bright whitish lights first were sighted while the plane was flying at 8,500 feet between Philipsburg and Bradford, Pa.

Mysterious Object Seen

HELSINKI (UPI) — Myster-

...ment, he said,
as EVENING CHRONICLE
...
7/4/59

'Flying object' near Russia

A flying object was seen over northern Finland near the Russian border, say Press reports in Helsinki.

One report said that the object was seen near Kuusamo, about 20 miles from the border.

ENGLAND

Did Hillary see Chinese rocket?

ENGLAND

KATMANDU, Thursday. — Sir Edmund Hillary, the New Zealand explorer, said today that he had seen "phenomena" across the Nepal-Tibet border in the Mount Everest region which could have been anything, including a Chinese rocket.

He said that while camping in a glacier in October members of his Himalayan expedition saw a streak of vapour trail and a flash of fire moving in a zig-zag.—Reuter.

Air-Line Pilot Sees Mysterious Flying Objects

CHICAGO, July 18.—(UP)—A veteran air-line pilot reported seeing four flying objects moving at high speed over Denver last night.

Capt. Paul L. Carpenter of American Airlines said he and his crew spotted the objects after a flight ahead of them radioed them to be on the look-out.

Carpenter said the objects looked like planets and had a yellowish tinge. He said he saw one by itself, then two others and finally a fourth. He estimated their altitude at 25,000 to 30,000 feet and said he thought they were traveling at about 3,000 miles an hour.

UFO Watch Ordered

MEXICO CITY (AP)—The airport commander here, Luis Angel Jara Monroy, has ordered control tower men to keep watch for flying saucers. Public relations chief Ricardo de Zaldo said he had no doubt some strange objects were seen by the hundreds who phoned in one night but he doubted they were from other

...branch by branch."

The boy, Raymond Grant, was taken home, suffering from shock.

ENGLAND

Flying saucer 'hisses'

Men on the tarmac at London Airport were certain last night that they saw a flying saucer. One described it—"white, with a blue flame from its tail. Speed about 600 miles an hour, and it hissed."

Mr Fred Perrior, airport porter, said it was a foot long and six inches wide, and it kept a straight course.

But control tower officials neither saw it nor heard the hiss.

THE PEOPLE 11/12/60

I've seen flying saucer—Priest

ENGLAND

AN Anglican missionary reported to his headquarters yesterday, "I've seen a flying saucer with men inside it.

"The men waved and exchanged signals with us," said Father W. R. Gill, of Boianai Anglican Mission, Papua, in a report which reached Brisbane yesterday.

Radar Crews Get Solid Fix on UFOs

HOUGHTON (Mich.)—(UPI)—Personnel at the U.S. Air Force radar base in the Keweenan Peninsula yesterday reported "solid radar contact" with seven to 10 unidentified flying objects moving in a "V" formation over Lake Superior.

The objects were moving out of the southwest and were heading north - northeast at about 9,000 miles per hour, the men said. They were 5,200 to 17,000 feet high.

One of the men at the base said three other radar stations, in North Dakota, Minnesota and Luther Air Station in Canada, also reported spotting the objects. He said another station reported electronic jamming of its radar.

Seven other objects were spotted over Duluth and jet interceptors gave chase, he said, but they could not maintain the speed of the UFO's and were easily outdistanced.

The radar personnel, Air Force enlisted men, asked that their names not be disclosed.

2 SOUTH AFRICAN POLICEMEN REPORT SIGHTING OF 'SAUCER'

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—South African police and scientists investigated Thursday a report that a flying saucer-type object had landed on a main highway near Pretoria, the country's administrative capital.

Two patrolling police officers reported seeing the flaming "saucer," about 30 feet in diameter, shortly after midnight. One of them, Koos de Klerk, said that the shiny copper-colored object resembled a giant spinning top.

The two men claimed that, as they approached the object, it took off silently at great speed with flames shooting out of its underside.

Scientists who examined the spot where the officers said that they saw the object are reported to have found that a six-foot wide section of the tarred road had been badly burned. Grass on either side of the highway also was reported slightly scorched.

(Associated Press)

September 29, 1959
ARKANSAS GAZETTE

In Conquest of Cosmos

Earthlings, Planet Men To Join Forces, Red Says

London, Sept. 29 (AP).—A Russian scientist predicted today that space-probing earthlings eventually would meet up with beings from other worlds.

And together they would go on to conquer the cosmos.

"Soviet science already commands the means to send cosmic rockets to Mars and Venus," claimed Moscow radio.

To be sure of getting to Venus a rocket will have to be set off precisely at 11.5 kilometers (7.46 miles) per second —"somewhat greater" than the speed of Russia's rocket which hit the moon, the broadcast said.

In man's conquest of the cosmos, Moscow radio reported, astronomer Feliks Segal believes the space travelers first will colonize the moon.

Then they will conquer the rest of the planets. Finally they will venture forth into other solar systems.

In a broadcast beamed to North America, Moscow radio said the moon at present was no place for man to make a home. It has no atmosphere and man could not breathe there. Daytime temperatures rise to 130 degrees centigrade but the nights are unbearably cold, the thermometer dropping to minus 160 degrees.

Moscow radio said one Russian scientist estimates that one inhabited planetary system must exist for every million stars.

"Consequently there must be about 150,000 inhabited planetary systems in our galaxy.

"On some of them life exists in lower forms. But there must be planets, too whose inhabitants may even be higher than man in point of development.

"Some of them may even have begun to make flights into space. Therefore we should have meetings with them.

"If such meetings do take place, they may result in the co-ordination of the efforts of man and these other intelligent beings in the great work of combating the elemental forces of nature."

Strange Air Object Seen In N.M.

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. (UPI)—A cigar-shaped unidentified flying object was reported seen Friday night near the place where the "manhigh" Air Force space balloon landed Wednesday.

The object was reported by John Romero, identified as a missile engineer, on the White Sands Proving Ground. But he said it had a fan-shaped tail and four pin-point-spots of lights on the side like portholes.

THE NEWARK STAR-LEDGER, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1959

Says 'saucers' seen in Far North

By JOHN LESTER
Staff Writer

Unidentified Flying Objects, more commonly known as Flying Saucers, again have been seen "maneuvering and landing" in Northern Alaska and the North Pole area, UFO authority Lee R. Munsick of Morristown told members of the Denville Rotary Club yesterday.

Speaking at a luncheon meeting at the Rockaway River Country Club, Munsick, formerly assistant director of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, told Rotarianism these most recent sightings in thein Frozen North took place within t ehpast two weeks, "as nearly as can be determined at this time."

The Alaskan sighting involved a single disc-type craft that was seen by a small party of trappers about 200 miles east of Umiat, Munsick said.

The men estimated the UFO was about two miles away when they firgt noticed it, Munsick reported, that it rose and descended to within a few feet of the ground several times, then flew slowly in a tight circle before disappearing.

They described it as "red colored."

Munsick attributed this to the fact that there are numerous instances on record of UFOs' glowing when in motion, a deep orange at low speeds, nearly white at high speeds.

The Polar sighting was made by two Norwegian soldiers, although no further details are available.

The Norwegian embassy, Munsick said, claimed to have no record of this sighting but added that all information on UFOs and their sightings were considered classified.

This latest North Pole sighting is at least the fourth in which members of the Norwegian military have figured as far as is known, the speaker said.

In September, 1955, he recalled, a representative of the Norwegian Gneral Staff revealed that "special details" assigned to observe the Arctic region "are now convinced" it was being used as a base by UFOs, especially during bad weather "when we are forced back to our bases."



INTRODUCTION

Sometimes reality can be stranger than fiction. It is therefore unnecessary to add more fantasies to the genuine historical facts in the field of Nazi occultism, especially when it comes to their weird expeditions and their pseudo-scientific researches.

The true amateur of sensational and strange stories can still be fully satisfied with Himmler's Witch Project, or the Hollow Earth Theory, or the various moons of the World Ice Theory that fell on our planet and drowned the Atlanteans. This is real history and some high-ranking Nazis did believe in these theories, no matter how sensational they may sound to modern ears.

It does not add anything to the uncanny spell of such stories to pollute them with material that cannot be verified or, even worse, with pure lies coming straight out of the imagination of poor authors in search of quick money and fame. These made-up stories are usually rewritten in a thousand ways on the Internet, and everyone ends up adding their own personal touch or interpretation, feeding on each other as makeshift sources.

Even if we happen to be dealing with esoteric matters on the fringe of myth and reality, one should not depart from the proper scientific methods which were suggested by Sagan. We should only work on experimental data, observations and measurements. Facts should be independently confirmed by documented references. Logic should be the basis of all rationale, and every link in the chain of our submitted observations should hold together. One can make hypotheses on the link between two separate phenomena, just because they were close in time, place or shape, but these still have to be confirmed by some relevant material, such as geographical and physical evidences. Take, for instance, the case of the alleged battles that would have taken place after 1945 in Antarctica between Allied forces and very special Nazi aircrafts, looking like UFOs and flying out of underground lairs.

Finally, one should use the rule of Occam’s razor: where there are competing hypotheses to explain the same facts, use the simplest, though you may find another one to be more attractive. The point is not to write a screenplay for a blockbuster, but to find out what really did happen.

Among many untrue statements, the yet fascinating book The Morning of the Magicians written by Pauwels & Bergier in 1960, stresses rightfully that the Nazi era was like a breach in space and time that they called "The Absolute Elsewhere." What happened during these almost 12 years of dictatorship, at the heart of Europe in one of the most civilized and industrially advanced countries, does not match the moral, philosophical and religious values that prevailed everywhere else at the same time in the world. There is therefore a need to revisit all historical facts linked to Nazi "oddities" that one rarely finds in mainstream historians' books.

True occultism did exist in Nazi Germany but was not widespread. It was mainly centered on Himmler's personal fantasies and his small circle of high-ranking officers. Himmler was, though, the very powerful Reichsführer of the feared SS, and as such could introduce occult teachings and new religious practices in the training of his elite soldiers as he did, for example, at the Wewelsburg castle. He founded an almost occult and pseudo-scientific institute called the Ahnenerbe that led expeditions as far as Tibet and searched for the Holy Grail in the South of France. Last but not least, Himmler was very much interested in the persecution of witches during the Middle Ages.

Fantasies, urban legends, literary inventions and pure lies came after the war at the beginning of the ‘60s. Any book that dealt with Nazis and the occult, Satan, UFOs or secret treasures was assured to be sold at thousands of copies. Among the purely commercial approach of fake historians and storytellers, there were a few "honest" though fanatic people who managed, by their writings and teachings, to develop a kind a semi-religious version of Nazism that has formed the basis up until today for neo-Nazi movements throughout the world. We shall therefore deal more deeply with such themes as the Black Sun and the Vril force that pervade many of these Nazi New Age creeds.

This book aims at separating historical facts, however esoteric and strange they can be, from post-war fabrications and commercial lies. The amateur of mysteries and dark secrets will not be disappointed, though, since in this quest reality is often stranger than fiction.

HISTORICAL ODDITIES

Not all that is strange is necessarily of the occult; and not all that is esoteric is necessarily strange, but things can remain hidden for a number of reasons.

There is hard historical evidence of odd things that did happen during the Nazi era; these topics are rarely touched by mainstream historians because they may not feel at ease with the classical "all evil/all good" dichotomy between the Axis and the Allied forces. This is probably due to the Nuremberg Trials held by the Allied forces just after the Second World War.

Suffice it to consider that the bad guys did not discriminate in their ranks as much as the US Army did with its Negro troops, or that whatever technical achievement the villains acquired has boosted the post-war research and development of both the USA and the USSR. This is particularly true in the fields of aeronautics and missiles.

Non-Whites & Jews in the German Army

Although Nazism applied racial theories against non-white people, it welcomed volunteers from almost all races in some of its organizations. According to Bryan Mark Rigg, in his book Hitler's Jewish Soldiers, there were up to 150,000 Jews, or partially Jewish soldiers, in the regular German armed forces. Some of them were even awarded very high decorations, and others became high-ranking officers, like generals and admirals. These Jews considered themselves nonetheless German above all, and not Jews.



Field-Marshal Erhard Milch

The most astounding example is Field-Marshal Erhard Milch, who was a "half-Jew," and whose birth certificate was falsified by none other than Goering, who had claimed to Nazi protesters that "I decide who is a Jew and who is an Aryan."

In fact, there was an exception to the racial laws of Nuremberg, called the concept of “honorary Aryan.” The whole Japanese people as well as the Finns, who are not of Indo-European descent, were proclaimed “honorary Aryans.” Some Jews were considered as such too, but on a very small scale, being mostly veterans from WWI who won military medals for their bravery during the fights.

There were also a few Black people living in Germany at that time. Some were sterilized when Nazis came to power, while others were harshly discriminated against by the population.



African serving in the Free Arabian legion

Afro-American POW soldiers were usually treated much worse than white American soldiers. Although rare, there have been some confirmed instances of Blacks being enlisted within Nazi organizations, such as the Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth) and the Wehrmacht. There were even a few Blacks in Berlin that were kept in pretty good conditions so that they could be used in propaganda movies.



Sikh soldier from the Indische Legion
controlling French citizens (1944)

In the German army, there was an influx of volunteers from many nationalities and races. Indians served on the Atlantic Wall in France under German uniform in the Indische Legion, all the while keeping some ethnic insignias of their own, just like Black and Arab soldiers were deployed throughout the Free Arabian Legion in North Africa.

Non-Germanic soldiers were enlisted in the Wehrmacht as Foreign Volunteers, whereas “Aryan” candidates usually joined the Waffen-SS.

All in all, there were around 120 different nationalities in the Waffen-SS and the Foreign Legions together, representing many races and religions alike. There were even a few American and British volunteer recruits among the POWs.

Spring of Life and Baby Abductions

The Lebensborn, meaning Spring of Life in German, was not a breeding organization taking care of Aryan children, as it was claimed after the war. Its aim was to lower the very high abortion rate in Germany after WWI (800,000 per year); to take care of orphans during wartime; and to offer social help for children born out of wedlock, may they be German or not and may they be in Germany or in an occupied country alike. The women, of whom 60 percent were not married, were allowed to give birth anonymously and have their children adopted by Aryan families.

The strict conditions to be eligible for the Lebensborn benefits were of course in accordance with the Nuremberg racial laws, and therefore they applied only to the members of the so-called Nordic race or Aryan race.



Nurse taking care of Aryan children
in a Lebensborn center

Though not directly involved, the Lebensborn helped host some of the abducted Polish children who were meant to be Germanized. A total of around 200,000 Polish children, none older than 10 and all bearing "racial value," were taken from their homes and brought to Germany to be raised by German families according to the national-socialist ideology. On a lesser scale, similar abductions were reported in other occupied countries as well.

It appears that the Lebensborn was only the tip of the iceberg regarding the broader problem of children considered to be Aryans throughout Europe. Besides abductions, many children were born from the illegitimate relations between German soldiers and women in occupied countries. In France alone, the number of such children, called enfants de la guerre (children of war) is estimated to be as high as 200,000. There were as many as 40,000 in Belgium, 20,000 in the Netherlands, 12,000 in Norway and 4,000 in Finland. After the war, these children were very often harshly discriminated against as "traitors."

Lake Toplitz: the Nazi Abyss

Lake Toplitz is located in the mountains close to Salzburg, in Austria. It is possible to access its shores only by foot, since the only small road close to it is private property. The lake itself is pretty narrow, only 400 meters wide; it's not that long (2 km), but it is quite deep (108 m). Because of these particular characteristics, Germans used this site to test their torpedoes.

Towards the end of the war, Nazis wanted to bring Hitler to this natural alpine fortress and organize a last-ditch guerrilla attempt against the Allied troops, which were closing in. However, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945, and this place was used to hide the last secrets of the Third Reich as an absolutely last resort to prevent them falling into Allied hands.



Lake Toplitz dark and deep waters

During the very last days of WWII, a SS car squad brought mysterious crates close to the lake. Since no vehicle could go further, they knocked at the door of a 21-year-old girl named Ida Weisenbacher, who still lives in a small house close to the lake. "It was five o'clock in the morning, we were still in bed when we heard the knock on the door," remembered Weisenbacher. "'Get up immediately! Hitch up the horse wagon, we need you.'"

She hurried up and guided them to ride their wagon pulled by horses to the lakeshore. "A commander was there. He told us to bring these boxes as fast as possible to Lake Toplitz," added Weisenbacher. The boxes were labeled with bold-painted letters and numbers. After carrying three full wagonloads to the lake she could later testify: "When I brought the last load, I saw how they went on to the lake and dropped the boxes into the water. The SS kept shoving me away, but I saw the boxes were sunk into the lake."

After the war many people tried to dive in to find these Nazi treasures, but the odds were low and the danger was high. The bottom of the lake was carpeted with logs, sometimes standing like an underwater forest made by falling trees from the steep slopes of the mountain. In 1947 a US navy diver became entangled there and drowned. Then in 1959 a team, financed by the German magazine Stern, managed to retrieve £72 million in forged British currency, hidden in those boxes, together with their money printing press. The fake currency was produced during a secret counterfeiting operation, code-named Operation Bernhard, which was personally authorized by Adolf Hitler to weaken the Allied economies.

In 1963 another diver drowned, and explorations became forbidden until 1983, when a German biologist accidentally discovered more forged British pounds, in addition to numerous Nazi-era rockets that had crashed into the lake. At the turn of the new millennium, other expeditions costing up to US$600,000 were launched in the depths of the lake, one of which brought back some more fake currency. A French company managed to dry some of those soaked banknotes in order to show them at an exhibition.

Some claim, sometimes with good reasons, that there could be more to find there, since it is most likely that any heavy treasure would probably be hidden under the log forest which lies at the bottom of the lake.

Werewolves

The name Werwolf (German for Werewolf) was initially a novel written by Hermann Löns: Der Wehrwolf (1910). The latter spelling literally means "the wolf that defends" in German. This book was read by the Free Corps fighters after WWI, and held as an example. Some go so far back as to see the Werwolf 's origins in the late Middle Ages and the Holy Vehme Courts, which were a secret society of normal citizens taking revenge on criminals who acted negatively towards the community. The criminal was sentenced and often hung on a tree as a manner of advertisement.



Werwolf insignia on pennant

By March 1945, when the Final Victory was seen as impossible, minister of propaganda Joseph Goebbels fostered the idea of a clandestine guerrilla warfare that would assault ceaselessly upon the Allies, even after their victory.

The truth is that the Werwolf was firstly intended as a uniformed unit and not an intellectual concept of resistance. Though some acts of "terrorism" against enemies of Nazism were accounted for as late as 1948, many put into question the fact that they actually were linked to a secret Werwolf organization. The only confirmed consequence of the propaganda made around the Werwolf was the overestimation of the phenomena by the Allies, which led to greater hardships for the German population.

The actual Werwolf was initiated by Heinrich Himmler in the summer of 1944, and then entrusted to SS General Hans-Adolf Prützmann. Their recruits, comprised of some 5,000 SS men and Hitler Youths alike, were trained with guerrilla tactics that were similar to what the Germans saw being used by the Soviet partisans in the occupied territories of the East.

On March 23, 1945, Dr. Joseph Goebbels urged every citizen of occupied Germany to act as a Werwolf. Although the partisans trained by Prützmann were completely annihilated in 1945, the Allies still adopted harsh measures with the Germans. The Soviets in particular killed thousands of young boys suspected to be Werwolf members, with no real proof or proper court trial.

Nonetheless, the Werwolf could be considered as a masterpiece of Dr. Joseph Goebbels' successful propaganda, since it mobilized many Allied resources against a quite non-existant danger.

The Underground Reich

In just a few years, Nazi Germany occupied many European countries, and managed to introduce noticeable changes in their daily landscape. Some of them are still visible today, such as the bunkers; others are spread underground through extended networks of tunnels and chambers. What was the purpose of such constructions, and did they hide agendas of the strangest kind?

Many know from WWII movies about the impressive chain of bunkers along the Atlantic Wall, which was meant to prevent any attempt of the Allied forces to land by sea. Others may remember pictures of Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia (Wolfsschanze aka The Wolf's Lair) or in Ukraine (at Vinnitsa: Werwolf aka The Werewolf). But who had ever heard of the underground cities in the Jonas Valley, or of the underground networks of factories at the Dora concentration camp?

They had built no less than fourteen headquarter-ready bunkers for Hitler, of which he actually used ten. Some of them were well known, but others are barely mentioned in the history books. For example, most French are not even aware that there exists a large bunker complex just 60 km from Paris, in the city of Margival adjacent to Soissons. Except for the people who live very close to it, nobody else had ever visited Hitler's Polish headquarters of Stępina or Strzyżów, referred to as the Anlage Süd, (Southern Installations). Hitler met Mussolini there on August 27, 1941. Based on the information that I was able to personally gather from the local elderly, villagers were asked to stay home and close their windows in order not to see the Duce and the Führer while they stayed at Stępina, although they were allowed to stay put in their homes.

The same old people told me that just after the war, Polish secret service agents discovered that there was a multi-level structure right under the bunker that may be four to five underground floors. Nobody could know for sure, since the Germans flooded the whole building thanks to a nearby river. Polish divers tried to locate the breach in the structure from which the river poured in, but always failed in doing so. Pumping up the water was therefore not an option. Rumors have said that rich North Americans of Polish descent would try in the near future to invest the necessary money in order to stop the leak and drain the bunker and its underground floors. Yet nobody knows exactly what they expect to find down there because of the lack of archives on the matter.



Stępina Train Bunker where Mussolini's train was hosted

Even more mysterious were the vast network of tunnels and bunkers, which were so big that they sometimes looked like underground cities. Their real purpose has not always been clear up to this day.

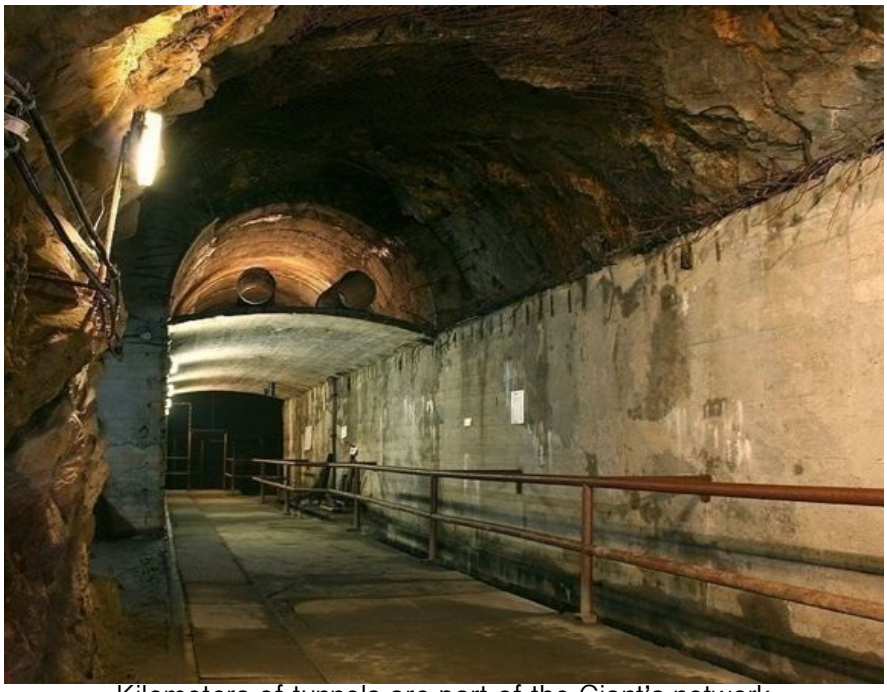
The less mysterious and yet probably the most gruesome among them was the Dora concentration camp near the city of Nordhausen, with its Mittelwerk factory.

The majority of Nazi covert activities took place in their underground facilities beneath Kohnstein Mountain, where they had buried their entire factory that produced the famous V2 rockets. The existence of these rockets was discovered after the Allied air raid on the Peenemünde island's U-boat facilities, on August 17 and 18, 1943, which destroyed most of its infrastructure.



Mittelwerk factory

Der Riese (German for “The Giant”) is another very extensive complex of underground tunnels and bunkers in the Owl Mountains and under Książ Castle in Lower Silesia, which was part of Germany at that time, but is now in Poland. It was built in 1943 to serve as another headquarters for Hitler. Its underground bunkers were located in eight different places and took thousands of forced laborers to build. According to Albert Speer, Minister of Armaments and War Production of the Reich, "These projects required 328,000 cubic yards of reinforced concrete, on top of the masonry involved, and they entailed 277,000 cubic yards of underground passages, 36 miles of roads with six bridges, and 62 miles of pipelines. The ‘Giant’ complex alone consumed more concrete than what was allocated for the entire population to build their air-raid shelters in 1944." The total cost was almost five times higher than the Wolf's Lair bunker.



Kilometers of tunnels are part of the Giant’s network

The works were never fully completed before the war ended, and since the Polish secret service confiscated the blueprints and all the relevant confidential information, nobody really knows what its exact purpose was to this day. People assume that

it was meant to be the biggest of all Hitler's headquarters, and a shelter for the underground factories, but this assumption could never be confirmed for sure. SS General Hans Kammler was in charge of all these underground facilities, but since he disappeared in 1945 close to Prague, in Czechoslovakia, his alleged death became surrounded by many controversies, the most likely being that he was shot by Russian troops in the woods surrounding the Czech capital city. Others claim that he bargained with the US Army to barter his knowledge about German Wonder Weapons in exchange for his immunity in the USA. This theory would not be implausible if he had made it through to the Americans before being captured by Soviet troops, since Kammler was a man who knew even about the A9 rocket, known as the Amerika rocket, that was going to be built in these 30-meter high tunnels with the purpose of reaching New York City.



Książ Castle in Poland

It has been calculated that over half of the underground galleries and chambers have yet to be discovered, because a SS team blasted many of their entrances. This is how the Warsaw Voice reports what the post-war Polish researchers had estimated: "There are 35 stoneware pipes meant to carry liquid. Where to? We don't know. We measured their depth and tried to use smoke to find out whether the pipes were connected inside, and where they ended. We put two lit flares in each opening – the smoke was evidently sucked inside. In one case, we could hear what sounded like an air-lock working ... smoke from 26 flares went inside and didn't really come out anywhere. How great must be the capacity of those pipes, or even the underground tunnels, if they could take in such a quantity of smoke!"

There seems to be even more tunnels, suggested by the fact that some have been bricked up. Researchers went on claiming, "In some places, pipes come out the surface of the mountain from nowhere, and in others, narrow-gauge railway tracks stick out of piles of rock; such tracks were used to remove the excavated material. There are also empty chambers with no direct connection to the tunnels accessible today, nor to any surface structures. Some elements suggest that the tunnels in the Owl Mountains could have had a multi-level structure, very seldom seen in other German facilities around the same period. This could confirm the presumption of some amateur explorers that there might still be some things in the corridors which are still inaccessible today. The question as to what exactly, still remains unanswered. The obvious interest shown in these facilities after the war, by the special services either in the Soviet Union, in East Germany, or in Poland could do nothing to dispel these doubts."

The Jonas Valley - It's now worth mentioning the most mysterious of all underground facilities: the 25 tunnels dug in the mountains of the Jonas Valley (Jonastal) in Germany. Tens of thousands of prisoners worked there to complete this gigantic enterprise, many of them starving to death or losing their lives in the process. The secrecy surrounding this operation was so strict that even nowadays no one can say for sure what their actual purpose was. The tunnel entrances have been blasted in order to prevent access to the public for security reasons. Some claim that it was one more huge headquarters for Hitler, others that it was a site for testing nuclear bombs, or to host factories producing the Amerika rocket meant to reach American soil (Hitlers Bombe by Rainer Karlsch, 2005).



Jonastal: 25 tunnel entrances can
be seen entering the mountain

Last but not least, adventurous minds claim that the Amber Room treasure, called the Eighth Wonder of the World, would be buried there. It was a room pertaining to Catherine's Palace, called Tsarskoye Selo in Russia, and was a true marvel of art and craftsmanship. The most likely theory is that is was brought to Königsberg by the Germans after they stole it, and that it was destroyed there by none other than the advancing Soviet troops. Königsberg is now a Russian exclave bearing the name of Kaliningrad.

True or not, there are still very strange stories being told about the underground Reich, and the author of this book heard one such tale recounted by a reliable good friend. This friend's grandfather was one of the very first French soldiers fighting on German soil, where he heard that American soldiers had found a very deep tunnel, probably in the Harz Mountains where the Jonastal is located. He claimed that they were ordered to go inside to find out what it was meant for. The deeper they went inside, the longer the tunnel appeared to be. They allegedly had even found two dead SS soldiers, probably by starvation, holding onto their MG42 machine guns in a desperate effort to try to prevent any Allied intrusion. Where it gets even stranger is that they were ordered to blast the tunnel after nearly 14 kilometers, and not even try to get any farther. Did the US generals know more, or were they simply afraid of what they could have found?

Wonder Weapons

The Wonder Weapons (Wunderwaffen in German) were real cutting-edge weapons, as well as a new means of propaganda in the hands of Dr. Joseph Goebbels. They were technologically so ahead of their time that they gave birth to a full new myth. Some of them were proven to be quite useful, like the V2 rockets, while some others may have been just as efficient if they had been produced on time and in sufficient quantities to really turn the tide of the war around. The most famous example is probably the Me 262 jet-engine aircraft; moreover, there were some Wonder Weapons which never developed beyond the stage of blueprints or prototypes.



Silbervogel: Wind tunnel model, picture taken in 1935.

Many innovative projects were cancelled before they even started, or they were never completed by the time the war ended. We are talking about different types of aircraft carriers, U-boats with all-electric engines using an air-independent propulsion device, both able to carry ballistic missiles and super-heavy tanks like the Ratte (The Rat) which would have weighed 1,000 metric tons. German scientists had also planned some rocket-powered aircrafts, reusable A5-type rockets, A11-and A12-type satellite launchers, a Silbervogel sub-orbital Amerika bomber that could be launched from the mid-Atlantic Azores islands, manned surface-to-air missiles, a sun gun with a concave mirror that could focus reflected sunlight on a specific target on the Earth and possibly destroy an entire city, a gigantic static V-3 cannon to bombard London from their Northern France location, and finally, the infamous German nuclear project, which failed for lack of unified research management.

Below are listed some of the Wunderwaffen that made it to the field of battle, even though some were only in small quantities:

The **Type XXI U-Boot**, also known as the "Elektroboot", was the first submarine designed to operate primarily submerged rather than as surface ships that could submerge, providing a means to escape detection or to launch a surprise attack.



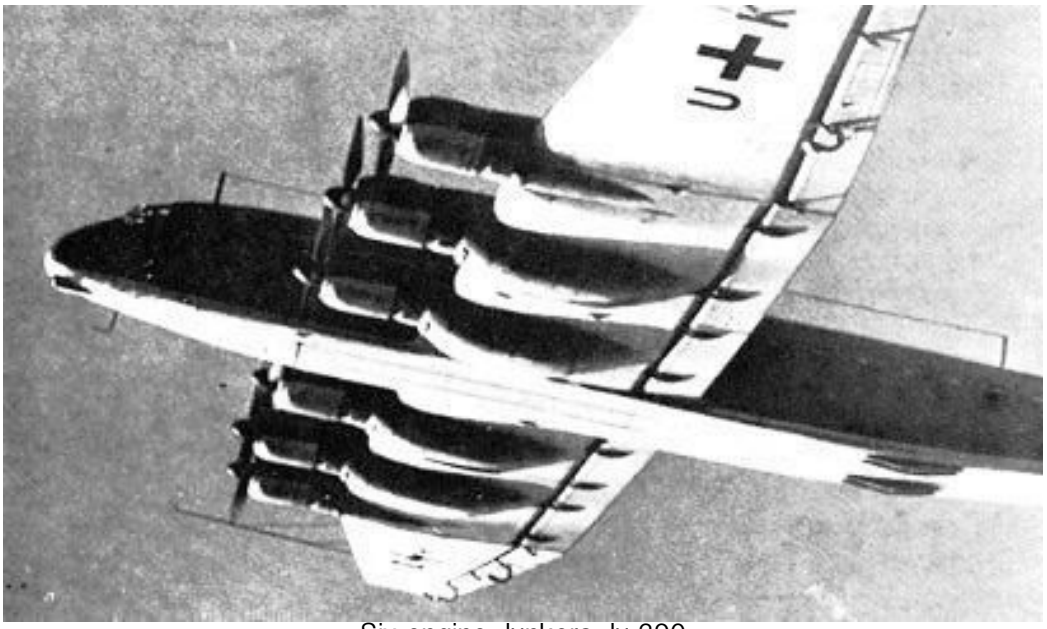
Type XXI U-boats in Bergen, Norway

The **Panzer VIII Maus** was completed in late 1944 and it was the heaviest tank ever built.



Panzer VIII Maus with crew members

The **Junkers Ju 390** was one of the aircraft candidates, along with the Messerschmitt Me 264 and Focke-Wulf Ta 400, which was submitted for deployment in the Amerika Bomber project.



Six-engine Junkers Ju 390

The **Messerschmitt Me 323 Gigant** was in fact the biggest land-based transport aircraft of the war.



Messerschmitt Me 323 Gigant

The **V-1 flying bomb** (Vergeltungswaffe 1 in German, standing for the Retaliation Weapon 1) was the jet-powered predecessor of our modern-day cruise missiles.



V-1 missile on a launch rail at Imperial War Museum Duxford

The **V-2 rocket** (also called Aggregat-4 or A4), was a ballistic missile specifically targeted to hit London and Antwerp.



V2-Rocket in the Peenemünde Museum

The **Horten Ho 229** was a prototype fighter/bomber combination, designed by Reimar and Walter Horten, and it was the first wing-powered jet aircraft in the world.



Horten Ho 229

The **Flettner Fl 282 Kolibri** ("Hummingbird") was a single-seat, open-cockpit intermeshing-rotor helicopter. It was the first series production helicopter in the world.



German helicopter Fl 282 Kolibri

The **Fieseler Fi 103R** was a manned version of the V-1 flying bomb, intended for attacks in which the pilot was likely to be killed.



Fieseler Fi 103R, code-named Reichenberg

The **Me 163 Komet** was a rocket-powered fighter aircraft, which was the only one ever to be deployed.

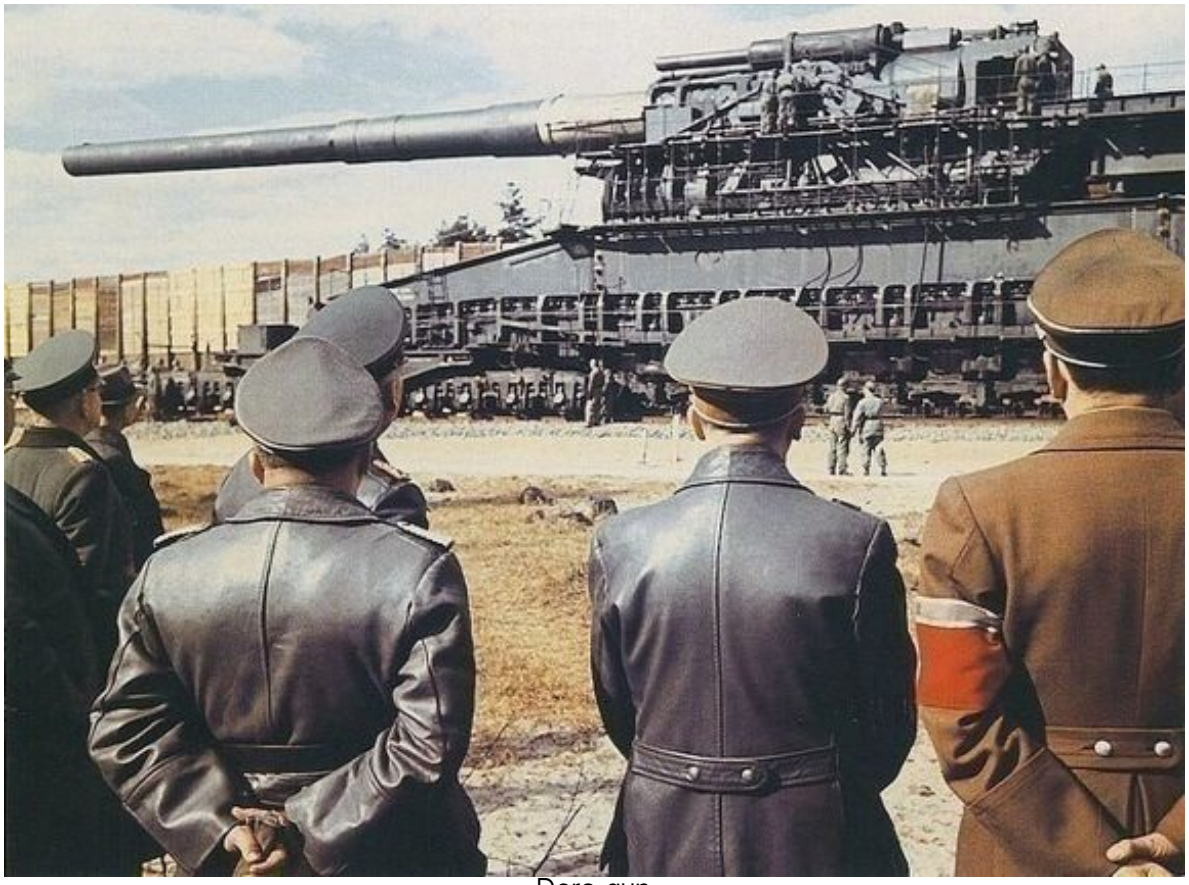


The **Me 262 Schwalbe** ("Swallow") was the world's first operational jet-powered fighter aircraft, which was much faster than its counterpart Allied fighters.



Me 262A at the National Museum
of the US Air Force in Dayton

The **Dora** was the name of one German ultra-heavy railway gun which weighed 1,350 tons. It fired shells that weighed seven tons, with a 47-kilometer range.



Dora gun

The **StG 44** (Sturmgewehr 44) is considered by many historians to be the first modern assault rifle.



StG 44

The **Zielgerät 1229** (ZG 1229), aka Vampir, was an infrared device developed for the Sturmgewehr 44 assault rifle, designed to offer the night-vision advantage.



Vampir infrared device for night vision

The **Sarin Gas** was discovered in 1938 by two German scientists who were attempting to create a strong pesticide. In mid-1939, the formula for the agent was passed to the chemical warfare section of the German Army Weapons Office, which ordered that it be brought into mass production for wartime use. A number of pilot plants were built, and a high-production facility was still under construction by the time World War II ended. Although sarin could be incorporated into artillery shells, for some reason Germany decided not to use nerve agents against Allied targets too close to home. This gas was used with devastating effects in a Tokyo subway during the 1995 attack of the Aum Sect.

NAZI OCCULTISM

Nazi occultism is a concept where it is difficult to separate historical facts from post-war fantasies. The latter are numerous, especially from the ‘60s onward. Two books helped this surge in Nazi occultism: Pauwels and Bergier's The Morning of the Magicians (1960) and Trevor Ravenscroft's The Spear of Destiny (1972). After these, any book that tackled the Nazi occultism theme was sure enough to make strong sales, well above 50,000 copies for the worst among them.

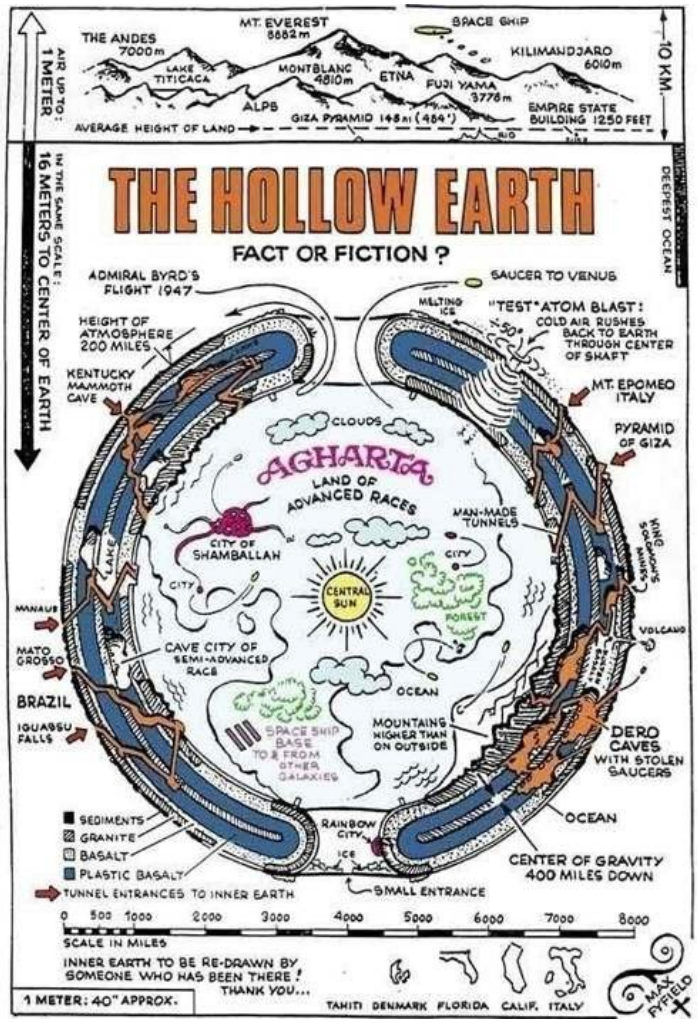
The only researched academic book to have seriously studied this field is The Occult Roots of Nazism (1985, Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke). It links the late 19th century ariosophist theories to the Thule Society, and possibly to the very beginnings of the Nazi Party. The only proven aspects of Nazi occultism are Himmler's known interest in the matter and the researches he ordered.

It is nonetheless obviously true that the twelve years of the Nazi era are like a breach in the fabric of history. The Nazi standards and values may be seen as the archetype embodiment of an evil empire compared to our own civilization, but they are above all values from the Absolute Elsewhere, as Pauwels and Bergier put it rightfully in their best-seller.

At this stage, it is hence more than necessary to determine the real facts concerning Nazi researches, expeditions and beliefs before we can properly evaluate post-war fantasies and cheap Internet Nazi myths. Let’s stress, though, that these myths are still best-selling as many readers prefer anything but the truth as long as it thrills them like a good TV series would.

The Hollow Earth Theory

Although this theory is merely a notion which was dismissed by the scientific community as early as the late 18th century, it still has advocates today.



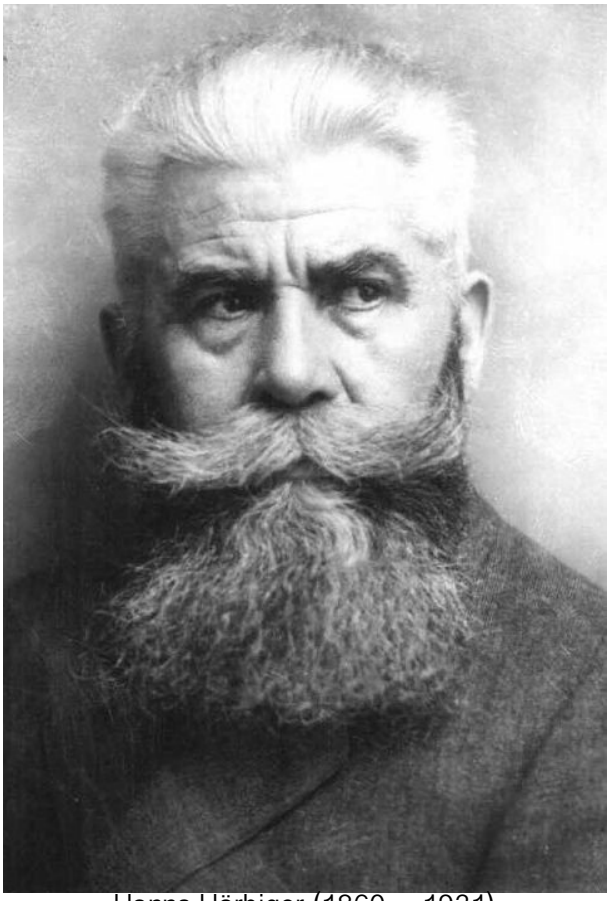
During the Nazi era, the Hollow Earth Theory had followers in Germany but not more than in any other Western country during that time. In 1838, Edgar Allan Poe wrote a novel, The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket, telling us of an awe-inspiring voyage inside the earth by a ship that entered through an alleged hole in the South Pole; in 1871, Edward Bulwer-Lytton published his famous fiction called The Coming Race about some superior creatures, called Vril-ya, that dwelled in the subterranean world; in 1864 Jules Verne wrote of A Journey to the Center of the Earth where prehistory still existed; in 1922 Ferdinand Ossendowski mentioned in his Beasts, Men and Gods the existence of an underground kingdom, with Agarthi as their capital city ... the very residence of the King of the World.

According to the book written by Pauwels & Bergier, The Morning of the Magicians (1960), German scientists were testing life inside a hollow universe on Rugen Island of the Baltic Sea. They even tried to use infrared rays to detect British navy ships, since the alleged inverted curvature of the Earth would have permitted the monitoring of their whereabouts. One does not wonder anymore why it failed so miserably.

The only proven link with Nazis is their fondness for tunnels, including underground bases and bunkers, that stretched sometimes for hundreds of kilometers, like those close to the Dora concentration camp in the Harz Mountains of Germany, or in the huge complex called Der Riese (The Giant) in what today is southwestern Poland.

World Ice Theory

The World Ice Theory (WEL or Welteislehre in German) is a cosmological theory coming straight from the mind of Hanns Hörbiger, an Austrian mechanical engineer whose daily work was far away from astronomy.



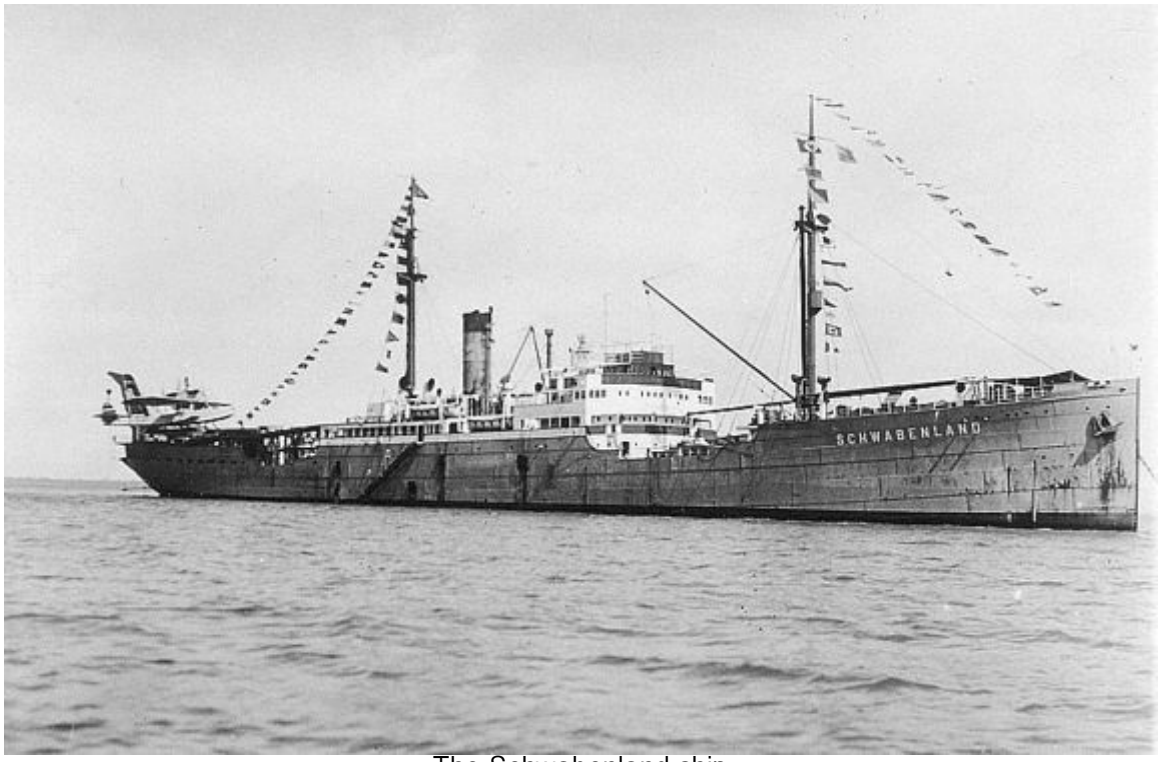
Hanns Hörbiger (1860 – 1931)

Hörbiger got his knowledge from "visions" that he had seen around 1894 while sleeping. His theory states that ice is the base material of all events in the universe. Ice allegedly determined the shape our planet through the influence of "ice moons" that fell on Earth at various times throughout history, causing floods that wiped out entire ancient civilizations like Atlantis.

Himmler and Hitler were first enthusiastic about the WEL theory because of its alleged weather forecasting abilities. The Führer went so far as to adopt it as the Nazi Party's cosmology, but later the Propaganda Ministry ordered Hörbiger to stop all related publications. WEL did not survive WWII except among some minor neo-Nazi groups.

Neuschwabenland

New Swabia (Neuschwabenland in German) is the region of Antarctica under Norwegian influence, which was named after the boat Schwabenland of the German Antarctic Expedition of 1938-1939. This boat could carry and catapult two aircrafts.



The Schwabenland ship

There were two German expeditions before 1938 with the idea of crossing right through Antarctica: the Gauss expedition from 1901 to 1903 and the Filchner expedition from 1911 to 1912.

Germany decided in 1937 to put a whaling fleet to sea for economic reasons. After successfully returning home to Nazi Germany, which was in dire need of whale fat for its industry, they launched their infamous 1938-1939 expedition. Their hidden agenda was to find a good location for a German naval base.

Because of the initial lack of information and the secrecy of the operation, conspiracy theories emerged about the Nazi survival bases under the ice in New Swabia and their subsequent destruction by the British and American troops (the notorious High Jump Operation led by Admiral Byrd). One enigmatic clue comes from two statements made by Admiral Dönitz, first after the expedition returned in 1939 and then later in 1944; he allegedly claimed, "My U-boat operators discovered a real earthly paradise" and then that "Germany's submarine fleet is proud that it created an unassailable fortress for the Führer on the other end of the world...." During the Nuremberg Trials, Dönitz would have spoken of "an invisible fortification, in the midst of that eternal ice."



Official insignia of the 1938-1939 expedition

Once more, we have to deal with post-war fantasies, as this is very accurately debunked by Colin Summerhayes in his serious and well-researched article called Hitler's Antarctic Base: The Myth and the Reality, first published in the Polar Record Magazine, issue 43, of the Cambridge University Press (2007). He concludes that "Using background knowledge of Antarctica,

and information concerning these activities that has been published since the early 1940s, it is now demonstrated that: the two U-boats U-530 and U-977 could not have reached Antarctica; that there was no secret wartime German base in Dronning Maud Land; that SAS troops did not attack the alleged German base; that the SAS men in the region had civilian jobs at the time; that Operation Highjump was designed to train the US Navy for a possible war with the Soviet Union in the Arctic, reason why not to attack an alleged German base in Antarctica; and that Operation Argus took place over the ocean more than 2,000 km north of Dronning Maud Land. Activities that were classified have subsequently been declassified, and it is no longer difficult to separate fact from fancy, despite the fact that many may find it fancy not to do so."

Furthermore, there is the famous myth surrounding U-530 and U-977, two German submarines which surrendered at Mar del Plata (Argentina) weeks after the end of the war. If we are to believe cheap books on that matter, these U-boats carried none less than Hitler and Eva Braun to an Antarctica underground lair, with plenty of supplies to prepare the advent of the Fourth Reich or the construction of UFOs. Once more, let's refer to Colin Summerhayes' scientific approach that states clearly:

"Consideration of dates, times and speeds suggests that neither U-530 nor U-977 had time to visit Antarctica. But sailors can lie, and ship's logs can be forged. The question we ask here is: was such a visit physically possible under the conditions prevailing at the time?

All previous considerations have omitted to note that June, July and August are mid-winter months in the southern hemisphere. Could a submarine reach the coast of Dronning Maud Land, surface, and unload onto the ice shelf in mid-winter? The first obstacle would be the notorious Southern Ocean itself. The second obstacle would be the pack ice 1-2 m thick that surrounds Antarctica during the winter. Satellite data collected by NASA (Gloersen and others 1992), and by India (Vyas and others 2004) show that off Dronning Maud Land the pack ice extends around 500km out from the coast in late May and June, and 1,665 km from the coast in July, August and September […]

Could U-boats surface through 1–2m of pack ice?

Because of their low freeboard, World War II submarines could easily be damaged by pack ice. […]

Supposing that U-977 had reached the coast, what circumstances would have met the crew?

The 24-hour darkness and the cloud cover would vastly increase the danger in navigating in ice close to a poorly mapped coast. Even seeing the 'coast' would have been difficult, because it comprises the 10-30 m high ice cliff at the edge of the ice shelf, which would be more or less invisible in the dark from the low deck of a submarine, not forgetting that the icy seas would be strewn with icebergs […]. [It] means that it would have been physically impossible for U-530 or U-977 to have gone anywhere near the coast of Antarctica in June, July or August 1945.

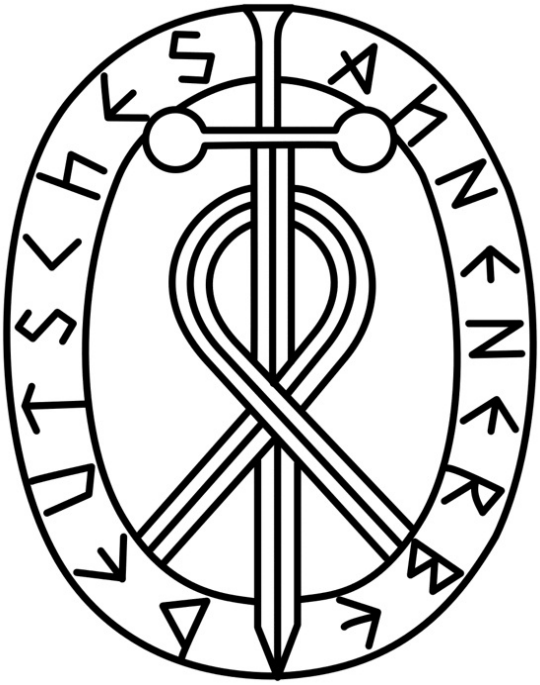
[Even if that had been possible] anyone landing from a submarine would have faced the most extraordinary difficulties in trekking 250 km across ice penetrated by hidden crevasses, in the dark and without navigational aids to a lair in the mountains where the temperatures would have been lower, down to -50○C (Ohta 1999) and the weather worse."

People who still hesitate should read this article in full, easily to be found on Google, since it proves in detail that all that was written before were pure fantasies, if not even gross lies. A scientific approach is always preferable than some unsubstantiated claim based on "anonymous insiders" and "government conspiracies."

The Ahnenerbe

In 1935 Himmler met with racial experts and founded an organization called “Deutsches Ahnenerbe, Studiengesellschaft für Geistesurgeschichte” ("German Ancestral Heritage, Society for the Study of the History of Primeval Ideas"). In short it was just called the Ahnenerbe. The most prominent and final chief of the organization was Wolfram Sievers, who was condemned to death at the Nuremberg Trials.

The goal of the Ahnenerbe was to study and research the ethnological, anthropological and cultural history of the Nordic race, the so-called Aryan race. They organized expeditions in different parts of the world to search for the birthplace of the Aryan race, and proof that it once ruled the world. The outbreak of WWII put an almost complete end to all faraway expeditions.



Official insignia of the Ahnenerbe

The Ahnenerbe had different departments, and although most of them were dedicated to archeology, they had a meteorological section based on Hanns Hörbiger's World Ice Theory, and they even had a musicology section.

These expeditions were numerous:

Karelia, Finland (1935): the goal was to record old sorcerers' and witches' chants, supposed to hold remnants of ancient Aryan pagan incantations.

Bohuslän, Sweden (1936): the team set off to the most ancient rock art site in the country, where ideograms were carved. Wirth, the then-president of the Ahnenerbe, tried to prove that he had found a prehistoric alphabet among these petroglyphs, but was using a less-than-rigorous scientific method.

Italy (1937) and **Middle East** (1938): Two researchers, Franz Altheim and Erika Trautmann, went to Italy and then to Romania, Turkey, Greece, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq in order to prove that the success of the Roman Empire was due to its Aryan racial base.

Germany (1937-1938): researchers excavated ancient fortresses and found prehistoric caves with Cro-Magnon artifacts. Some other SS studied the famous Extern Steine that would hold the proof about advanced Germanic prehistoric tribes, with a highly organized and a sophisticated solar religion.

France: the same researchers went to visit well-known prehistoric caves in France. Furthermore, during the war the SS tried to steal the Bayeux Tapestry (showing the invasion of England by the Normans) since this would have proven the superiority of the Germanic tribes.

The most mysterious case is that of Otto Rahn, an SS sent as a civilian to southwestern France pre-war to look for the Holy Grail, allegedly kept by the Cathars of Montségur. Rahn wrote interesting books about these legends. The strange part is that he died, literally frozen to death in the mountains, once he was back in Germany. Some suspect that it could have been neither an accident nor a suicide.

Spain: a recent archaeological exhibition in Bremen (Germany) "Dig for Germania. Archaeology under the Swastika" shows how the Nazis launched an expedition during WWII to find the Holy Grail. Truth turns out to be stranger than fiction. The exhibition tells how SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler allegedly visited Spain because he believed the grail was at the Montserrat Abbey near Barcelona.

He believed that finding the grail "would help Germany win the war and give him supernatural powers." Many undercover SS scientists searched in vain for the grail. The SS budget for such projects was vast inside the Ahnenerbe as the Nazis intended their finds to rewrite history and prove Germans to be the master race.

Tibet (1938-1939): Much has been said about this expedition. It would have had an esoteric and occult agenda to establish contacts with Bon Pö monks, who practiced shamanic black magic, enabling the Nazis to win the war. The only element of truth is that Himmler was very enthusiastic about Asian mysticism, and he wished to recruit "true Ahnenerbe scientists" like Edmund Kiss in order to test Hanns Hörbiger's World Ice Theory in Tibet.



SS of the Ahnenerbe with their Tibetan hosts having a traditional meal

The truth, as stated by Ernst Schäfer in a 1994 Italian documentary called Il Nazismo Esoterico, is far less mystic than all the fantasies that flood the Internet with conspiracy theories. Schäfer stated clearly that there was nothing occult in this expedition, and that all other claims were nonsensical. Proofs should be brought by fantasy tellers, and not by their listeners. That is the way science and justice should work.

Ernst Schäfer led a normal expedition with many difficulties due to his passage through British India, just before the coming war, but he and his team only focused on geology, ethnology, botany, and zoology. They brought back to Germany many pictures, film rushes, samples of plants and animals, measurements and precious gifts from their Tibetan hosts, like a complete edition of the Tibetan sacred text, the Kangyur, in 108 volumes, and other ancient texts, one of which is an alleged document regarding the Aryan race. It has also been said that the Schäfer team brought back a statue called the "Iron Man" made of meteoritic metal, and probably as old as 1,000 years, dating from the pre-Buddhist Bon religion.

Poland (1939): Wolfram Sievers convinced Himmler to loot certain museum pieces, like the famous Veit Stoss altarpiece in Cracow, but in many cases Goering's men were quicker. The Ahnenerbe was mainly left with scientific devices and historical artifacts bearing little commercial value.

Crimea (1943): Himmler sent his men of the Ahnenerbe to go after the Gothic relics that were supposed to exist in this region, which then would have confirmed the presence of past Aryan tribes. All they found were just a few relics that dated back to ancient Greek colonies established in the region and stone-age artifacts.

Ukraine (1943): Strange and mysterious botanic experiments were held in that region, perhaps in an effort to discover a resistant variety of wheat that would enable the Reich to feed its wartime population.

Cancelled expeditions

Once the war started, the Ahnenerbe had to cancel its planned expeditions because the British fleet was everywhere. Cancelled expeditions included: Tiwanaku (Bolivia), which was set out to prove that these wonderful gigantic pre-Columbian constructions could only have been built by ancient Aryan migrants; Behistun (Iran) to study the inscriptions pertaining to the Aryan origin of the Iranians, ordered by Shah Darius-I, which were found on top of a steep cliff; Canary Islands, where legends reported that the ancient inhabitants had blond hair, and where they had found mummies with these characteristics; and Iceland, to study ancient farming and architectural practices, as well as their folklore.



"Gateway of the Sun" at Tiwanaku

Human experiments

The most infamous attributes of the Ahnenerbe were their experiments on human beings, to test how far a human could resist in freezing waters, to try new medications, and so forth. Even a collection of Jewish skulls was ordered to facilitate racial measurements. These experiments made the whole Ahnenerbe a criminal organization, as sentenced by the Nuremberg Trials, which condemned Wolfram Sievers to death. It has been said that a Tibetan ritual chant was performed upon his dead body.

Much has been said about the Ahnenerbe, and the weirdest conspiracy theories have been propagated through the Internet and some cheap esoteric articles here and there. They are far from the truth, and they include tales about Nazi vampires, übersoldaten, parallel universes only accessible to Nazi UFOs, etc. Though it is pure fiction, the most respectable work in that field is Steven Spielberg's Indiana Jones movie that portrays how eager Nazi secret agents were to get ahold on the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy Grail.

The Wewelsburg

The Wewelsburg is a castle from the Renaissance era in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, close to the city of Paderborn. The overall shape of the castle is triangular, and dates back to the beginning of the 17th century, although some earlier strongholds had been built around that same place ever since the 9th century. It is worth mentioning that during the 17th century many women were held prisoner in the dungeon under the accusation of witchcraft, and they were consequently tortured and then burned at the stake.



Wewelsburg Castle

In 1934 Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler signed a lease of 100 years for one Reichsmark a year, with the intention to renovate the whole castle as an SS leadership school (SS-Führerschule). The works began first with volunteers of the Reichsarbeitsdienst, who were then replaced by forced labor from a nearby concentration camp. The bedrooms carried names of the Grail legend and King Arthur's adventures. The guests could also enjoy the use of a big dining room, an auditorium, a library and even a photographic laboratory.

They trained in such fields as ideology, early history, archeology, mythology and astronomy. Though it was already close to the defeat, Himmler had thought about building a planetarium and recruiting an astronomer to teach the high-ranking cadre of the SS. The teachings later became more oriented towards a special type of esotericism, made up of ancestral cults and practices (see Ahnenerbe), study of the runes and racial theories, as well as the worshiping of nature. This whole education was to serve as a kind of new and mysterious pagan cult, based on the legend of the Holy Grail and the Knights of the Round Table. New religious rituals were invented for this purpose, with the help of Karl Maria Wiligut, at least in the beginning, since his reputation and mental health was later questioned by many, even inside the SS.

Such rituals included SS marriages, most of the ancient pagan festivals like the Yuletide, and the winter and summer solstices. Himmler, who admired Ignatius of Loyola's book, Spiritual Exercises, allegedly practiced meditation with his higher-ranking generals (Obergruppenführer), although no hard evidence could ever be found except for the testimony of SS General Walter Schellenberg at the Nuremberg Trials. He described a curriculum consisting of "spiritual training and meditation exercises."

The most esoteric part of the castle was its North Tower, which was not destroyed even by the explosion at the end of the war, and is therefore supposed to store "powerful magical energies." It was to be the very spiritual center of the Aryan world, extending then to the adjacent cities around the castle, which were to be drastically modified according to the grandiose blueprints that were found after the war. The North Tower had a stone-lined room called the Obergruppenführersaal (SS Generals' Room) where the floor was inlaid with a Sun-Wheel symbol made of interlaced swastikas and sig runes, later to be called the Black Sun (see chapter on "The Black Sun"). On the walls were hanging the generals' coat of arms, and in the center of the room stood an oak Arthurian round table for the twelve senior SS generals. In the underlying crypt, or "Land of the Dead," were also twelve matching urns that were intended to receive the ashes of the generals when they died. The Obergruppenführersaal was used only once in 1941 before Operation Barbarossa, which was the invasion of Russia.

Himmler had asked in 1938 to have a safe that only the castle commandant and he would know about. In the same mysterious confidential way, all Death's Head rings (Totenkopfring) of dead SS men had to be returned to a shrine in the castle.

Due to the Allied advance, namely of the US Army, an SS commando was sent on March 31, 1945, to destroy the castle and hide all the Death's Head rings in a secret location in the neighboring mountains. These were never found, despite the zeal of generations of treasure hunters.

Hexen Files

In 1935, Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler decided to build up a secret team of researchers, in charge of gathering information about the persecution of the witches and their trials throughout the ages. His SS gathered information not only in Germany but from other countries as well. They worked mostly undercover in German libraries and archives, pretending to look for their own genealogies. The 38,846 files were stocked in a Hexenkartothek (a witch file library). Each file stored information as to why a given witch was imprisoned, the details of her trials, and the types of torture that she was submitted to.



Chronicle of Schilling of Lucerne (1513), illustrating
the burning of a woman in Willisau (Switzerland) in 1447

The aim of these files was to prove the wicked involvement of the Catholic Church and beyond, of a Jewish conspiracy that was meant to destroy ancient Germanic creeds. The Christian faith had allegedly fought old pagan rituals in their most sacred places, like the famous Extern Steine close to the Wewelsburg castle, where ancient rites were performed from the oldest times man can remember. Pagan priests and priestesses were therefore burned as sorcerers and witches. The cellars of Himmler's beloved Wewelsburg were used until the 17th century to imprison persons suspected of being "witches and werewolves."

Germany was indeed one of the European countries that murdered the greatest number of so-called witches, counting them by the tens of thousands. It is worth mentioning that Himmler was told by SS genealogists that among his ancestors there was a witch who had been burned at the stake. The Brothers Grimm would contribute to have the legend about the persecution of the witches live on in their nationalist tales.

Researches in the field of witch persecutions were carried on until 1944, despite the ongoing war and the closing in of Allied forces from the West as well from the East. The last order related to this occult quest, given by Himmler in 1944 to his staff, was to try to prove that Von Stauffenberg, the main perpetrator of the bomb plot against Hitler, had among his ancestors witch persecutors.

None of the planned publications and books on the subject went through. What is left over from this incredible occultist search in the middle of the 20th century are the files of the Hexenkartothek: the originals are nowadays in Poznań (Poland), and a copy of them can be found on microfilms at the Bundesarchiv in Berlin. They are not of much interest to modern scholars, since they were not collected according to the best scientific methods.

This case is real and has deep roots in the occult, but one must not deduce that Himmler wanted to cast spells on the Allies. His goal was only to prove a Christian-Jewish conspiracy against the ancient Aryans.

Hitler and Magic

Much has been written in the field of pseudo-esotericism and a makeshift evil genealogy of Hitler was made up in the later part of the 20th century, namely: he was Satan's medium, he sold his soul to the devil, he negotiated with Unknown Superiors from Shamballah, with extra-terrestrials from Aldebaran, etc. Most of these claims were Allied propaganda aiming at discrediting him. Some even said that he was involved in abnormal sexual practices, BDSM and the like. The truth is always stranger than fiction, though. This is the case with a book from Hitler's private library.

In the spring of 1945, the 101-St. Airborne Division found Hitler's library packed in crates and hidden in a salt mine near Berchtesgaden, where he had his Berghof Alpine chalet. In fact, there were only 3,000 books out of the estimated more than 16,000 that he was supposed to own in different locations. These books were later sent in the early ‘50s to the United States Library of Congress.

The most serious authors, like Nicholas Goodrick-Clark, now dismiss the idea that Hitler was seriously interested or involved in occultism. There are nonetheless occult and esoteric books in Hitler's library from such authors as Adamant Rohm, a "magnetopathic doctor"; Carl Ludwig Schleich, a Berlin physician using local anesthesia; and Joseph Anton Schneiderfranken, aka Bô Yin Râ, who wrote books on reincarnation. The strangest and most marked book, though, is without doubt the one called Magic: History, Theory and Practice (1923) by Ernst Schertel.

Ernst Schertel, an early advocate in the ‘20s of the German nudist movement, tackled themes linked with magic, demons, eroticism, sadomasochism, and flagellation.

He dedicated a copy of his book to Adolf Hitler and sent it to him in 1923. This fact was made known to the public only in 2003, in an article published in The Atlantic Monthly by Timothy Ryback, the author of Hitler's Private Library: The Books That Shaped His Life.

Among the passages Hitler marked, one can find the following: "False images are necessary for the recognition of truth"; "He who does not have the demonic seed within himself will never give birth to a magical world"; and “Satan is the beginning…."

As a "reward," Dr. Ernst Schertel was sent into a concentration camp, and stripped of his PhD during the time that the war lasted. Isn’t all of this obviously hard proof of Hitler's involvement, or at least his interest in the occult? Hitler read a lot of books during his life, and if he were once interested in occultism it was rather during his early years while in Vienna, where he was supposed to be a regular reader of the racist occult magazine Ostara. Later in his life and even in Mein Kampf, he made fun of astrologers, mediums, seers and all "the occult rubbish" Himmler was so much involved in.

Wotan and the Aryan Archetype

Finally, let's mention the famous Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung's esoteric interest in archetypical explanations of Nazism, since they are closely related to a semi-religious paradigm. It is therefore no wonder that Jung maintained a dense correspondence for some time with Miguel Serrano, the Chilean Nazi diplomat, about psychology and more esoteric topics about Jung's archetype theory.



Wotan aka Odin, the Norse God

In his essay, first published in 1936 in Zurich as Wotan in the Neue Schweizer Rundschau, when writing about Nazism in Germany, Jung suggests, "Perhaps we may sum up this general phenomenon as Ergriffenheit – a state of being seized or possessed. The term postulates not only an Ergriffener (one who is seized) but also, an Ergreifer (one who seizes). Wotan is an Ergreifer of men, and unless one wishes to deify Hitler – which did indeed actually happen – he is really the only explanation."

Furthermore, in the book Black Sun, Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke writes how Carl Jung showed "Hitler as possessed by the archetype of the collective Aryan unconscious, and could not help obeying the commands of an inner voice." Hitler referred often indeed to his "inner voice" and to the Providence that helped him during many difficult moments of his life.

Carl Jung thought of Hitler as an archetype, often manifesting itself to the complete exclusion of his own personality. "Hitler is a spiritual vessel, a semi-divinity; even better yet: a myth. Benito Mussolini is a man ... the messiah of Germany who teaches the virtue of the sword. The voice he hears is that of the collective unconsciousness of his race". This brings us to all the underground theories about Hitler as a medium of Higher Powers, as it was brought up by less-serious authors.

POST-WAR MYTHS

There are just a few serious books on Nazi occultism. The reliable references on this subject are mainly and almost exclusively those of Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke's in The Occult Roots of Nazism and of Joscelyn Godwin's in Arktos, The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism and Nazi Survival. They address the question from an erudite and academic point of view, but they nonetheless have the merit of drawing the line between the historical facts and the fantasies, or shall we say the pure lies, made up by hoaxer charlatans.

Our position is that people interested in Nazi esotericism deserve the truth, and that they prefer to see a myth they hung on to be rightly debunked, rather than waste time on useless quests. Like Sagan once said: "It is not whether we like the conclusion that emerges out of a train of reasoning, but whether the conclusion follows from the premise or starting point, and whether that premise is true." As Colin Summerhayes from the Scott Polar Institute summarizes perfectly in his article Hitler's Antarctic Base: The Myth and the Reality: "The burden of proof should fall on the shoulders of those making the claims. It is not sufficient to propose an idea and then claim that the hypothesis is untestable, because the evidence for it has been covered up."

The Allies discovered the horror of the concentration camps, and faced something they were not prepared to see in the 20th century, especially in a very civilized country like Germany was thought to be. Why all these murders? Why this barbarian ruthless will to exterminate? Why did the Nazi regime give priority to their train convoys of Jews, even as the war was coming to an end, when the German army was in such need of transportation to stop the Allied forces from advancing? What hidden agenda did they have behind this?

These almost twelve years of the Third Reich followed rules that were completely different from the rest of the civilized world; and the same is true of their philosophies, their goals, and their very concepts about how they viewed human life and history. Pauwels and Bergier, though they also narrated many unsubstantiated stories about that era, invented a very relevant wording for what happened: they called it "The Absolute Elsewhere."

The Morning of the Magicians

The Morning of the Magicians is a book written in France by Pauwels and Bergier in 1960. It was a best-seller, and it was subsequently translated in many languages. The content of the book was mainly thrilling stories, and as such they were mostly unsubstantiated on a historical and scientific level.

They tackled many subjects like ancient astronauts, spiritism, and out-of-place artifacts, and they dedicated a whole section to Nazi esotericism. In the way they presented this "breach in the fabric of history," they happened to have forerunners from ever since the early '30s, when there were mostly French books that associated Hitler with evil dark forces, or even the devil incarnate himself.

Pauwels and Bergier mixed quite unknown but true facts about the Nazi era with some pure fantasies made up of their own imagination. They mentioned the now well-known Hörbiger's theories about the Ice World, its falling moons and the subsequent sinking of Atlantis; the Hollow Earth Theory; the Thule Society and the inevitable Vril Society.

We took the trouble to quote some pertinent experts' opinions, but Pauwels and Bergier invented a completely different life for Professor Haushofer, who was allegedly a member of the secret society of the Green Dragon in Japan, and who committed the Japanese harakiri ritual to end his life just after the war was over, exactly as he would have promised to his Asian initiators.

Our hallucinating authors mentioned the presence of "Tibetan" dead bodies, wearing German uniforms without any insignia, in the ruins of Berlin in 1945. There is however not a single historical proof of this happening; at best, they could have been misled by the documented participation of foreign volunteers from Central Asia, who had been "liberated" by the Nazis from the Stalinist regime.



Asian Volunteers from Turkestan
in the German Army (Normandy)

Finally, The Morning of the Magicians is one more book that quotes Rauschning's Hitler Speaks as if it were the Bible; more particularly, it talks again about this now-famous account that Hitler was hearing voices, waking at night with convulsive shrieks, and pointing in terror at an empty corner of the room while shouting, "There, there, in the corner!"

According to most modern researchers, Rauschning's book was a fraud. Hänel, a Swiss scholar who studied the book in detail, notes that:

- Rauschning's claim to have met with Hitler "more than a hundred times" was a lie, since the two actually met only four times, and never alone;

- Certain words which he attributed to Hitler were simply inspired from many different sources, including the writings of Ernst Jünger, Nietzsche, and the French writer Guy de Maupassant in his short novel Le Horla.

M. Emery Reves, the publisher of the original French edition of Hitler Speaks, claimed that he commissioned the book from Rauschning in 1939 for 125,000 francs in advance, and they agreed on the fabricated stories about Hitler to be written in that book.



Hermann Rauschning (1887 – 1982)

Nowadays no serious historian quotes Rauschning's book anymore. This is particularly the case of Hitler's best academic biography writer Ian Kershaw, who said, "I have on no single occasion cited Hermann Rauschning's Hitler Speaks, a work now regarded to have so little authenticity that it is best to disregard it altogether."

Hitler’s Death

Nazism is at the origin of many modern myths, because it contains many of the necessary ingredients for them to arise. First of all, when the Russians finally reached Hitler's bunker ... it was empty. The very person that had been identified as the Devil on Earth had disappeared at the last moment, giving birth to many survival theories, to the point that even the FBI and the KGB kept investigating the matter for many years far after the war was over. The FBI closed the case of his death in 1956, though, after many interrogations in the USA and in South America, not neglecting the weirdest trails, whereas the KGB always remained suspicious especially because Stalin was unwilling to acknowledge that his nemesis had committed suicide in the Berlin bunker.

Being quite paranoiac, Stalin ordered his secret police, the NKVD, precursor to the KGB, to study every last vestige of the private life of the only opponent whom he considered “great enough” to be his match; he therefore asked them to write a one-copy book for his eyes only. This book was recently found by German researchers in Moscow and later translated into English under the title The Hitler Book: The Secret Dossier Prepared for Stalin from the Interrogations of Hitler's Personal Aides, 2005, by Henrik Eberle.

Many other books have Hitler fleeing to South America and dying there very old, sometimes well after 110 years. The last book, written by the well-known Jerome R. Corsi, a longtime addict of conspiracy theories, claims in his last work, Hunting Hitler, that Hitler was helped by none less than the CIA to flee to Argentina in exchange for valuable technological knowledge.

According to Brazilian Simoni Renee Guerreiro Dias’s own investigations in her recent book Hitler in Brazil – His Life and His Death, he escaped to her country and not Argentina, where he lived with his black lover until the age of 95. The main proof is a very blurry color picture, allegedly taken in the ‘70s, of Hitler flirting with his Negro mistress “in order not to attract attention” by any racist behavior.

The story of Hitler’s and Eva’s remains has long been traced by the Soviets, who had a political agenda of their own, and not admitted this evidence to the West, pretending on the contrary that the Führer was being shielded by the former Western allies.

A special Soviet elite intelligence unit, the SMERSH (literally in Russian: "The Death") found on May 2, 1945, Hitler’s, Eva’s and two dogs’ remains in a crater close to the bunker. By May 11, 1945, the SMERSH had already confirmed that the dental remains were Hitler’s without a doubt, thanks to his personal dentist’s assistant whom the Russians had found, looking for her for days throughout ruined Berlin.

In 1946, the remains of Hitler and Braun were repeatedly buried at night and exhumed in the morning by SMERSH on their way to a Soviet barrack in Magdeburg (Communist East Germany), where they rested there, buried in crates, until 1970. At that time, German-Soviet treaties reminded that the USSR had to hand over their facilities to the East German government. That is when former KGB director and future president of the USSR Yuri Andropov asked permission, in a letter dated March 13, 1970, addressed to then-president Leonid Brejnev, to destroy once and for all the remains of these historical figures so that they would never be used as a neo-Nazi shrine in the future.

On April 4, 1970, a special secret KGB team, following detailed burial charts, "exhumed five wooden boxes containing the remains of 10 or 11 bodies (maybe including the Goebbels family corpses) ... in an advanced state of decay." These final remains were once more burned and reduced to ashes and then thrown into the Biederitz river, near the Elbe, in a city called Schönebeck, 11 km away from Magdeburg.

Hitler was obsessed with not falling into the hands of the Russians alive, nor being publicly exposed in a humiliating way like Mussolini was after his death. This way of disappearing in the bunker was somehow also a willful way of staging his grand finale for history.

The Mystic Treasure of the SS

The treasure of the SS is a great secret according to Saint-Loup, a French author of many books about the history of the French volunteers of the Waffen-SS Division Charlemagne, who fought Bolshevism in the Soviet Union. Saint-Loup is a pen-name for Marc Augier, a French collaborator, a great sportsman and a journalist.



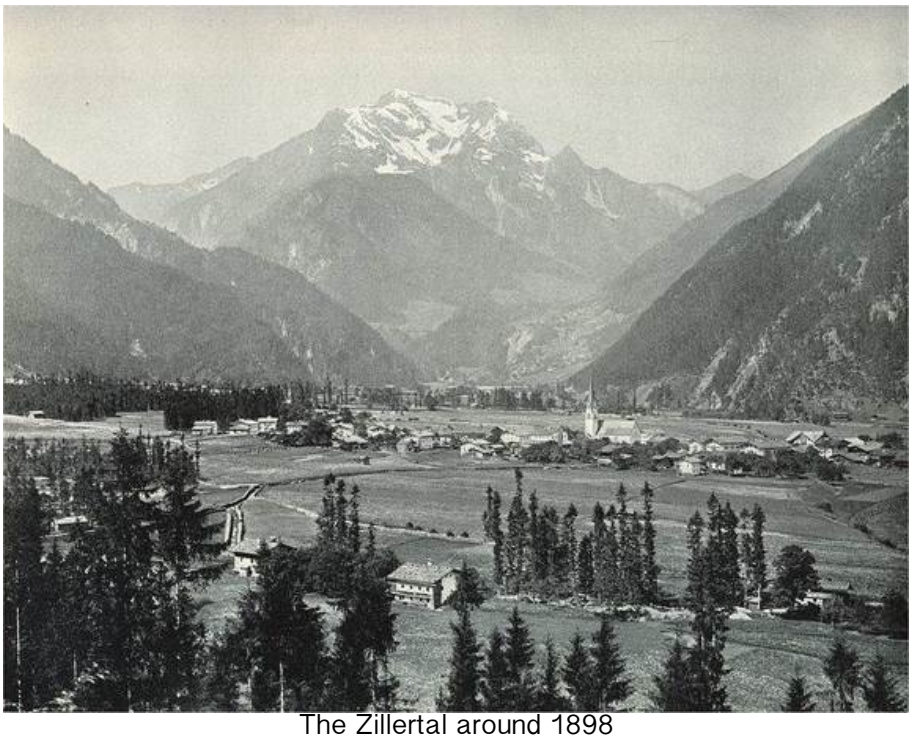
Saint-Loup in 1942 in Smolensk in German uniform

In many of his books, Saint-Loup presents the SS as a noble order, much like a modern version of the Teutonic Knights, forgetting the atrocities they committed during WWII.

He gives them an aura of heroism, and makes them the guardians of the Aryan race in a "decadent" post-war world. What makes them especially attractive is that they possess the great secret of the Aryan race, the one and only who is able to save the white race from vanishing from the surface of the world.

That great secret was, according to Saint-Loup, carved on stone tablets by the Cathars in the 13th century in France, at the time of the fall of the Montségur castle. They are an Aryan equivalent to the stone tablets on which Moses wrote the Ten Commandments, except that the Jews try to keep and understand these, whereas the Aryans do not know where theirs came from and are unsure about their content.

The Aryan tablets were allegedly found by Otto Rahn before WWII, and hidden somewhere in the mountains around Montségur, in the French Pyrenees. Otto Rahn was a specialist of Roman languages and literature, as well as an SS who reported directly to the infamous Ahnenerbe and Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler. He brought the tablets back to Germany, and was found frozen to death in the Bavarian Alps sometime after that, though he was an excellent mountain climber.



The Zillertal around 1898

When the Allies closed in on the Alpine Fortress, Saint-Loup claims that on May 2, 1945, a special SS unit made only of officers from various European nationalities gathered in Tyrol, Austria, at the crossroads of Innsbruck-Salzburg and Gmünd-Zell am Ziller. The day before, three high-ranking SS officers (a Frenchman, a Norwegian and an American, since there was even a few of the latter in the Waffen-SS as well) were taken probably to Tibet by a long range aircraft that landed on the Munich-Salzburg highway.

The rest of the SS unit was waiting for something really important, and therefore all necessary measures were taken to hold the advancing Allied armies. Eventually, a special convoy coming from Berchtesgaden, Hitler's Alpine chalet, transferred to the SS unit a crate made of lead. Their mission was to dump this crate at the top of the Zillertal glacier. It contained the Aryan tablets transmitted by the Cathars. These tablets contained a purely pagan message, addressed to the coming generations of Aryans. They were hoping that the crate would slowly flow down the valley at the pace of the glacier, and eventually reappear down below between 1990 and 1995.

The secret contained inside the lead crate was so important that it had to be read by absolutely all Aryans. If not, the whole white world would definitively be wrecked to havoc.

According to Saint-Loup, the secret was that the Aryans should always follow the holy rule of not mixing their blood with "inferior races" in order to not to be wiped out from the surface of the earth. This gnostic and Manichaean belief was that all non-whites and especially all Jews had to be considered evil and that the Holy Grail was a metaphor for pure Aryan blood.

Fantasy Wonder Weapons

The real German Wonder Weapons were so ahead of their time that they seemed like they came from the future. This is nevertheless not a good reason to make up stories about their origin that are not only ridiculous in their conception but also totally fraudulent in nature.

Die Glocke – One of the weirdest and most fraudulent of these post-war fictions is certainly Die Glocke (in German, The Bell). Igor Witkowski, a Polish journalist, claimed in 2000 that he had access to secret SS files talking about the purported existence of Die Glocke, in his book called the Prawda O Wunderwaffe (The Truth About the Wonder Weapons).

As usual with this kind of fantasy, Witkowski cannot name the Polish intelligence source that gave him this information, “for obvious security reasons.” This did not prevent British author Nick Cook from using this fantasy material very seriously as historical truth in his book called The Hunt for Zero Point, and reaching for the usual eager-to-believe-anything audience of science-fiction amateurs.

This prompted Joseph P. Farrell to use Witkowski's claims as well to reignite the overall lowering interest that readers were beginning to show on Nazi occultist hodgepodge. Funny how all these English-language writers who came forth as “we have the secret information" had to wait for years after an unknown Polish journalist first made revelations about Die Glocke. None of these authors bother to share their sources; neither do they refrain from frantic science-fiction fabrications (the “What if…” game).

Die Glocke was allegedly invented by Nazi scientists, helped by Jewish prisoners, as a way to travel through time and space using anti-gravitational science.



The Henge in Poland

It was built in the underground facilities of Der Riese, which truly existed as we already saw above, and was "made out of a hard, heavy metal approximately 9 feet wide and 12 to 15 feet high, with a shape similar to that of a large bell." The anti-gravitational effect was reached by two counter-rotating cylinders, filled with a mercury-like substance.

Witkowski claims that the metal-and-concrete ruins in Poland called "The Henge," close to the Wenceslas mines, would have served as a test rig for the experiments related to Die Glocke. In fact, such structures can be found in nearby places in the same Polish region, but are nothing more than the cooling towers of power plants.

The funny part is that none of these writers agrees on how the story ends. Farrell makes the Nazis kill no less than 60 scientists that contributed to the project to maintain its secrecy.



Cooling Tower in Siechnice, Poland. Does it ring a bell?

Witkowski claims that Die Glocke ended up somewhere in South America. Cook, for his part, states that it was taken over by the Americans probably as part of Operation Paperclip. There are even well-known and usually serious TV channels that dramatized these versions, where they showed a Glocke chained to The Henge, trying to fly away during a Doctor Evil-like experiment with many stunning 3D special effects.

Once more, of course, the evil SS General Hans Kammler is part of the plot, and according to the different versions of the story, he either negotiated with the Americans, or he literally disappeared from the face of the Earth ... maybe even from our space-time reality!

Strahlkanone – There was at least one real project meant to send a lethal light ray against the Allied forces, something that one might call a "laser gun" nowadays. Nothing is known precisely about this mysterious plan, except that a certain professor Ernst Schiebold from Leipzig once managed to get funds from the Nazi government, to materialize this fantastic wonder weapon. More recently, his ex-secretary testified on German television about the reality of the project, but she admitted that she was never allowed to get into the bunker where the actual experiments took place. Once that project was stopped, nobody heard of Professor Schiebold anymore.



Alleged picture of a similar project: a Schallkanone ("Sound Gun").

This is not the typical case of a genuine "fantasy wonder weapon," but it lacks the thicker documentation required to distinguish facts from fiction. It is atypical enough to belong to the category of "intended wonder weapons" that did not succeed in turning the tide of the war against the Allies, because they were still at the earlier stages of being either prototypes or blueprints.

Nazi UFOs – In Internet sci-fi underground lore and in the thriving world of conspiracy theories there circulate unsubstantiated claims that the Third Reich somehow managed to produce futuristic flying devices, far ahead of the scientific capabilities of their times. These so-called Nazi UFOs have even names: Rundflugzeug, Feuerball, Diskus, Haunebu, Hauneburg-Geräte, V7, VRIL, Kugelblitz, Andromeda-Geräte, Flugkreisel, Kugelwaffen, and Reichsflugscheiben. Many blueprints of these devices can be found on the Internet, all of them grossly concocted in German with "original Nazi fonts" and precise measurements to

add a realistic touch.

These Nazi UFO fantasies stem mainly from 3 origins:

1 – The allegedly wider scopes and achievements of the real 1938-1939 German expedition to Antarctica in Neuschwabenland; Colin Summerhayes of the Scott Polar Institute scientifically debunked all claims that there ever were German bases in Antarctica (see chapter on Antarctica Expedition 1938-1939).

2 – The great advances that the Nazis possessed in rocketry, and the purported findings of Dr. Viktor Schauberger in the field of breaking new means of propulsion (his famous "Repulsine" engine). Some scientists proved, however, that his Repulsine was no more than a water turbine on which he was working to cool aircraft engines at the Messerschmitt plants.

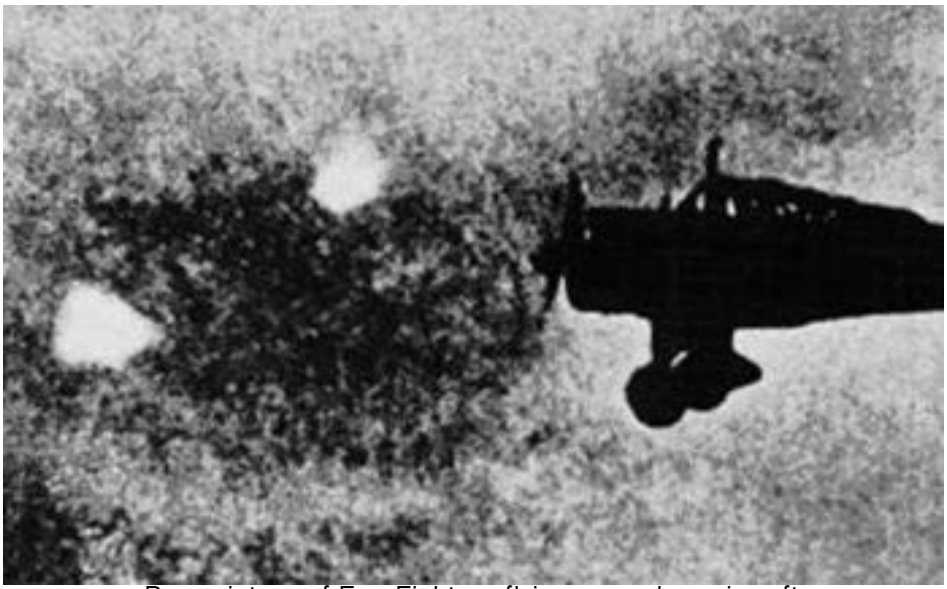


Real Repulsine device



Repulsine appears sometimes with
a Luftwaffe cross as a Nazi UFO

3 – The Allied sightings of so-called "Foo Fighters," allegedly German secret weapons designed to harass an aircraft through electromagnetic disruption. Though real, the German pilots saw the same phenomena, and asked themselves what they could be, and where they possibly came from.



Rare picture of Foo Fighters flying around an aircraft

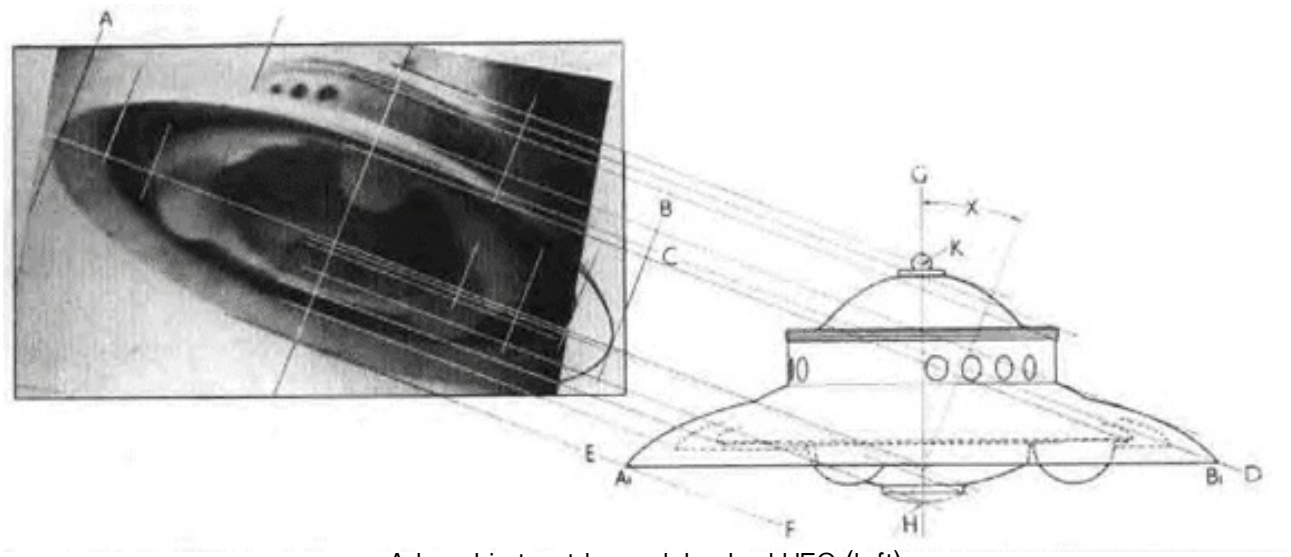
Unfortunately for true amateurs of such mysterious stories, there are just unsubstantiated books and unscientific websites that address this subject. The eagerness of the writers to make money or, in the best cases, to prove their claim, lead them more often than not to put together unrelated facts, and draw hasty conclusions from similar events which either did or didn't take place at that same time or place. Their sources are either anonymous "deep throats" for "obvious security reasons," or based on other such books and websites as serious as their own. They feed on one another, and people who dare criticize them are usually considered to be part of "government cover-up operations" at worst, or very skeptic shrinks at best.

Some of the first reports on flying saucers, like Kenneth Arnold's in 1947, had even the US military involved, since its alleged shape was indeed very close to that of the Horten Brothers' Flying Wing. They eventually concluded that although the Germans were far ahead of their time in aeronautics, their plans were only blueprints or unreliable prototypes by the time the war was over.

A little bit later in the UFO wave, a Polish-American citizen named Adamski claimed to have made encounters of the third kind, like having made actual contact with ETs. These first extraterrestrials had this very odd feature of resembling the "perfect Aryans"; they were tall, blond and blue-eyed, though pretending to come from Venus.

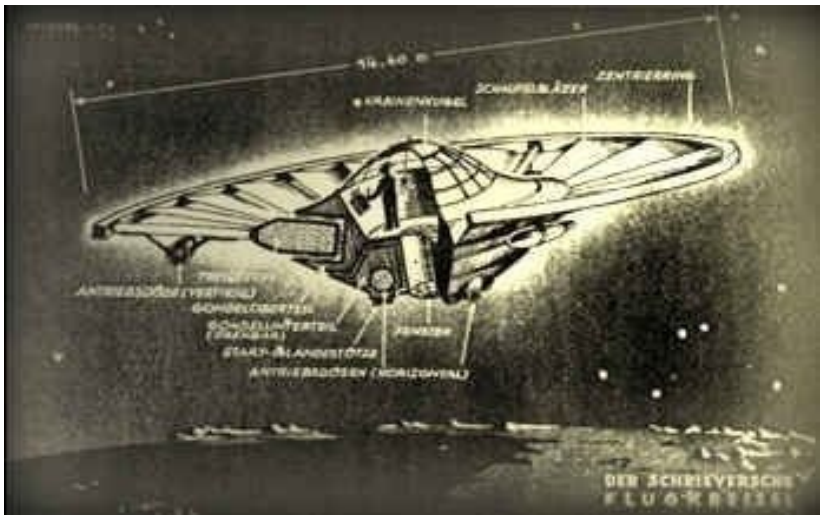
Adamski even took a picture of their spacecraft, but the only problem is that it was later proved to be a ... simple street lamp. This finding has not prevented this picture from being used and re-used on the Internet as a model for so-called Nazi UFOs, sometimes digitalized as a 3D model with the Luftwaffe cross on it.

The first links made between UFOs and Nazis are the work of the Italian professor Giuseppe Belluzzo, a scientist and former Minister of National Economy under the Mussolini regime. He claimed in 1950 that "types of flying discs were designed and studied in Germany and Italy as early as 1942."



Adamski street lamp debunked UFO (left)
and a Nazi UFO (right)

There have also been subsequent claims that underground FIAT factories, mainly located in vast tunnels around the Lake of Garda in Italy, were used to produce Nazi UFOs. These stories were propagated by the Italian Renato Vesco who claimed, among others, to have studied at a German Aeronautical Institute during the war, but was later discredited because of discrepancies concerning his very young age at that time.



Rudolf Schriever's flying device as
it appeared in Der Spiegel (1950)

In 1950 the famous German magazine Der Spiegel tackled the subject of possible Nazi UFOs for the first time, and reported the dubious stories of former engineer Rudolf Schriever and his round flying device. Schriever did indeed show discrepancies in later versions of the same story, notably in 1952 during another interview.

True enough, some prototypes that never achieved mass production status, like the Sack AS-6, had a shape very close to those of the after-war UFO sightings.



Prototype of the Sack AS-6

The soar of Nazi UFOs is nevertheless historically attributed to writers like Jan van Helsing, Norbert-Jürgen Ratthofer, and Vladimir Terziski, who developed the background stories and added to them detailed features, in order to become the sophisticated myths of the '80s and '90s we still know today. They mixed up the Thule and the Vril societies, invented the Vril girls (among whom we find the famous Maria Orsitsch) who made make-believe contact with aliens from the Albebaran star system, thanks to their long hair that acted as antennae. From these contacts and a crashed UFO found in the Black Forest in 1936, they would have reverse-engineered alien technology in order to produce all the flying machines that you can find in the Antarctica sky today!

Some of these writers had even rightist political agendas, and surfed on the Nazi occultist wave initiated by Pauwels and Bergier in the early '60s. This is mostly the case of the Vienna Circle with Wilhelm Landig at its head that we already mentioned. On the other hand, a famous Holocaust denier by the name of Ernst Zündel almost admitted in an interview that he used the UFO madness to draw attention on his books and beliefs. He even tried to organize a trip to Antarctica for a $9,999 fee per seat to locate the polar entrance to the Hollow Earth, but the project did not go through. Finally, right wing extremists like Miguel Serrano seem to genuinely believe in their own stories, and have largely contributed to the Nazi sub-genre of UFO sightings and SS esotericism.

In popular culture, we find such harmless works as Robert Heinlein's book Rocket Ship Galileo (1947); it was a popular book for children that got special public attention for showing a Nazi base on the moon, among other adventures. In the same vein, the recent sci-fi comedy movie Iron Sky (2012) staged vengeful Nazis living on the dark side of the moon, ready to re-conquer the Earth to establish a Fourth Reich.

The author of this book can only humbly report one strange case that a friend shared with him. It is not confirmed by other independent sources. This friend's grandfather was among the first French aviators to fly over and bomb German soil even before ground troops set foot on it. He said to my then 16-year-old friend that he saw aircrafts or "space crafts" from "other worlds" on the German airfields, things like he never saw before in his entire life. He added that there were plenty of them and, that scared him tremendously since the Allied propaganda had promised to quickly defeat the Third Reich. He took many pictures of these "machines" and duly reported them in his flight book. He showed these pictures to my friend after the war sometime in the '70s.

When his grandfather eventually died, nobody in the family ever found these pictures again. They were just gone. Could it have been the work of the French secret service?

Worth mentioning is his grandfather's fear in 1989 when he saw on television that the Berlin wall had collapsed. The whole family was rejoicing loudly at this progress of freedom, whereas he stayed still in front of the TV set, bleak and scared, just whispering aghast: "Oh no! It is coming back!"

The Amerika Bomber Project – The Amerika Bomber project was a German plan to bomb American soil, especially New York City, thanks to a customized long-range aircraft capable of returning safely back home. The project was eventually abandoned for being too expensive and too resource-consuming compared to the relatively small explosive payload it could deliver crossing over the Atlantic.

The possibility of dropping a nuclear bomb would have given more credit to the project, but it would have taken even more time and resources; the Germans did study nuclear fission and they used heavy water from Norway for their experiments, but these researches were spread among so many different administrations that it made it practically impossible for the high command to gather compelling evidence of its feasibility.

In 1955, there was a public allegation that such a round-trip drop could be made to New York by a six-engined Ju 390 aircraft, as published in the British magazine called the RAF Flying Review (see chapter about Wonder Weapons). The story was based on "unspecified German aircraft records" that claimed the aircraft had flown over New York City for one hour; it was, however, revised later to a more humble version, which claimed that the Ju 390 made a 32-hour reconnaissance flight in late 1944, departing from near Bordeaux (France) and coming as close as 19 km (12 mi) to New York. The pilots allegedly even took pictures of the New York skyline.

After the war ended, aviation historian Dr. Kenneth P. Werrell cast serious doubts on this story, where he emphasized that the pictures taken by the pilots had never been found. At a later date, Werrell studied meticulously all available data regarding the Ju 390's range, and he thought that it would have been a most unlikely thing to do.



Six engines Ju 390 on the ground

The final blow to this exciting aviation mystery was given by the German authors Karl Kössler and Günter Ott in their book about the Junker aircrafts. Like Werrell, they thought that a return flight was not feasible, and they even proved that there never was a flight from which the New York skyline was visible. The reason is simple: France was the "closest" location to fly to America, but the only customized version of the Ju 390 available for such a flight (the Ju 390 V1) was not on French soil at that moment, since it was in Prague (Czechoslovakia) from November 1943 until late March 1944.

These German authors offered one more reason why this could not have been done, namely because the Ju 390 V1 prototype was unable to take off with the fuel load necessary for a round-trip flight to America. As for the second and last model of the Ju 390, named Ju 390 V2, it was not completed prior to October 1944.

The Genocide

The first Allied soldiers who liberated the death camps had no words to describe what they had witnessed. This was a massive irruption of horror and barbarian practices of a primitive era. The comparison with the torments and tortures during the Inquisition in the Middle Ages can only be evoked for the way the victims were put to death, but the main difference with these Dark Ages was the magnitude of the plague that had struck these innocent victims: they could be counted by the millions.

Most historians saw this as the mere and logical consequences of the eugenics of the Nazi anti-Semitism that lied at the core of the national-socialist ideology. This can be true. But there remains at least one question that cannot be answered by pure Nazi fanaticism: Why did the Germans give priority to trains transporting Jews to death camps over their own army convoys, full of soldiers and tanks, right when the tide of war had turned and they needed these resources more than ever on the Russian front?

The first ones to tackle the subject, though not necessarily the most serious authors, were Pauwels & Bergier in their Morning of the Magicians. They linked the Thule Society with certain magic practices that could reach the Powers, and thus be anointed to dominate the world while being protected against all possible dangers. This pact was supposed to last for a thousand years, until the next Big Flood. In return, these Powers demanded that each member of the Thule Society who made a mistake die from his own hand. In the mind of the highest-ranking Nazis in charge of perpetrating the genocide, these sacrifices would serve to get the attention of the Powers, and have them on their side against their enemies. In the mid-20th century, they behaved in the same way as did the Mayans in pre-Colombian America, sacrificing human lives to the sun.

In 2003, David Brin & Scott Hampton published The Life Eaters through DC Comics. This is a sci-fi comic that belongs to the alternate history or uchronia genre. A uchronia always chooses a turning point in history and asks the question, "What if it did not turn out the way it did?"; like, "What if Hitler had won the war?" or "What if the Confederates were the victors of the Civil War?"

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, the Allied armada approaching the landing beaches of Normandy is wiped out by the lightning attack of the Norse gods, who came to fight side by side with the Nazis. Some say that the ancient Norse gods died with their last believer. The purpose of the occultist Nazis is to resuscitate them, by feeding them with the millions of souls of the victims they exterminated in their death camps.

All these fantasies are directly linked to the extent of the murders and the genocide, and yet they could not be understood by the victors: how could a very civilized nation like Germany do it ... if not under an evil spell?

Nazism Becomes a Semi-Religious Movement

The birth of a new religion needs a cosmogonical myth of creation, a God or a deified prophet, a clergy, a ritual and of course, followers who possess a strong enough holy Faith for proselytism. It is a much more subtle step, and it takes a much longer time to crystalize those ingredients in a successful alchemy than, for example, the more simple "Cargo Cults" that developed in some islands of the Pacific Ocean particularly during WWII.

These religious ingredients were not all present at the time of Jesus, but they developed in the decades and even the few centuries after His earthly disappearance. The Catholic Church gave a structure and a hierarchy through its bishops, formalized the dogma and the canon laws much later in time. This was especially the case in 325 AD, during the Council of Nicaea convened by the Roman emperor Constantine, who was acting mainly for political reasons. This process could of course be demonstrated with all other religions, or sectarian movements alike. Some go even so far as to state that a new religion is just a sect that has been proven to be historically successful.

National-socialism was not really seen in its time as a religion, even by its most fanatic followers. The fact that Himmler did try to revive ancient pagan Germanic creeds was not linked to the ideological content of national-socialism. On the contrary, the post-World War II period saw the emergence of different esoteric currents, claiming that there had been more to the Third Reich than what was studied by mainstream historians.

These esoteric currents are mainly linked to Savitri Devi and Miguel Serrano, though there are also less famous authors from the far right and neo-pagan movements that contribute to what could be called the "semi-religious developments of Nazism." Let us add that the majority of neo-Pagans are not neo-Nazis nowadays.

Savitri Devi, who had French, Greek and English blood, was born Maximiani Portasis. She studied chemistry as well as philosophy in France, where she obtained her PhD in Lyon. She can be rightfully regarded as the major post-war thinker of "esoteric Hitlerism," aiming clearly at creating a religious movement from Nazism. According to her, Hitler's death in 1945 could be seen as martyrdom or a voluntary, Christ-like self-sacrifice. When the Russians entered Hitler's bunker, it was indeed empty, giving birth firstly to all kinds of escape speculations, and secondly to a semi-religious myth.



Savitri Devi aka Maximiani Portasis

This is how Savitri Devi writes in her book called Pilgrimage: "…National Socialism is infinitely more than a mere political creed; the fact is that it is a way of life, a faith in the fullest sense of the word – one could say a religion, however different it may at first appear, from every existing system thus labeled in current speech. Religions are not as easy to uproot as mere political creeds."

Savitri Devi, who stood for Indian independence from British rule, merged somehow her esotericism with Hinduism, considering Hitler to be Kalki, the tenth and final Avatar of Vishnu. For her, he was undoubtedly "the god-like Individual of our times; the Man against Time; the greatest European of all times."

Hitler's death, in this way, could be seen as the beginning of a new religion, aiming at the spiritual and physical resurrection of the Aryans, in order to rule the world again as the elected people.

Miguel Serrano is the next most important figure, who contributed to this religious trend of Nazism after 1945. He was a

Chilean diplomat and had therefore many opportunities during his career to meet with people like Léon Degrelle, Otto Skorzeny, Hans-Ulrich Rudel, Marc Augier (aka "Saint-Loup"), Julius Evola, Wilhelm Landig, Herman Hesse and Carl Jung.

While younger, in 1941, Miguel Serrano was initiated into an esoteric order in Santiago, Chile, practicing ritual magic linked with the Holy Masters who dwelled somewhere in Tibet. They were admirers of Hitler, whom they regarded as a bodhisattva incarnated on Earth to counter the evil effects of the Kali Yuga age.

Serrano's theories basically state that our material world is ruled by the Demiurge (Jehovah), who populated the planet with primitive beings doomed to be endlessly reincarnated, always at the same low level of existence. This purely gnostic and Manichaean view admitted of course their counterpart of good gods (the Hyperboreans of extraterrestrial origin), who tried their best to elevate the conscience and moral level of the Demiurge's poor humanoid creatures.

Like the ancient astronaut theories, he lamented that the Nephilim (Fallen Angels), or renegade Hyperboreans, took advantage of their relationships with the Demiurge's human creatures to have sexual intercourse with them. This miscegenation diluted their light-bearing blood, emerging from the Black Sun, and their divine energy power called Vril. To the Demiurge's delight, i.e., the tribal deity Jehovah of the Jews, this diminished the conscious awareness for the divine on this planet, making it easier for him to control.



Miguel Serrano as a diplomat in India in 1957

Serrano states thus that "There is nothing more mysterious than blood. Paracelsus considered it a condensation of light. I believe that the Aryan, Hyperborean blood is that but not the light of the Golden Sun, not of a galactic sun, but the light of the Black Sun, of the Green Ray." (See chapter on the Vril for explanations on the Green Color).

In this context, Hitler was seen as an emissary of the Higher Gods who vanished in his bunker in 1945, but who waits underground somewhere in Antarctica, to emerge in the future with a fleet of UFOs, beat the Forces of Darkness (i.e. the Jews) and start a Fourth Reich.

The Black Sun

History of religions, esotericism and pseudo-sciences provide not a single aspect of the Black Sun, but many. Beyond these differences, the question is to know if one deals with different facets of the same theme, and if so, if they can be structured into a single one, or if the Black Sun is just a generic name for unrelated phenomena. Nowadays the Black Sun refers almost exclusively to a neo-Nazi symbol that can be found inlaid in the marble floor of the Wewelsburg castle in Germany.

The Egyptians – Alchemy, like Freemasonry, plunges its roots into Egyptian mythology. The solar cycle is probably at the origin of one of the oldest myths that inspired the ancient Egyptians and mankind, as can be seen in the duality of Ra/Osiris. Ra dies after 12 hours of reign and resuscitates as Osiris during the next 12 hours, after which the latter dies to be reborn as Ra. Osiris stands for the Black Sun, and this natural cycle is tuned to the rhythm of our daily biological physiology, as well as to our souls reincarnating from a body to another.

The Mesoamerican mythology – The Mesoamerican myths are shared by, among others, the Aztecs, the Mayans, the Mexicas and the Toltecs. One prominent god common to these people is Quetzalcoatl, literally "feathered serpent," who incarnates one of the many mystical beliefs of the Black Sun in Central America. After his shining passage through the sky during the day, he would dive into the underworld with a blackened aura.

The Aztecs compared the passage of the sun into the underworld with a butterfly, which is an archetype for transformation and reincarnation. The only event when the Black Sun would appear during the day would be a solar eclipse. He would then be identified with the earth goddess Itzpapalotl, also called the "Obsidian Butterfly" (obsidian is a very dark volcanic stone), who would eat men during that exceptional cosmic event.

Whereas the Aztecs believed in five successive worlds corresponding to five suns, the fifth being ours, the Mexicas held the Black Sun for such an ancient sun that was the female origin of everything. It could be seen as a fecundity symbol coming from the womb of death, i.e., a metempsychosis or reincarnation principle.

The alchemical Sol Niger – Alchemy, hermeticism and gnosis tell us of the existence of two opposed Manichaean beliefs, corresponding, in our case, to two suns: an apparent material one (or "material gold") and a hidden one (or "philosophical gold"). The material sun of our planetary system, which consumes itself through a simple nuclear fusion based on hydrogen, could as such possibly be seen as a "Dark Sun," but still not a black one.

The strict alchemical principle of Sol Niger (literally: "Black Sun" in Latin) refers to the first stage of the Magnum Opus (i.e., the Great Work, at the end of which production of gold is obtained), also called the Nigredo or blackening phase.

Considered from an operative view point, the Magnum Opus resembles greatly to the physical principle of nuclear fusion, but one should not neglect the speculative or mystical aspect of this alchemical process that may also refer to an internal spiritual transformation, popularized under others by Paulo Coelho in his book The Alchemist.

The Egyptian and historically unrelated Mesoamerican myths of the Black Sun referring to death, rebirth and fecundity suppose the underlying alchemical intermediary concept of Putrefactio (putrefaction or rotting in Latin).

A Black Sun can be seen in the colorful alchemical manuscript called Splendor Solis ("The Splendor of the Sun"), allegedly written in 1532/1535 by Solomon Trismosin, the spiritual father of Paracelsus. This sun is only partially visible, could be setting or rising, in a desolated dried landscape of leafless trees, though remaining golden rays of light can be seen radiating weakly out of it. This Black Sun stands for putrefaction in alchemy. The accompanying text says that dissolution is required in alchemy in order to obtain a black matter like the nigredo phase does.



Salomon Trismosin - Splendor Solis 1532-1535 at the
Kupferstichkabinett of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Putrefaction, or death, is needed in order to give way to life and rebirth, while the unconscious reconciles with the conscious. The culmination of this conciliation corresponds to the making of the Philosophical Stone, where the Putrefactio or Nigredo is the first part of the process. It is a phase where the pure should be separated from the impure, or as Carl Gustav Jung put it in the field of psychoanalysis, to integrate the shadow to one's self, i.e., the dark side inside of us.

Some alchemists saw all of this also as the association between the woman/moon and the man/sun into a Black Sun, or a mystical wedding.

Theosophical Nemesis – In The Secret Doctrine (1888), Helena Blavatsky, founder of theosophy, mentioned a central invisible sun in the Milky Way. It would act as a center of attraction on our sun, and an energetic source for the universe. Its energy was seen as a "creative light," though invisible, and which the Jews of the Cabala would call "the Black Light."

Interestingly enough, this matches exactly the modern astronomical theory of the existence of Nemesis, which would be a hypothetical hard-to-detect brown dwarf star. The hypothesis was made in 1984 by paleontologists David Raup and Jack Sepkoski, who claimed that they had identified a statistical periodicity in extinction rates over the last 250 million years, which could be explained by the regular passing of Nemesis.

The Wewelsburg Sonnenrad – The castle of Wewelsburg was built in 1603 in North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany. In 1934, one year after the Nazi rise to power, Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler leased the castle for 100 years from the Paderborn district in order to make an ideological center for the Black Order of the SS.

The castle became an almost religious place where esotericism, runes, pagan lore, and racial theories were studied by a handful of high-ranking SS, i.e., an elite within the elite. Himmler adapted the legend of King Arthur and his Knights to a new Grail mythology, based on Germanic paganism.



The Black Sun in the Gruppenführer hall of
the Wewelsburg lies exactly above the swastika
on the ceiling of the crypt underneath.

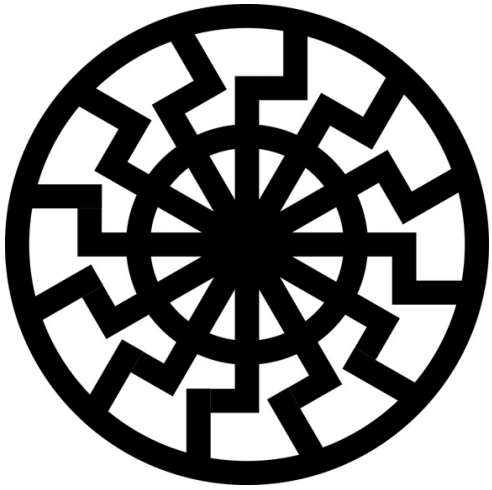
In the center of the marbled floor of the Gruppenführersaal (SS Generals' Hall) on the first floor of the castle lies an inlaid dark green Sonnenrad (“sun wheel” in German). The axis of the Sonnenrad was made out of a pure golden disk that was supposed to become the center of whole "Germanic world empire" from 1941 on. The design resembles that of Early Medieval Germanic brooches (Zierscheiben), possibly worn on Frankish and Alemannic women's belts. Its shape bears a solar significance, showing a twelve-spoke sun wheel looking like a decorative disk of the Merovingians that represented the passage of the visible sun through the months of the year. The design also reminds one of the round table of Arthurian legends where each spoke of the sun wheel represents one "knight" or one officer of the "inner" SS.



Close-up of the now famous Black Sun symbol

It is most likely that this symbol was embedded during the Third Reich but it is only after the Second World War that it was

called Die Schwarze Sonne (Black Sun in German), though there is no evidence at all that Himmler's SS linked this symbol with that of the Black Sun. The very association between both seems to be a post-war esoteric interpretation that is still in use in certain scenes of neo-Nazism and Odinism.



Neo-Nazi Black Sun symbol

According to Jean-Michel Angebert (Les mystiques du soleil, 1971) the swastika is actually the Black Sun, i.e., a principle of hidden energy in a multi-dimensional universe beyond the visible world. It is close to Iamblichus' philosophy based on gnosis. Without going so far, the sun wheel possibly had a relation to Germanic sun-based mysticism which was propagated by the SS; the sun was interpreted as "the strongest and most visible expression of God."

Here we find again the opposing traditional concepts of physical objects versus their spiritual expression: the marble Black Sun symbol from Wewelsburg vs. the inner light of a mystical universal and its creative energy. In the same way, the material cup of the Grail can be opposed to the alchemical properties of the beverage it holds, i.e., spiritual immortality. We can draw the comparison even further with the Sol Invictus ("Invincible Sun"), which was the official sun god of the later Roman Empire, who seems to have inspired Himmler's sun mysticism.

In 274 AD the Roman emperor Aurelian made it an official cult, alongside the traditional Roman cults. But like the inner light of the Black Sun, or the immortality and/or mystical knowledge hidden in the Grail, the Sol Invictus stood for a spiritual sun, a metaphysical concept, only accessible to initiates, not just the physical sun visible to the exoteric crowds.

All these stories surely added up to the myth that Castle Wewelsburg was an esoteric center, hiding not only rare historical artifacts (like the fake Celtic Cauldron of genuine pure gold recently found in the Chiem Lake in Germany) brought in by the Ahnenerbe but also the deepest spiritual secrets about the origins of the Nordic race.

Weisthor, Himmler's Rasputin – Karl Maria Wiligut, aka Weisthor, headed a Department for Pre-and Early History that was created within the SS Race and Settlement Main Office (RuSHA). There, he developed the plans for the rebuilding of the Wewelsburg into a pseudo-religious center for the SS elite.

During the 1920s, he designed his own runic alphabet with mostly alternative meanings from the mainstream Futhark and wrote with them 38 verses called the Halgarita Sprüche.

He claimed to have memorized these verses as a child, when taught by his father. Werner von Bülow and Emil Rüdiger of the Edda-Gesellschaft (Edda Society) claimed some verses are connected with the Black Sun, like verse number 27 which would be a 20,000-year-old "solar blessing" according to Willigut:

Wilugoti Haga tharn
Halga fuir santur toe.

which translates, according to Werner von Bülow, more or less as follows, and taking into account that this language exists probably only in Weisthor's brain:

"Legend tells, that two Suns, two wholesome in change-rule UR and SUN, alike to the hourglass which turned upside down ever gives one of these the victory The meaning of the divine errant wandering way dross star in fire's sphere became in fire-tongue revealed to the Earth-I-course of the race of Paradise god willing leaders lead to the weal through their care in universal course, what is visible and soon hidden, whence they led the imagination of mankind polar in change-play, from UR to SUN in sacrificial service of waxing and waning, in holy fire Santur is ambiguously spent in sparks, but turns victorious to blessing"


Karl Maria Wiligut aka Weisthor

These confused and almost incomprehensible verses are supposed to stress that Santur would be a burnt-out sun and the source of power of the Hyperboreans. These were purportedly the ancestors of Germanic tribes living in the North Pole, when its climate was mild and its landscapes were green. Hyperborea had its capital city, Thule, and was once identified with Iceland. Furthermore Santur allegedly still orbits in the vicinity of our planet as a Black Sun and sends powerful hidden energy. The latter recalls the Nemesis hypothesis and the invisible creative energy that a Black Sun is supposed to radiate.

The Vienna Circle – In the 4th district of Wieden in Vienna, Austria, ex-Waffen-SS Wilhelm Landig founded a group in 1950 called the Vienna Circle or, after him, the Landig Group. The group gathered the first time at Landig's apartment and held discussion on esoteric and völkisch (nationalist and racialist) mysticism. They revived and promoted the mythology of Hyperborea which was, as we saw, allegedly the home of the Aryans' ancestors in the Arctic.


Wilhelm Landig

According to Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (Black Sun, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity, 2002), the Landig group

invented the concept of the Black Sun that flourished in neo-Nazi groups during the 1990s. It was through Wilhelm Landig's own novels that this Nazi revival was made possible. He wrote for this purpose a trilogy: Götzen gegen Thule, Rebellen für Thule and Wolfszeit um Thule.

Erich Halik, a prominent member of the Vienna Circle, was the first to link the esotericism of the inner SS elite with the Black Sun concept, but not yet to the Wewelsburg symbol. Landig called the Black Sun "a substitute Swastika and mystical source of energy, capable of regenerating the Aryan race." The visible sun would be merely a symbol of an invisible anti-sun: "Everything that can be comprehended by human senses is material, the shadow of the invisible spiritual light. The material fire is – seen in this way – also just the shadow of the spiritual fire."

Landig revived old völkisch pseudo-scientific theories about Atlantis, Hörbiger's Hollow Earth and Aryan mysticism. In his trilogy, he locates in the Arctic the Aryan positive forces of the Black Sun, which according to him is represented by a disk that is not black, but of a deep purple that will turn white when Germany eventually overcomes this titanic world struggle. Interestingly enough, Landig states that the Black Sun refers to the Babylonian religion, which in turn would come from the Aldebaran star, which "shines within us and gives us the power of understanding." For Landig, the Black Sun is the symbol for an esoteric order inside the SS, and it "shines above the Midnight Mountain an invisible light because it shines within." The Midnight Mountain seems to be present in the myths of different people throughout the globe like the Chinese and the Indians, the latter calling it Mount Meru.

Furthermore, Landig circulated stories about Nazi flying saucers assembled in an underground base in Antarctica (see Neuschwabenland expedition), from which US Admiral Byrd could not extirpate them.

The Black Sun of Tashi Lhunpo (Die schwarze Sonne von Tashi Lhunpo) is an occult Nazi thriller written in 1991 by Russel McCloud, a pen name for Stephan Mögle-Stadel. It tells of the assassinations of the president of the European Bank and a leading member of the UN Security Council, which are linked by a brand mark of the symbol of the Black Sun on the foreheads of the victims. This is the very first time that the symbol of the Sun Wheel, as found at the Wewelsburg castle, is linked with the Black Sun myth itself. If it contradicts the deep purple disk of Landig's trilogy, it evokes nonetheless very well a universal creative source of energy, with its black circle and twelve radial sig runes. The only problem is that it seems to be a pure fiction, Stephan Mögle-Stadel being just a journalist enjoying writing a thriller.

Nonetheless the neo-Nazi scene adopted the Wewelsburg Sonnenrad as the one and only true symbol of the Black Sun, and a legal substitute to the swastika, which is forbidden in many European countries.

More Post-war Nazi Fantasies – According to Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, "In the early 1990s, the Austrians Norbert Jürgen Ratthofer and Ralf Ettl developed new Nazi UFO myths involving ancient Babylon, Vril energy and extraterrestrial civilizations in the solar system of Aldebaran. These colorful ideas are integral elements of a dualist Marcionite religion propagated by Ralf Ettl through his Tempelhofgesellschaft (Temple Society) in Vienna, identified as a secret successor to the historic Templars, who had absorbed Gnostic and heretical ideas in the Levant". Ratthofer and Ettl state in the DVD UFO – Geheimnisse des Dritten Reichs (1990) (UFO – Secrets of the Third Reich), "Within the SS the Thule Society created a separate secret organization called the 'Black Sun' with the 'Geheimnis Schwarze Sonne' as its logo."

In 1997 Peter Moon wrote The Black Sun: Montauk's Nazi-Tibetan Connection in which he shows for the first time in Nazi occultism a picture of the "Signet of the Black Sun." This is allegedly the symbol of "the innermost secret society of Nazi Germany: the Black Sun."

As a matter of conclusion, the Black Sun can be seen as a multi-faceted myth with an ancient background, though it is not demonstrated that its various historical phases of development refer to the same concept. It is possible, though, to identify many common elements to these myths, which could contribute to unveiling parts of a unique and original truth.



Signet of the Black Sun

The Black Sun seems to be an invisible counterpart of our visible sun, which is able to bestow its influence onto planets, things and living beings. It hides from mortals, though keeping tuned with their very biological rhythms, but can be seen by souls in the Netherworld. Its alchemical and psycho-analytical meaning is that of a spiritual force, able to lead a deep internal transformation prior to a total rebirth or reincarnation.

Nazis were after the spiritual secrets of the Nordic race, and they could have envisaged the Black Sun, at least in a very confidential inner circle of the SS, as a universal pervasive force of creative energy that shines "from within." Some went so far as to state that this force would "allow souls to experience many levels of reality simultaneously."

This definition of the Black Sun resembles strongly that of the Vril force, for which documentation is scarce if not mostly unreliable. Likewise, it is said that our planet is hollow and illuminated by a central Black Sun, dispensing a greenish light.

The Vril

The Vril, as well as the secret society bearing its name, is now a traditional stopover in the meanders of so-called Nazi esotericism. Compared to the Black Sun, the Vril's very existence is really controversial, and sometimes we shall have to depart from historically verifiable facts in order to enter a twilight zone between myth and reality. But how unreal are the myths?

In the Beginning Was a Sci-Fi Novel – Many sects actually begin with the sayings or visions of a single man, whereas others are based on a holy book or even a novel. This is the case of Scientology, but it could be applied to some extent to other very successful religions. The Vril was first mentioned in a book entitled The Coming Race, written by Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton in 1871. Though the term "science fiction" did not exist at that time, it would well fit to this book as well as to Jules Verne's. He also wrote Zanoni, an occult fiction, and the famous Last Days of Pompeii.

The plot centers on a traveller who lost his way in an old mine in Great Britain, only to find himself the guest of an antediluvian subterranean race called the Vril-ya. Neither gods nor angels, they look, however, far superior to humans by their height, their intelligence, their cold wisdom and their supernatural powers like telepathy. They harness an "all-permeating" fluid called Vril. Through training their will, they can master this universal, invisible, creative energy that can heal, transform or destroy, besides acting as a fuel for transportation devices and lighting of the underground. The latter was of a light green luminescence.

The hero and narrator is taught the most accessible history of the Vril-ya by Zee, his host's daughter. He learns that when the underground caves are not sufficient for their breeding, the Vril-ya will have to conquer the surface world, destroying mankind if necessary. Vril is indeed so powerful that a Vril-ya child could reduce a city of tens of millions of inhabitants to ashes in a matter of seconds.

The narrator studies the Vril-ya language and draws the conclusion that they are "descended from the same ancestors as the great Aryan family, from which in varied streams has flowed the dominant civilization of the world."



Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton

Somehow the Vril-ya have much in common with Lovecraft's Unknown Superiors: telepathy, mastery of unknown forces and an antediluvian ancestry.

Black Sun & Alchemy – One ought to be cautious with all that refers to esotericism, since one fake myth reinforces the other, especially on the Internet. Nonetheless, the idea exists that Bulwer-Lytton only based his novel on more ancient myths and archetypes, which were popular among Middle Ages alchemists. The life force underlying the Vril was indeed already known since antiquity as Prana, Chi, Ojas, Astral Light, Odic Force and Orgone. Some advocates of the Hollow Earth Theory have even said, more recently, that Vril came from the Black Sun hidden force that would be an irradiating Prima Materia ("primordial matter" in Latin), at the center of our planet.

Green is the Symbol of the Vril – The green light that illuminates the Vril-ya's underworld reminds of many other occurrences of that color: Goethe's tale The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily; the Holy Grail that could be an emerald fallen from Lucifer's forehead; the Greenland, named in the 10th century by Erik the Red, in remembrance of the Primordial Earth, though

60 percent of the island was by then already covered by white ice; Osiris was seen by certain Egyptologists as a green irradiating god; the Mesoamerican Quetzalcoatl Great Priest drew their might from an enormous magical emerald and the god himself was green; the famous Emerald Tablet (tabula smaragdina) of the hermetic tradition of the alchemists; eventually, some green lunar stones would possess a "levitation" power enabling witches to fly in old Scottish lore or, hidden under cathedrals, would have prevented bombs from falling onto them during WWII in Germany.



Quetzalcoatl

Let us have a special mention for the Order of the Green Dragon and the Monk with the Green Gloves.

The Order of the Green Dragon was a Japanese secret (political/mystical) society dedicated to mastering the human body, which in turn permitted access to a "great power." Higher initiates were required to be able to germinate a seed by telekinesis.

While a military attaché in Tokyo before WWI, Karl Haushofer would have been one of just three Westerner members of the Order. Haushofer was one of the founders of geopolitics (the theory of Lebensraum or vital space) and allegedly also a member of the Vril Society. He never was a member of the Nazi Party, and was even married to a Jewish woman despite many contrary assertions in neo-Nazi esoteric literature.

The Vril Society profess to have sent expeditions to Tibet before WWII, and as late as 1942, to meet the Bon Pö monks of Agarthi. In the '20s, Tibetan monks formed the Society of Green Men in Berlin and Munich. Their High Priest was a man called the Monk with the Green Gloves. Hitler would have visited him for his clairvoyant gifts.

The Society of Green Men, helped by the Order of the Green Dragon, allegedly helped the Nazis to try to turn Aryans into God-Men. Pauwels and Bergier, in their Morning of the Magicians, a very unreliable source but the only one on this subject, report that during the fall of Berlin, the Russians found many dead bodies of Asians in German uniforms who apparently committed suicide in a ritual way.

According to the same source, Haushofer would have committed the same kind of suicide, except that this is historically untrue. Historian H. A. Jacobsen proved that all what was written in The Morning of the Magicians about him, the Thule Society, and the Vril Society is simply fiction.

The Vril Society – Louis Jacolliot (1837–1890) was a French consul in Calcutta, India, when he wrote Les fils de Dieu (1873) and Les Traditions indo-européennes (1876). Both books stressed the existence of the Vril that appeared a bit earlier in Bulwer-Lytton's novel The Coming Race (1871). Jacolliot is supposed to have met the Vril among the Jains in Mysore, and Gujarat in the country where he lived as a diplomat and judge.

Madame Helena Blavatsky, the founder of theosophy, was also impressed by Bulwer-Lytton's book. She found a confirmation of the racial aspects of her theories in respect to the origin of mankind, of which she wrote in her books Isis Unveiled (1877), and again in The Secret Doctrine (1888). The physical and spiritual superiority of the white race was later on mixed with anti-Semitism, and the first studies of the Indo-European peoples by the German nationalists gave thus birth to ariosophy (Aryan +

theosophy). It was mostly the works of Guido von List and Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels.

Both Louis Jacolliot and Madame Blavatsky supported Bulwer-Lytton's Vril myth so well, and many contemporaries actually believed in the existence of this green force.

According to Joscelyn Godwin (Arktos: The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism, and Nazi Survival), the only primary source of information on the Vril Society is Willy Ley.

Willy Ley was a German rocket engineer who fled Nazi Germany in 1933. In 1947, he published an article called "Pseudoscience in Naziland" in the magazine Astounding Science Fiction. He explained that the Nazis did obtain many technical successes because they systematically tried every option possible in all scientific fields and beyond. This included the pseudo-sciences of the Hollow Earth, the Welteislehre (The World Ice Theory) and even magic at the fringe. Among these weird theories there really existed, according to Ley, a group interested in Vril:

"The next group was literally founded upon a novel. That group which I think called itself Wahrheitsgesellschaft (Society for Truth) and which was more or less localized in Berlin, devoted its spare time looking for Vril. Yes, their convictions were founded upon Bulwer-Lytton's The Corning Race. They knew that the book was fiction; Bulwer-Lytton had used that device in order to be able to tell the truth about this "power." The subterranean humanity was nonsense, Vril was not. Possibly it had enabled the British, who kept it as a State secret, to amass their colonial empire. Surely the Romans had had it, enclosed in small metal balls, which guarded their homes and were referred to as Lares. For reasons which I failed to penetrate, the secret of Vril could be found by contemplating the structure of an apple, sliced in halves.

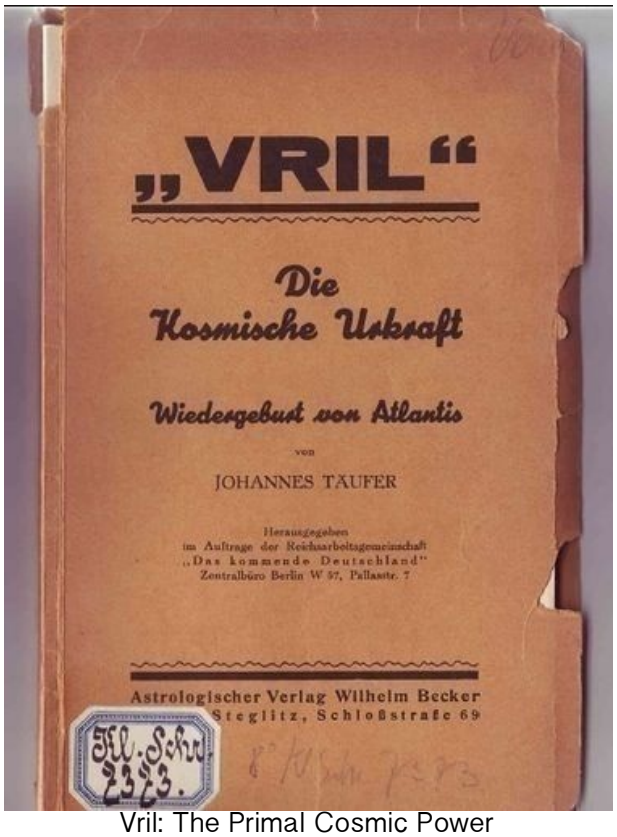


(Left to right) Heinz Haber, Wernher von Braun,
and Willy Ley

No, I am not joking, that is what I was told with great solemnity and secrecy. Such a group actually existed, they even got out the first issue of a magazine which was to proclaim their credo (I wish I had kept some of these things, but I had enough books to smuggle out as it was)."

Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity, 2002) tells a different and more probable account based on the findings of Dr. Peter Bahn in his 1996 essay, Das Geheimnis der Vril-Energie (The Secret of the Vril energy): "The reality of the Vril Society was a good deal less impressive. Its formal name was Reichsarbeitsgemeinschaft ‘Das Kommende Deutschland’ (Reich Working Group ‘The Coming Germany’); one of hundreds of little occult societies in Weimer Germany, it was sponsored by the astrological publisher Wilhelm Becker. The group put out a magazine, which apparently folded after one issue.

In 1930 it also published two pamphlets, Vril: Die kosmische Urkraft (Vril: The Primal Cosmic Power) and Weltdynamismus (World Dynamism), claiming to reveal the secrets of Atlantean free energy technology. A section of the latter pamphlet shows a bisected apple as a symbol of the free energy field surrounding the earth. While this confirms Ley’s account, it does nothing to back up the extravagant claims made for the Vril Society’s activities and influence by later writers."



Vril: The Primal Cosmic Power

Last but not least, some went so far as to claim that the Nazis wanted to change Nordic Germans into a super-race, to become equals with the supermen inside the earth. They would have tried to use different methods of meditation to obtain this transformation. These methods were allegedly based on tantric Buddhism and Tibetan Bon Pö pre-Buddhist "black" shamanism as well as on Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual exercises.

The existence of a Vril Society was mentioned for the first time as such in 1960 by Bergier and Pauwels in their best-seller The Morning of the Magicians. It looked like other secret societies that pretended to have existed at that time, like the Thule Society and the Golden Dawn. They quote the excerpt of "Pseudoscience in Naziland" where Dr. Willy Ley wrote about that strange society and link it to the ritual suicide of the Tibetan monks in Berlin's final days. For the latter, the most likely is that they were Asians from "liberated" Soviet republics enrolled in the Nazi struggle against communism. There were also well known similar cases of Indians serving in German uniforms on the Atlantic Wall bunkers in France.

Van Helsing's Myths of the '90s – With German author Jan van Helsing, aka Jan Udo Holey, the Vril myth reaches its climax, but surely not the historical truth. Van Helsing wrote about modern secret Nazi UFO bases in Antarctica as the achievement of a long underground activity that began in the '20s among members of secret societies.

Maria Orsitsch (Marija Oršić in Croatian) was allegedly a powerful medium and member of the Vril Society. Her father was a Croatian immigrant from Zagreb, while her mother was Austrian.

She would have met in 1917 with Karl Haushofer, Baron Rudolf von Sebottendorf (Thule Society), prelate Gernot of the secret Societas Templi Marcioni (The Inheritors of the Knights Templar) in the Schopenhauer café in Vienna. They would have been admirers of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and disciples of secret Asian lodges, hence the presence of Tibetan monks in Berlin and Munich. As we already saw, this is pure fantasy, at least as far as Karl Haushofer is concerned.

They studied secret texts of the Knights Templar and were linked to the secret fraternity Die Herren vom schwarzen Stein ("The Lords of the Black Stone"), the existence of which is to be found nowhere else.

Maria would have gotten acquainted in Munich with members of the Thule Gesellschaft, and started her own female medium group called first Alldeutsche Gesellschaft für Metaphysik. They all had long ponytails that they believed acted as cosmic antennas, to receive alien communication.

In 1919 a few members of all these secret societies met at a small alpine lodge close to Berchtesgaden. There, Maria Oršić and another medium by the name of Sigrun claimed to have received telepathic transmissions from Aldebaran star in a secret Templar writing, containing technical blueprints for the construction of flying machines. The language used to code the message would have been nothing less exotic than ancient Sumerian, "that sounded like German" (sic).



Maria Orsitsch aka Marija Oršić

What follows is a series of different Vril UFOs (Vril-7, Haunebu I, II etc.) and the project to reach one day Aldebaran itself by traveling with these. Of course a multidimensional channel, independent from Einstein's Relativity equations, would lead them to the star of their dreams.

Maria Oršić disappeared in 1945, leaving behind her a letter to all the members of her lodge, where she wrote "niemand bleibt hier" (no one stays here). It is speculated that she and her friends escaped to Aldebaran and if not, at least to Nazi Antarctica, which is much closer indeed!

One can safely say that Vril is at least a controversial subject. It is not necessary to make it ridiculous by inventing unsubstantiated stories, with no references and no hard evidence at all to support them. Truth finders do respect good research work, and dismiss parrots which echo rumors and urban legends. All genuine myth hides a truth, and deserves to be treated seriously and with respect.

Vril is a word that was probably invented by Bulwer-Lytton in his novel, since it is the first time when it was mentioned. Nonetheless, the concept of a hidden universal creative force that can be harnessed and mastered is not new. It has predecessors in history of religions, philosophy, occultism, and could possibly be newly interpreted in the light of quantum physics.

The Vril Society was very likely the group called Reichsarbeitsgemeinschaft "Das Kommende Deutschland." It surely looked after the Vril and its mastery. It has, however, no proven links with the Thule Society which, based on known evidence, did exist but had already disappeared by then. Karl Haushofer was not a member of the latter, neither was Rudolf Hess, and they most probably never reached the attention of leading Nazis. It is true, though, at least regarding the Thule Society that they were deeply involved in fighting the short-lived Soviet republic of Bavaria after WWI.

On the other hand, the legend of Maria Oršić is based on nothing, since not even her birth certificate could be found. Of course, some will argue that the people of Aldebaran took it with them or, as can be read in fantasy books pretending to hold some truth, that the Vril members erased all tracks behind them for "security purposes."

EPILOGUE

One may wonder why books, movies and even video games about WWII are still so successful, especially when they tackle Nazism and its dark side. Maybe because WWII was the last historical event of global proportion, and we presently live after the End of History, in a postmodern world controlled by the Empire of the Good. Evil, negation, fights, and ideologies were only necessary when the foundations of our civilization were at stake. It is no more the case since 1945. Everywhere in the world we see people aspiring to achieve the same levels of material comfort, based on the same moral and economical individualistic values. “Evil” is no longer a real threat but one is asked to believe in its present existence more than ever.

In this perspective, occult Nazism is the evil of Evil and Hitler incarnates Lucifer. Postmodern man wants the thrill of past history but in an asepticized version, without the risk and the pain. He wants to be a "rebel," supported by the law, the government, “well-meaning” NGOs and all new moral institutions. A Rebel Without a Real Cause, fighting long-gone ghosts. In other words, modern man pretends to be unique while his billions of clones play the hero at no cost, never putting their lives at stake as they pretend to.

The attraction of occult Nazism comes from these feelings, because no bigger event than WWII ever happened in our post-historical world. Most of the small wars that have occurred after WWII, like the Vietnam War, did have casualties but they were not meant to change the world. They were meant to draw a red line between the West and the communist empire, to make them understand that it should not be trespassed. It was more of a backyard quarrel. No less, no more.

The more evil vanishes away, the more we feel purposeless since it was the very fuel of history, that necessary dialectical "other" that we could fight. Modern man replaces evil with "mock enemies" and fake events, such as comparing Saddam Hussein to Hitler by making up stories of weapons of mass destruction. We like to be scared, knowing that a Hollywood happy ending always waits for us around the corner.

This is the reason why occult Nazism became a myth after WWII. All the ingredients are there: bad guys, witches, magic, esotericism, and the fight against irreconcilable ideologies in an environment of a new history in the making.

That being said, many authors identified a juicy gap in the market and began to write nonsense, or, far more dishonest, to make up stories that would even give birth to urban legends and new myths on the Internet. Spreading like rumors, each myth relied on the previous one and added new fantastic elements. Some are jokes, some are commercial traps but none of them is the truth.

As far as history is concerned, there was a genuine Nazi occultism and many other unknown odd facts that were related to the Third Reich. We dealt with them in this book because they are interesting enough, and they bear a deep meaning that does not require making things up, or creating a fantasy. They are in itself a testimony of no ordinary times. They are, like Nazism, a breach in the fabric of history that left its contemporaries in awe.

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Germany's -SECRET WEAPONS- IN WORLD WAR II

Roger Ford

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Introduction

Before we begin to examine the large and diverse array of secret weapons produced in Germany before and during World War II, we should perhaps define what is meant by the term 'secret'. Most weapons are developed in secret - or at least, under conditions of stringent security - whether in times of peace or war, if only because, as the old adage has it, forewarned is forearmed. In Germany's case, there was an added imperative: the Versailles Treaty which, at the end of World War I, forbade her to develop (and even to possess) certain categories of weapons, such as aircraft and tanks. Development programmes for these weapons had to be carried out in absolute secrecy, since the ultimate risk (though probably a small one by the time these development programmes were under way) was the occupation of Germany by the victorious Allies. In many cases, up until the moment that Hitler signalled his intention to revoke the Treaty unilaterally, the projects were actually based outside Germany: in Holland, the Soviet Union, Sweden and in particular Switzerland.



In the strict sense, then, when we address the topic of German secret weapons of World War II, we are faced with an enormous task. But the term 'secret weapons' has a more precise meaning in general use: it implies something which goes beyond the development of a piece of more or less mundane equipment in conditions of secrecy. It implies a genuinely new concept, something truly out of the ordinary, which simply could not work without a new understanding of physical science or chemistry; a new mastery of technology; or some great leap of creative, imaginative invention. In the place and at the time in question, there was certainly no lack of those.

WUNDERWAFFEN

Perhaps the alternative term frequently used in Germany at the time - *Wunderwaffen* - comes closer to defining the true nature of these secret devices, for they were often truly things of wonder, being either completely new and hitherto undreamed-of outside a small select group, or achieving previously unthinkable levels of performance thanks to breakthrough innovations in science and technology. Some of them, it is true, were 'ideas whose time had come', in that the basic principle was understood, but had not yet been successfully applied, and in these cases, teams of scientists and engineers in America, Britain and Germany (and sometimes elsewhere: there were several significant advances made by Italy) were engaged in a headlong race to get the first reliable working version onto the battlefield. The development of the jet aircraft and of radar, not to mention the development of nuclear fission, stand out amongst those. But in other areas, particularly in rocketry and the invention and perfection of the all-important guidance systems, Germany stood head and shoulders above the rest.

Left: The Junkers Ju 287, with its forward-swept wings, was just one of a number of futuristic designs developed by German scientists and engineers in World War II.



Above: A borderline secret weapon: the 'Goliath' was an explosives-filled wire-guided tank and a typically innovative approach to dealing with bunkers and armour.

Her scientists made an enormous and outstanding contribution, not just to the German war effort, but to modern civilisation. However, there were areas where German science and technology were deficient, most importantly - arguably - in the field of electronic computing machines, which were not weapons themselves but something without which the bounds of technological development would soon be reached. However, all too often these deficiencies arose as a result of demand chasing insufficient resource, and time simply ran out for the scientists of the Third Reich before a satisfactory result could be produced.

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

Time and again in the course of this work we will come upon development programmes which were either cancelled before they came to fruition or which were still in progress at the war's end. Many of them, of course, did not get under way until 1944, when the spectre of defeat was already looming large in Berlin and many essential items were in increasingly short supply. We can only speculate upon the possible outcome of an earlier start on the course of the conflict. Others were cancelled simply because they did not appear to offer the likelihood of spectacular results, and in those cases we can, all too often, detect the hand of Adolf Hitler. In general, we can note what can only be described as a wrong-headed insistence on his part that big (and powerful) was always beautiful (and irresistible). This major flaw led him to push for the development of weapons such as the fearsome - but only marginally effective and very expensive - PzKpfw VI Tiger and King Tiger tanks, which would have been far better consigned to the wastebin from the very outset, and the resources squandered upon producing them - and then keeping them in service - redirected into more appropriate channels such as the more practical PzKpfw V Panther.

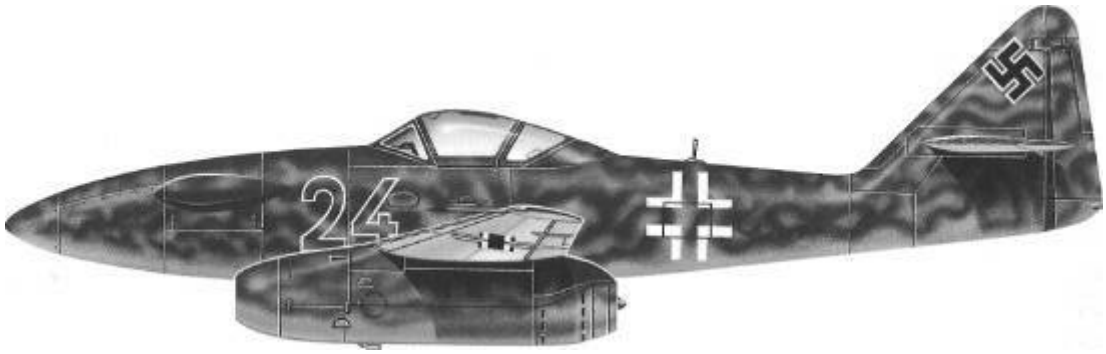
In a very real sense, Hitler himself motivated and ran the German secret weapons programme. There seems to be a direct and very tangible link between this programme and his psyche, and we are perhaps left wondering whether the *Wunderwaffen* would have existed without him. On balance, it seems certain that they would have done, given the creative imagination of so many German scientists and the readiness of many of her military men to accept innovation, but it is equally certain that without Hitler's insistence, many weapons systems which made a very real impact upon the course of the war would either not have been developed at all, or would, at best, have been less prominent.

Nonetheless, without the genius of many German scientists and the brilliance of German technologists and engineers, the entire programme would have been stillborn. Many of the weapons produced for the first time in Germany and employed in World War II went on to become accepted and very important parts of the broader armoury, and several have made an enormous impact on life as a whole outside the military arena. The more spectacular failures have a certain grandeur, despite their shortcomings, and even the outright myths - and there were many, some remarkably persistent - frequently had an underpinning of fact.

CHAPTER ONE

Jet Aircraft

Thrust-powered flight was an early alternative to the airscrew propeller - in 1928, only a quarter century after the Wright brothers first took to the air, Fritz Stammer flew in a rocket-powered glider. By the time a further decade had gone by, both rocket- and jet-powered aircraft had become a reality, and a central plank in Germany's attempts to win control in the air.



The German Air Force, the Luftwaffe, was held in high esteem in National Socialist Party (henceforth, Nazi) circles, and it perhaps enjoyed better access to the ultimate seat of power, namely Adolf Hitler, than the Army or the Navy. This was not just because it had at its head one of the Fuhrer's closest associates, Hermann Goring, but also because for almost all of the war, it had sole charge of the front-line defence of Germany against the combined onslaughts of the British and American air forces, bombing by night and by day.

Certainly, when it came to the allocation of funds for research and development, the Luftwaffe was at the head of the line; as a result, more developments were made in the field of aeronautics in the Third Reich than in any other. That there was something approaching chaos in the way individual projects were initiated, approved and evaluated is a constant source of wonder, because in a country which prided itself on its logical, methodical approach to problem-solving, there was no logic or method in evidence! As one expert has commented, the relationship between the individual aircraft and engine manufacturers and also between them and the Luftwaffe and the *Reich-sluftfahrtministerium* (RLM - the German Air Ministry) looked like tribal warfare.

Those projects which came to fruition were amongst the better-known wartime developments, and not just in Germany, but that only tells half, or far less than half, the story. The vast majority fell by the wayside, some due to lack of time; others, quite properly, because they were flawed; still others because they were simply too fanciful and apparently far-fetched. Most of the more interesting new aircraft

Above: The stark shape of the Messerschmitt Me 262.

Left: The Heinkel He 162 made use of appropriate technology- in this case, plywood; its wing and tailplane assemblies were manufactured in furniture factories.

developed during World War IT in Germany were to be powered by either turbojet or rocket motors, in both of which German scientists and engineers excelled, but as we shall see, the jet engine programme in particular was to get off to a very slow start. Had the optimism of the jet pioneers been justified, we might well have seen a different outcome to the war, a prolongation, perhaps, into the autumn and winter of 1945, which might have resulted in the nuclear bombs used against Japan being dropped on German cities, too. When it was so evident that the jet aircraft was going to be so vitally important, it comes as something of a surprise to see that the timescale of its development was so extended. As a result, although Germany had a very clear lead in the field, she squandered it, thanks largely to poor overall control of the research and development programme.

THEHEINKELHe178

The name Heinkel deserves to figure high in any list of notable achievements in aviation, for it was from Ernst Heinkel's design studio, and specifically from the drawing boards of twin brothers Siegfried and Walter Günter, that the first practical thrust-powered aircraft - the rocket-propelled He 176 and the turbojet-powered He 178 - were to come. Heinkel himself, with partner Hellmuth Hirth, had enjoyed considerable success with the Albatros aircraft, especially the B.I, during World War I. He struggled through the dark days of the 1920s and came to prominence again with a commercial aircraft, the Giinter-designed He 70 and, using that as a stepping-stone, produced arguably the most effective bomber of its day, the He 111, which first flew in early 1935. Heinkel continued to develop successful piston-engined aircraft, but his interest also turned to the emerging technology of rocketry. There had been thrust-powered flights - Fritz Stammer flew a solid-fuel rocket-powered glider for the first time on 11 June 1928 - but it took almost a further decade and the development of liquid-fuelled motors to make it a practical proposition, as we shall discover in Chapter Two when we come to examine rocket-propelled aircraft.

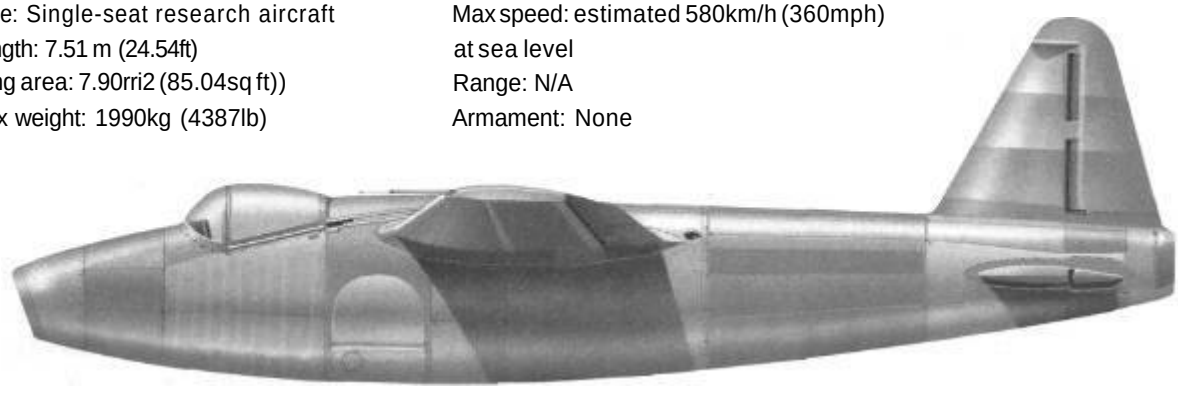
Rocket motors, while they could hardly be called 'tried and tested' by 1938, were simple in the extreme; far more complicated, but offering huge advantages in terms of fuel economy and controllability, was the revolutionary new turbojet powerplant on which Heinkel's engineer, Joachim Pabst von Ohain, and his assistant Max Hahn, were working in secret. Lured away from Göttingen University, where they had done their pioneering work, the pair produced a first demonstration prototype, the HeS 1, which ran only on hydrogen (and was only barely controllable) to produce about 250kg (55()lb) of static thrust, in September 1937. By the time six more months had passed, they had made considerable progress, and had produced the petrol-fuelled HeS 3, which developed 500kg (HOOlb) of thrust. This, they believed, was a practical - if only marginally - powerplant, and the next step was to produce an airframe in which to mount it.

The result of their efforts was the He 178, the world's first jet-propelled aircraft. It was a shoulder-wing monoplane with its cockpit well forward of the wing leading edge, where it sat above the ducting

Below: The Heinkel He 178, despite its shortcomings, was the first jet-powered aircraft to fly successfully, on 27 August 1939, 20 months before Britain's Gloster E.28/39.

HEINKEL He 178

Type: Single-seat research aircraft
Length: 7.51 m (24.54ft)
Wing area: 7.90rri2 (85.04sq ft))
Max weight: 1990kg (4387lb)
Max speed: estimated 580km/h (360mph) at sea level
Range: N/A
Armament: None



HEINKEL He 280

Type: Single-seat prototype interceptor
Length: 10.40m (34.125ft)
Span: 12.20m (40.00ft)
Max take-off weight: 4310kg (9502lb)
Max speed: 900km/h (560mph} at 6000m (19,700ft)
Range: 650km (404 miles)
Armament: 3 x 20mm MG 151 cannon



Above: The second Heinkel jet, the He 280, was successful, but lost out in competition with the Messerschmitt Me 262. Just nine examples were built

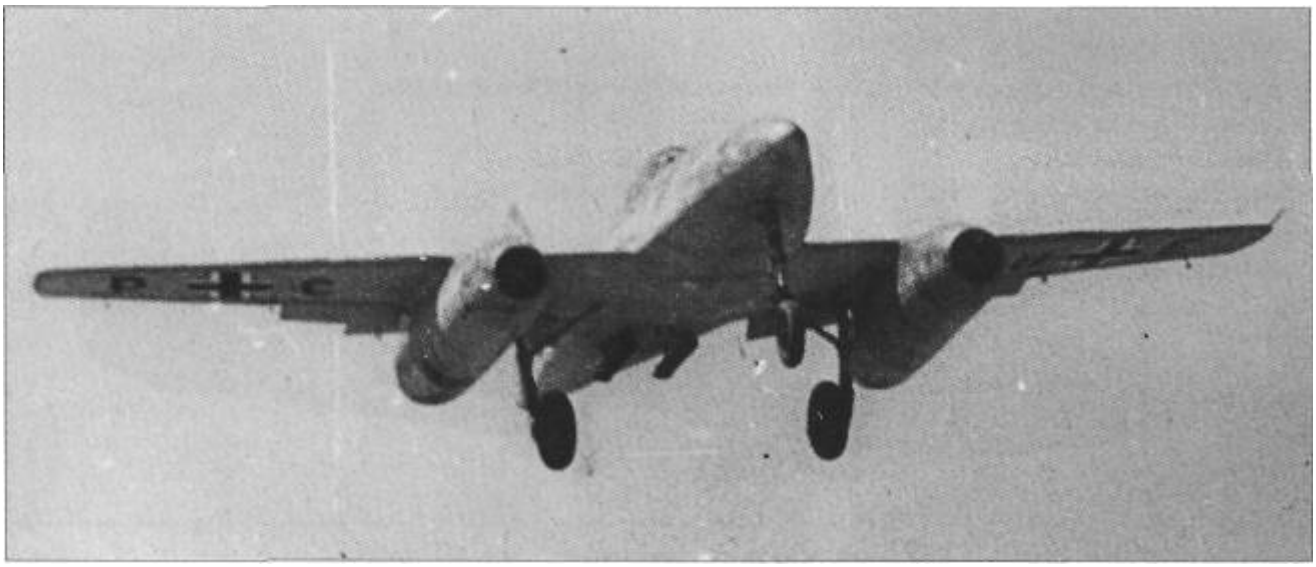
which brought air to the engine (which, along with its tailpipe, occupied most of the rest of the fuselage). It made its first true flight on 27 August 1939, having 'hopped' along the runway three days earlier. This pre-dated the maiden flight of the Gloster E.28/39, powered by Frank Whittle's engine, which had in its turn pre-dated Chain's original effort, by over 20 months. The He 178 was demonstrated to the RLM on 1 November. Almost incredibly, there was virtually no official interest, and it (along with the He 176) was consigned to the Berlin Air Museum, where both were destroyed in an air raid in 1943.

THE HEINKEL He 280

Heinkel abandoned the He 178 largely because of technical problems associated with mounting the engine within the fuselage, but did not give up hope of developing a turbojet-powered fighter. New blood in the shape of Max Mueller arrived from Jumo to pep up the jet engine development programme. He worked on the the HeS 30, which became the 109-006. The 109- prefix was employed, somewhat confusingly, for both pulse-jet and turbojet engines and also for rocket motors; the three-figure designator following was allocated chronologically, and there is no logical distinction between one manufacturer and another. Thankfully, there were few enough engine types, so one soon became familiar with the rather impersonal system.

Simultaneous with Mueller's work was that of Pabst von Ohain who developed the HeS 3 as the HeS 8 (109-001). Both engines were to be tested in an all-new airframe, the He 280. This was a twin-engined aircraft, its powerplants slung beneath the low wings in nacelles and with a high tailplane with a fin and rudder at each tip. It made its first powered flight with von Ohain's engines on 2 April 1941, and was demonstrated to the Luftwaffe and RLM three days later.

Now the reaction was different. The immediate result was that Heinkel's engine division expanded in size with the addition of his old partner Hirth's company (which made piston engines and turbo-chargers amongst other things). Mueller and his team moved to the Hirth factory at Stuttgart, and von Ohain stayed at Rostock-Marienehe to work on a further development of his engine, the 109-011, which was projected to give 1300kg (28661b) of static thrust. There was understandable rivalry between the two teams and both made considerable progress, but for some unaccountable reason, the RLM decided to order work on the 109-006 to be discontinued, even though it was already producing 900kg (19841b) of thrust. Meanwhile, development of the Oil continued at Stuttgart, but even by the end of the war, it had never run except on a test bench and just 20 had been completed. Testing of the He 280 continued with both Jumo 004 and BMW 003 engines, but when it eventually came up against the Me 262, it fared badly. There are suggestions that the decision to adopt the Me 262 was at least partly politically motivated, since, as we have noted, the relationship between the various German planemakers themselves, and with the RLM and the Luftwaffe, was a political minefield. The nine prototypes constructed were later used for testing new wing and tail designs and Heinkel later worked on other jet aircraft designs, most of them centred on the



stillborn Oil engine, but none came to fruition until the submission which became the He 162 (qv) was accepted.

THE Me 262 'SCHWALBE/STURMVOGEL

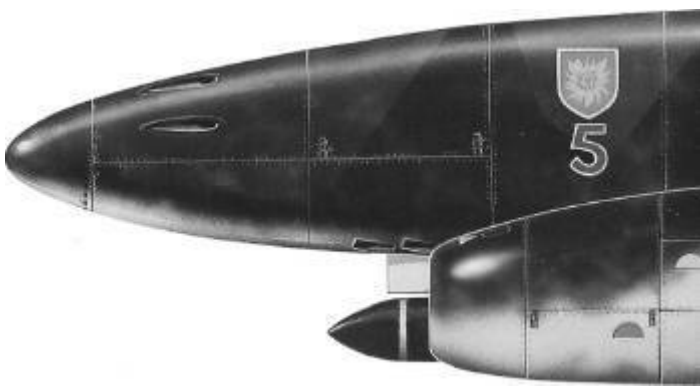
The best known of the aviation projects which actually came to fruition is the Messerschmitt Me 262, the aircraft chosen over the He 280. By modern standards, this was a fairly conventional all-metal fighter aircraft with gently swept low-set variable-chord wings, powered by twin Junkers Jumo 004B-1 turbojet engines. It became the first jet-powered aircraft to enter operational service, on 3 October 1944, and was thus a landmark in aviation history. We shall examine the development history of the Me 262 in more detail than other aircraft, both because it was so significant and because it will give us an insight into the methodology of aircraft development in the Third Reich, revealing that it was by no means a smooth process.

The Me 262 started life as a loosely defined project of the RLM, inaugurated in 1938, with Hans Mauch and Helmut Schlep working on the powerplant and Hans Antz on the airframe. Schlep, recently returned from college in the United States, had already convinced Junkers Motorenwerke (Jumo - the engine division of the forcibly nationalised planemaker) to start work on designs for axial-flow turbojets, and BMW, initially sub-contracted by Junkers, had also begun to develop a more sophisticated design of its own. In the meantime, Antz had interested Messerschmitt's chief of development, Robert Lusser, in examining the possibilities of producing an airframe to carry such a powerplant. Before the end of the year, the project had moved up a gear, and Messerschmitt

Above: A pre-production version of the Me 262 gets airborne with the help of solid-fuel rocket motors. Such 'RATO' (Rocket-Assisted Take-Off) units were widely used to assist heavily loaded aircraft into the air.

Below: In all, some 1430 Me 262s were to be produced in seven different variants. This bomber variant, the Me 262A-2a 'Sturmvogel', was operated by KG 51 out of Prague-Ruzyn in late 1944.

MESSERSCHMITT Me 262A-2a/Ul
Type: Single-seat bomber
Length: 10.61 m (34.79ft)
Span: 12.50m (41.01ft)
Max take-off weight: 6775kg (14,936lb)
Max speed: 870km/h (541 mph) at 7000m (23,000ft)
Range: 845km (525 miles)
Armament: 2 x 30mm MK 108 cannon;
1000kg (2200lb)bombload

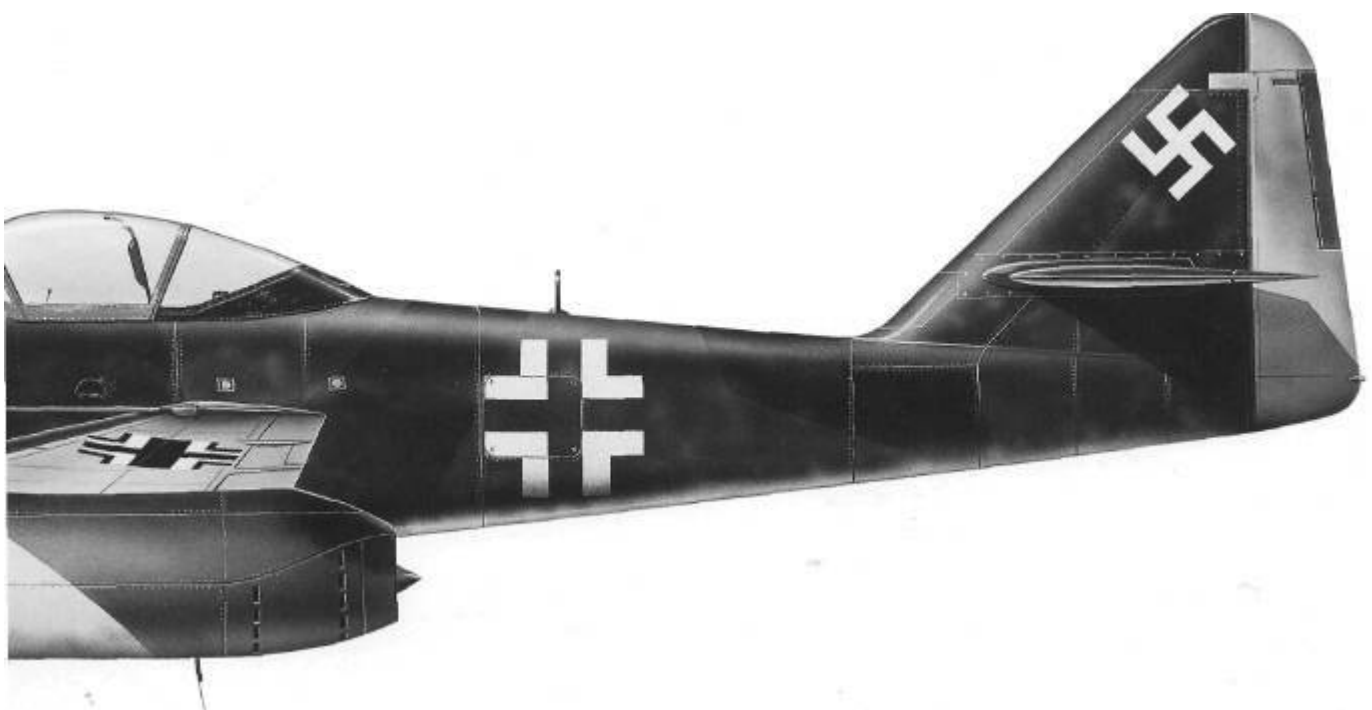


was instructed, somewhat baldly, to begin development work on a fighter aircraft which was to have an endurance of one hour at 850km/h (530mph). Responsibility was placed in the hands of Woldemar Voigt (of whom more later), who examined both single- and twin-engined arrangements before concluding that a single centrally mounted engine layout would present more problems than it would solve. His view was coloured by the performance of the He 178. Instead Voigt suggested a design with engines in each wing root, which crystallised into Project 1065 in Messerschmitt's Augsburg design office. Detailed design drawings were produced as early as 7 June 1939, and a wooden mock-up then made. On 3 March 1940 Messerschmitt was awarded a contract to produce three airframes, designated as the Me 262, for flight testing.

It was envisioned that the aircraft's power would come from two BMW P.3302 engines, delivery of which had been promised for the end of 1939, and their non-appearance was only the first of a long series of setbacks associated with the powerplant. In fact, the prototype BMW engine, now known as the 109-003, did not run until August 1940, and then it produced only 150kg (3301b) of static thrust instead of the 600kg (13201b) promised. A year later it was still only producing 450kg (9901b), which was by no means enough to get the Me 262 into the air. It was to be mid-1943 before an 003 engine produced sufficient power to be viable, and a further year before production units became available, and in due course it was decided to reserve it for the Heinkel He 162 (see below). In addition, the BMW engine had proven too big to fit into the wing-root mount, and the design team had hurriedly modified the Me 262 to carry it in under-wing nacelles, though this, in turn, simplified main spar design. Some sources suggest that this factor, not the diameter of the BMW engines, underlay the decision to adopt nacelles rather than faired-in mountings, even at the expense of increased drag.

FIRST ALL-JET Me 262 FLIGHT

The Jumo 109-004 was always to have been a less sophisticated design, sacrificing ultimate potential for a 'fast track' into production. It, too, had its problems, however. The prototype ran in November 1940, but it was January 1942 before all the snags were ironed out, and its first flight, slung under a Messerschmitt Bf 110, took place on 15 March. The first pilot-production engines, 004As, which produced 840kg (185()lb) of static thrust, were rolled out in early summer, and were fitted to the Me 262 V3, which made



the first all-jet Me 262 flight on 18 July 1942 in the hands of Fritz Wendel. The aircraft had flown as early as 18 April 1941, but with a single 1200bhp Jumo 210G piston engine in its nose, and by that time an aircraft which was ultimately to be its closest competitor, the Heinkel He 280 (qv), had already flown on the power of two 500kg- (HOOlb-) thrust HeS 8 turbojcts. Orders for 15 Me 262s were placed, expanded to 60 by early October, by which time the second prototype had also flown, and the first Jumo 004B engines, with similar performance characteristics to the -As, were going into production.

PROPELLED BY AN ANGEL

On 22 April 1943, Adolf Galland, the operational head of the Luftwaffe, flew the aircraft himself (and returned to say it felt 'as if an angel were pushing me'), and was instrumental in convincing the RLM to switch most of Messerschmitt's production from the Bf 109 to the Me 262, the formal order for general production being issued on 5 June. On 26 June the production prototype, -V5, with a nosewheel undercarriage, took to the air. A blow fell on 17 August 1943: production of the Me 262 was just getting into full swing when the USAAF bombed the Messerschmitt factory at Regensburg, destroying much important tooling. The company's development programmes were transferred from Augsburg to Oberammergau as a result, with further attendant delays. By November, the future looked less bleak, with prototypes flying with pressurised cockpits and carrying armament (the as yet imperfect MG 108 30mm cannon) and with Junkers finally getting the 004B engine into series production, but then another quite different problem arose in the shape of direct interference from the Führer himself.

Senior Luftwaffe personnel, aware that they were losing the fight to limit the success of the RAF and USAAF bombing campaign, had begun to advocate that the production of bomber aircraft in the Third Reich should cease and that all efforts should concentrate on fighter types. Goring agreed, but Hitler recoiled at the very suggestion and would have none of it. Instead, he decided that the Me 262 would be perfect to carry a 500kg (11 OOlb) bombload to England to continue his pet campaign of harassment and nuisance raids, and he ordered the aircraft to be modified and developed for this purpose alone, even though it was hardly suitable and no adequate bombsight was available, nor was one ever produced.

It was May 1944 before Hitler agreed to allow production of the 'Schwalbe' ('Swallow') fighter version to continue, and then only in parallel with the

Below: The two-seater Me 262B-1 was normally employed as a night-fighter, but these aircraft lacked the distinctive 'toasting-fork' antenna on the nose, which, incidentally, slowed the night-fighter down.





Above: This Me 262A, 'White 10' (the distinctive markings are largely obscured), was flown by Leutnant Kurt Bell of III/EJG 2 during the making of a Luftwaffe training film. Note the aircraft's pristine appearance.

'Sturmvogel' ('Storm Petrel') bomber, at the rate of one fighter to 20 bombers. Furthermore it was 4 November before he gave permission for it to go into unlimited production. By then, 13 pre-production Me 262A-Os had been completed, in addition to 12 development prototypes, and 60 more were scheduled to roll out during the following month. There was still much 'fine tuning' to be done, and versions of the aircraft, both bombers and fighters, were testing in a variety of forms, but more importantly, pilot training had begun. It was still to be five months before the Me 262 was ready to go to war, but essentially by mid-1944 the development emphasis had switched from Messerschmitt to the Luftwaffe, although the firm was still heavily involved, developing the two-seater trainer and night-fighter versions, as well as alternative forms for the stillborn *hochgeschwindigkeits* (HG - high speed) version.

In the final analysis, the Me 262 was simply too little, too late. The German jet scored its first confirmed combat victory in the hands of Leutnant Joachim Weber - his victim was a PR XVI Mosquito of No. 540 Squadron, RAF - on 8 August 1944, four days after the British Gloster 'Meteor' Mk 1 had made its combat debut (though admittedly, the latter's debut 'victory' had been over a pilotless VI (lying bomb). That bare statistic is a telling indictment, for the British had not flown their prototype jet aircraft, the E.28/39, until almost 21 months after Heinkel's He 178 had taken to the air.

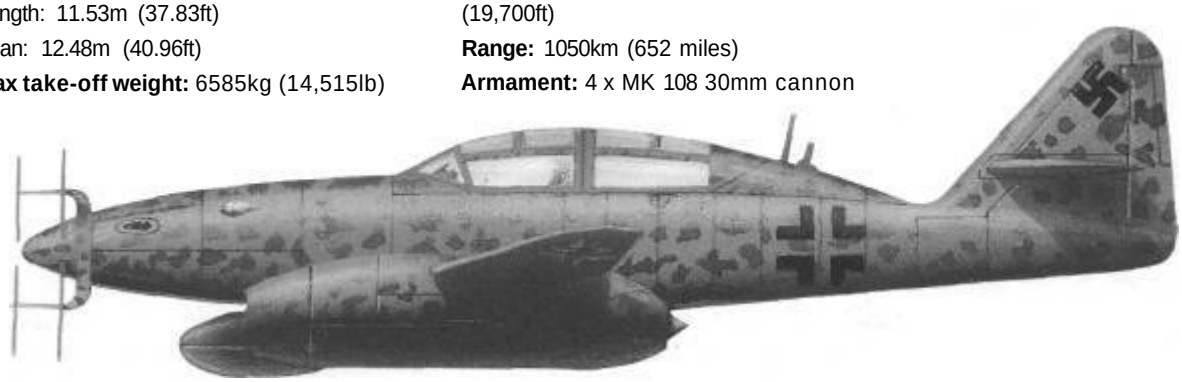
Me 262 VICTORIES

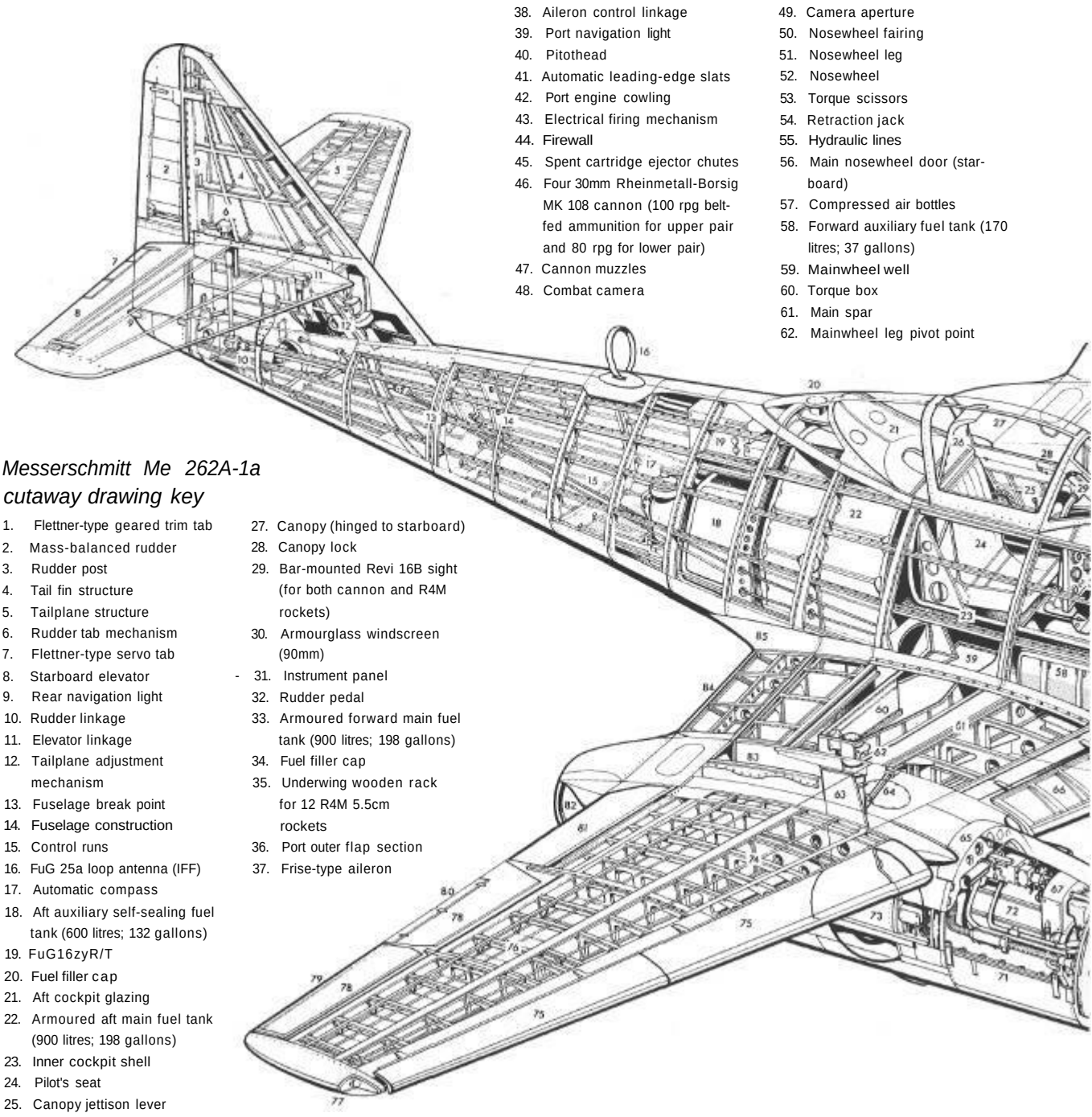
Some 1430 Me 262s were to be produced, in seven main versions, but probably no more than a third of them actually saw combat (and over 100 were lost, many in accidents on landing) over a seven-month period. By the spring of 1945 they were operating under very difficult circumstances but were still downing American bombers in significant numbers, particularly when equipped with 5.5cm R4M 'Orkan' ('Hurricane') unguided rocket projectiles, despite a never-cured tendency to snake at high speed, which made aiming somewhat unpredictable. The total number of victories scored by Me 262s is uncertain, but is authoritatively put at more than 735. The highest-scoring pilot was Oberleutnant Kurt Welter, with over 20 victories, and 27 other Luftwaffe pilots became jet aces, with five or more victories each, including

Below: The Me 262B-1 night-fighters of 10/NJG 11 were assigned to the defence of Berlin. One of the unit's pilots, Feldwebel Karl-Heinz Becker, accounted for seven Allied aircraft. Note the radar array on the nose.

MESSERSCHMITT Me 262B-la/Ul

Type: Two-seat night-fighter
Length: 11.53m (37.83ft)
Span: 12.48m (40.96ft)
Max take-off weight: 6585kg (14,515lb)
Max speed: 813km/h (505mph) at 6000m (19,700ft)
Range: 1050km (652 miles)
Armament: 4 x MK 108 30mm cannon



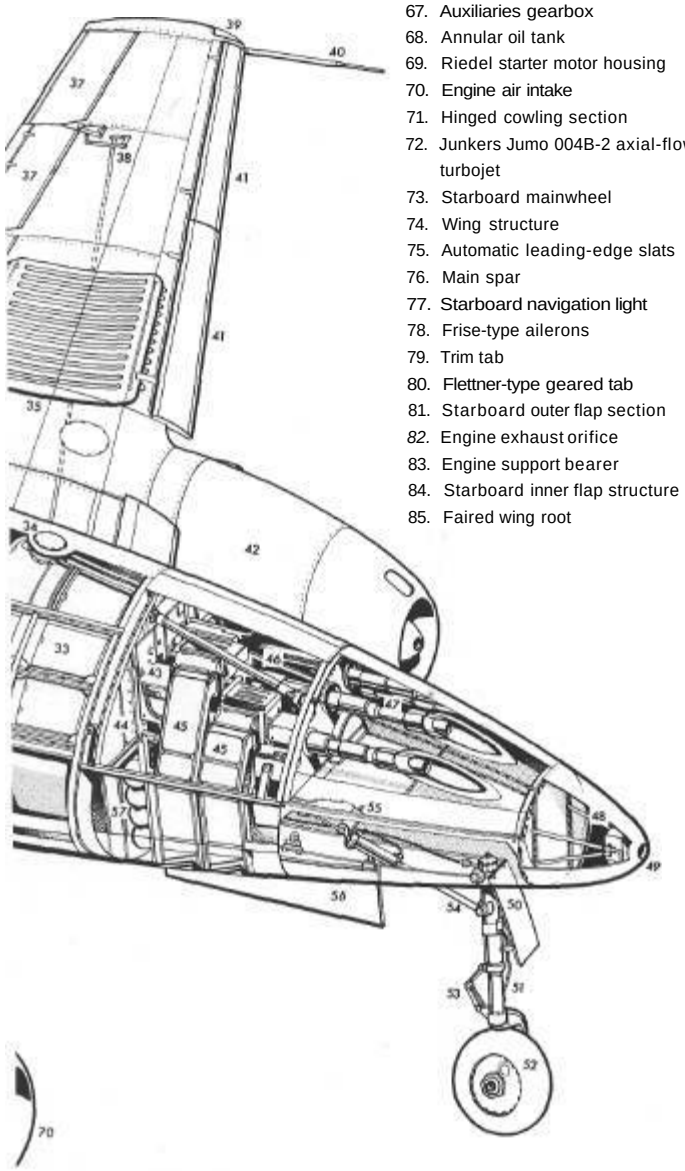


Messerschmitt Me 262A-1a cutaway drawing key

1. Flettner-type geared trim tab
2. Mass-balanced rudder
3. Rudder post
4. Tail fin structure
5. Tailplane structure
6. Rudder tab mechanism
7. Flettner-type servo tab
8. Starboard elevator
9. Rear navigation light
10. Rudder linkage
11. Elevator linkage
12. Tailplane adjustment mechanism
13. Fuselage break point
14. Fuselage construction
15. Control runs
16. FuG 25a loop antenna (IFF)
17. Automatic compass
18. Aft auxiliary self-sealing fuel tank (600 litres; 132 gallons)
19. FuG16zyR/T
20. Fuel filler cap
21. Aft cockpit glazing
22. Armoured aft main fuel tank (900 litres; 198 gallons)
23. Inner cockpit shell
24. Pilot's seat
25. Canopy jettison lever
26. Armoured (15mm; 0.6in] head rest
27. Canopy (hinged to starboard)
28. Canopy lock
29. Bar-mounted Revi 16B sight (for both cannon and R4M rockets)
30. Armourglass windscreen (90mm)
31. Instrument panel
32. Rudder pedal
33. Armoured forward main fuel tank (900 litres; 198 gallons)
34. Fuel filler cap
35. Underwing wooden rack for 12 R4M 5.5cm rockets
36. Port outer flap section
37. Frise-type aileron
38. Aileron control linkage
39. Port navigation light
40. Pitothead
41. Automatic leading-edge slats
42. Port engine cowling
43. Electrical firing mechanism
44. Firewall
45. Spent cartridge ejector chutes
46. Four 30mm Rheinmetall-Borsig MK 108 cannon (100 rpg belt-fed ammunition for upper pair and 80 rpg for lower pair)
47. Cannon muzzles
48. Combat camera
49. Camera aperture
50. Nosewheel fairing
51. Nosewheel leg
52. Nosewheel
53. Torque scissors
54. Retraction jack
55. Hydraulic lines
56. Main nosewheel door (starboard)
57. Compressed air bottles
58. Forward auxiliary fuel tank (170 litres; 37 gallons)
59. Mainwheel well
60. Torque box
61. Main spar
62. Mainwheel leg pivot point

Generalleutnant Adolf Galland, who formed and then commanded the ad hoc unit known as 'Jagdverband *T* after being implicated in the January 1945 'revolt' of Luftwaffe fighter unit leaders.

Was the Messerschmitt Me 262 worth the time and effort it took to develop, when all was said and done? The answer is a qualified 'yes', but the situation, most experts agree, would have been very different had the two major hold-ups - the late delivery of the engines and the Fuhrer's meddling - been somehow speedily dealt with. Had the Luftwaffe's fighter squadrons been able to operate it in significant numbers from, let's say, mid-1944, the outcome would probably have been very different. Tt would not have won the war for



63. Mainwheel door
64. Mainwheel retraction rod
65. Engine support arch
66. Leading-edge slat structure
67. Auxiliaries gearbox
68. Annular oil tank
69. Riedel starter motor housing
70. Engine air intake
71. Hinged cowling section
72. Junkers Jumo 004B-2 axial-flow turbojet
73. Starboard mainwheel
74. Wing structure
75. Automatic leading-edge slats
76. Main spar
77. Starboard navigation light
78. Frise-type ailerons
79. Trim tab
80. Flettner-type geared tab
81. Starboard outer flap section
82. Engine exhaust orifice
83. Engine support bearer
84. Starboard inner flap structure
85. Faired wing root

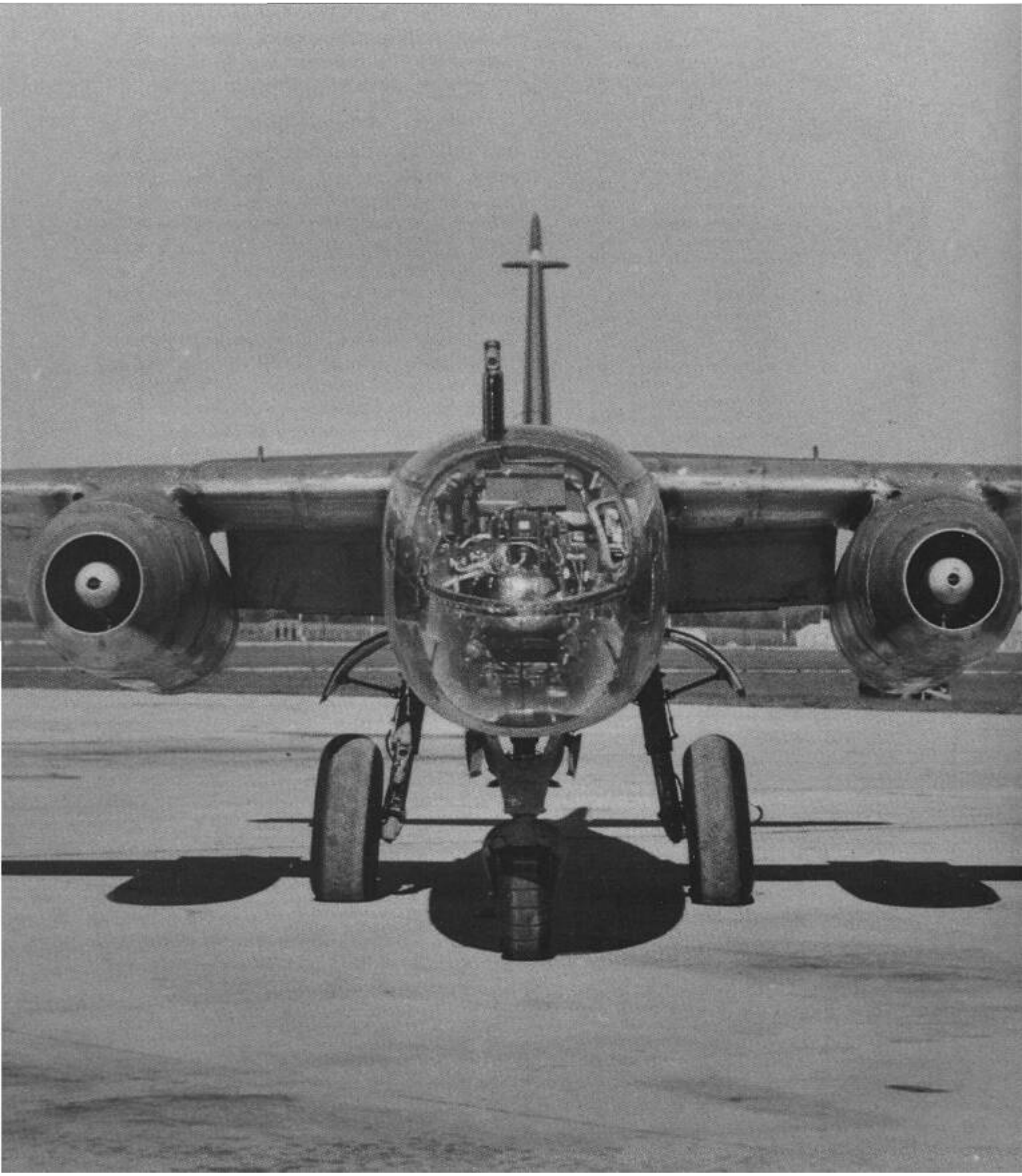
Left: Despite its revolutionary wing form, the Me 262 was constructed along entirely conventional lines, the only limiting factor of the powerplant being the need to keep the airframe components out of the exhaust stream.

Germany, but it might well have prolonged it by some months by making inroads into the Allies' (especially the Americans') strategic bombing campaign, thus helping to maintain German manufacturing production levels. The question of whether that would have been a good or a bad thing lies outside the scope of this work.

THE Ar 234 'BLITZ'

The only other jet-propelled German aircraft to see serious combat during World War II came not from one of the major manufacturers, but from a relatively minor player. Prior to the development of the Ar 234 'Blitz' ('Lightning') bomber (also known as the 'Hecht' - 'Pike'), the Arado company had only ever been involved in the production of light aircraft. Many of them, such as the Ar 196, were produced as floatplanes, designed to operate from warships, though that is not to say that its products were anything less than excellent. In 1940, the RLM issued a specification for a high-speed reconnaissance aircraft to be powered by two jet engines, either Jumo 004s or BMW 003s. Arado responded with a design - the E.370 - for a shoulder-wing monoplane with engines in under-slung nacelles, which was accepted as the Ar 234. Two prototypes were constructed over the winter of 1941-42, but it was February 1943 before the first pair of engines, the Jumo 004Bs, were delivered, and 15 June before the aircraft first flew. It was entirely conventional for the period, save in one respect: the fuselage was very slim and instead of a wheeled undercarriage, it used a take-off trolley and landed on skids. This was clearly unacceptable in an operational aircraft since it made manoeuvring on the ground next to impossible, so midway through the prototype programme, the fuselage was marginally widened beneath the wings, and main wheels and a retractable nosewheel were installed. Arado engineers also developed a rocket-powered interceptor, the E.381, which was to have been carried as a parasite beneath the fuselage of the Ar 234. Nothing came of the idea.

Most of the early Ar 234s were completed as reconnaissance aircraft, and flew many successful missions at 700km/h (435mph) at between 9000m (29,530ft) and 12,000m (41,000ft), where they were largely immune to attack, but a bomber version with either one or two seats, and able to carry 2000kg (4400lb) of bombs, was also produced. It was February 1945 before the first of these aircraft, assigned to KG 76, were operational. One was shot down by American P-47 Thunderbolts near Segelsdorf on 24 February, and fell into Allied hands. The most important missions KG 76 undertook were those aimed at the destruction of the Ludendorff Bridge over the



Rhine at Remagen between 7 and 17 March, when Ar 234s made repeated and often suicidal attacks supported by Me 262 bombers of KG 51. A night-fighter version of the Ar 234 was produced in small numbers, and operated from March 1945 with some success. Later Ar 234 variants had a variety of different powerplants, and a four-engined version using 'siamesed' nacelles was also produced in prototype. Maximum speed at medium level of the latter was over 850km/h (530mph), which was beyond the level-flight capabilities of any Allied fighter, but still by no means fast enough for absolute safety. The limiting factor on its performance was not, however, the engines: it was the design of the wing. Straight wings have a finite maximum speed, after which compression causes local airflow to exceed the speed of sound, resulting in potentially catastrophic instability. Arado's engineers discovered this the hard way, but soon designer Riidinger Kosin came up with an alternative planform: a crescent wing, starting out with its leading edge sweeping back from the wing roots, the curve returning so that the wingtip sections were at right-angles to the body axis (a form which was later used in the British Handley-Page 'Victor' bomber). Wind tunnel tests showed this to be much more effective, but the war ended before a prototype could be constructed. And even while the Ar 234 was in development, engineers elsewhere were looking at much more advanced concepts.

Left: The Arado Ar 234 - this is the production-B variant - with its long, slim fuselage and wings, was the only real alternative to the Me 262, but was nowhere near as successful in operational terms.

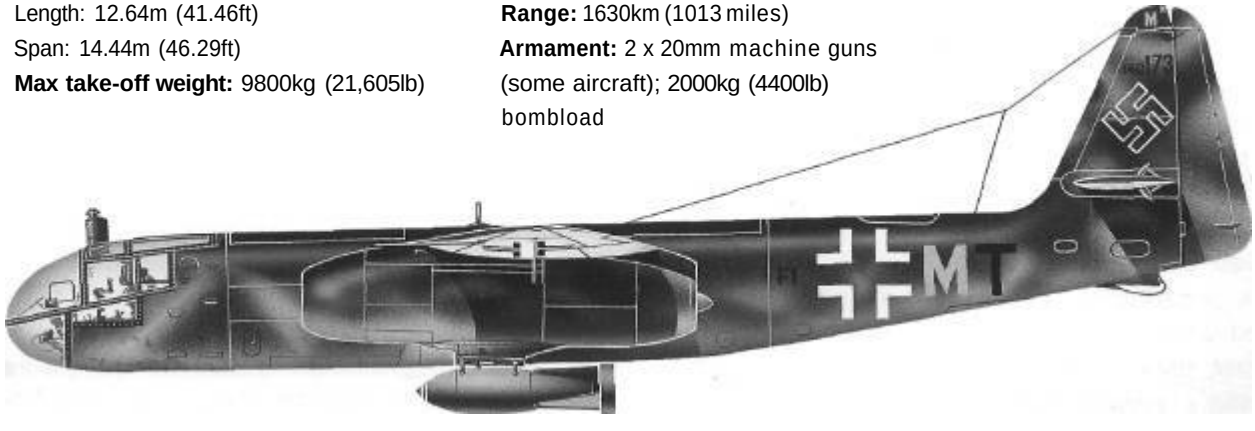
THE JUNKERS Ju 287

There is no space here to go into the complex aerodynamics of wing form in any depth, save to say that as early as the mid-1930s, it had been accepted - following the work of the *Deutsches Versuchsanstalt für Luftfahrt* (DVL - the German Aviation Development Establishment) - that straight wings had a finite speed limit thanks to the rise in drag caused by air compressing at their leading edge. As we have seen, this was the main factor in limiting the speed of the Ar 234. An interim solution was to sweep the leading edge backwards but keep the trailing edge straight, thus producing a variable-chord wing, and this was adopted with piston- and jet-engined aircraft alike. The Me 262 had a wing essentially of this form (although it did have a small sweep to its trailing edge outboard of the engines) as did the altogether more pedestrian Douglas C-47/DC-3 transport. At this time, no aircraft had flown with a wing that had steeply swept leading and trailing edges, even though it was known from wind tunnel testing that such a wing would benefit not only from decreased compressibility but also from a reduction in the ratio between its thickness and its chord (the distance between the leading and trailing edges).

In June 1943, at about the time when the Arado Ar 234 first flew, a development team at Junkers, under Dr Hans Wocke, produced a design for an advanced bomber using a double-swept wing form, but with one

Below: A total of 210 examples of the Arado Ar 234B were produced; just one remains, on display in the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C.

ARADO Ar 234B-2
Type: Single-seat tactical light bomber
Length: 12.64m (41.46ft)
Span: 14.44m (46.29ft)
Max take-off weight: 9800kg (21,605lb)
Max speed: 742km/h (461 mph) at 6000m (19,700ft)
Range: 1630km (1013 miles)
Armament: 2 x 20mm machine guns (some aircraft); 2000kg (4400lb) bombload



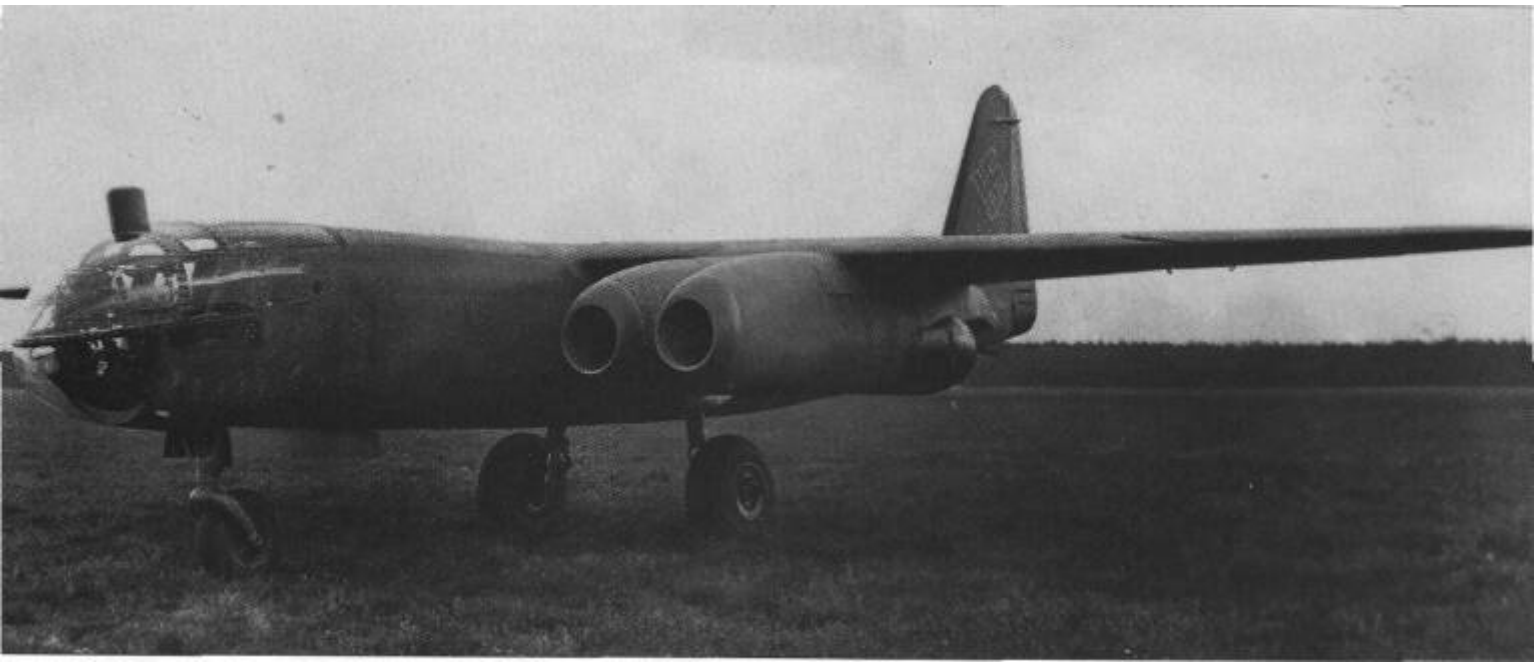


Above: Surrounded by Junkers Ju 88Gs, this Ar 234B was captured by US forces at Manching in Bavaria in April 1945. The state of its cockpit bears out the assertion that the full glazing offered no protection against flying debris.

further innovation. The wing was to be swept not back, but forward, conferring all the advantages outlined above but also resulting in greater stability, except under certain well-defined circumstances. Wocke's project was championed by Siegfried Kneymeyer who was already a leading advocate of the abandonment of all piston-engined aircraft manufacture (save for the Junkers Ju 88) in the Reich.

A CHANGE AT THE TOP

In November 1943, Kneymeyer took over from Ernst Udet as Chief of Technical Air Armament at the RLM, and thus had considerable influence. The following March, prototype development of Wocke's new aircraft, designated the Ju 287, was ordered, and construction of a flying testbed began, using the fuselage of a Heinkel He 117. It was to be powered by

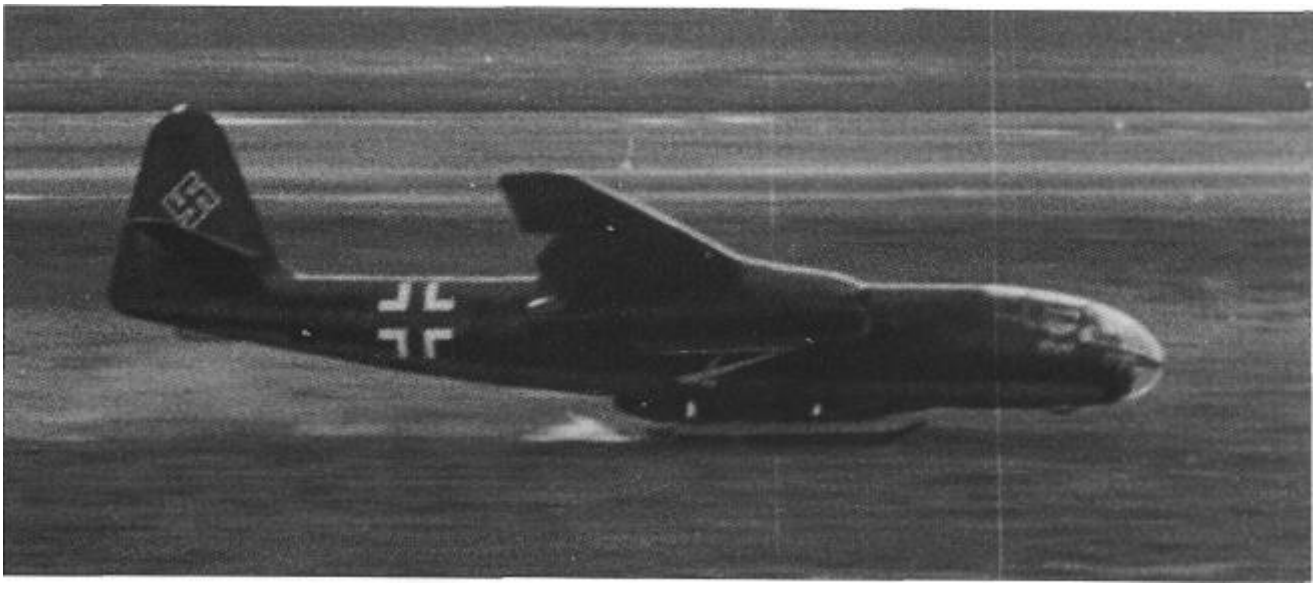


Above: The Ar 234B was found to be underpowered, and the obvious solution was to double up on the powerplants to produce the Ar 234C. Both reconnaissance and night-fighter versions were built alongside the bomber variant.

four 004B engines of 900kg (19841b) thrust each, two suspended from the wings, the other two mounted on the fuselage sides, just below and aft of the cockpit. It would have two Walter 501 rockets to assist take-off.

The prototype aircraft made its maiden flight on 16 August and proved to be predictable in flight, though wing flexing was more of a problem than had been anticipated and when it yawed the trailing wing tended to lift and create a rolling moment. On the whole, however, results were positive, and work went ahead on the construction of a second prototype with a purpose-built fuselage, to be powered by six BMW 003 turbojets, four wing-mounted and two mounted on the fuselage. In July, however, a new *Führerdirectiv* instigated the *Reichsverteidigungs* programme, which ordered all development work not concerned with

Below: An early Ar 234 screeches down the runway as it lands on its skids. Such a landing arrangement was out of the question for operational purposes, so the fuselage was widened and main wheels and a nosewheel fitted.





Above: The Junkers Ju 287, with its forward-swept wings and nose-mounted engines, was one of the more radical aircraft of World War II. This is the sole example built, the -V1 prototype. It was later captured by Soviet troops.

fighters and interceptors to be stopped, and accordingly no further progress was made with the Ju 287 V2, though the Ju 287 VI continued to fly occasional tests. Tn March 1945, the project was suddenly revived and the Ju 287 ordered into production. Construction of the Ju 287 V2 recommenced, and plans were made for a -V3, with a pressurised three-man cockpit, 4000kg (88001b) bombload, and remotely controlled guns, to be powered by four Heinkel Oil engines of 1300kg (28661b) thrust. Two Jumo 012 engines of 2780kg (61201b) thrust or two BMW 018 engines of 3400kg (74801b) thrust (neither of which had actually been completed) were posited as an alternative. Both the Ju 287 VI and the still-incomplete -V2 fell into Soviet hands in May 1945; the former was flown as found, while the latter was completed with swept-back wings and is said to have achieved speeds of around 1000km/h (620mph). Hans Wocke later produced a civil aircraft, the HFB 320 'Hansa', with a swept-forward wing.

THE He 162 'SPATZ'/'SALAMANDER'

By 1944, with the situation looking increasingly black for Germany, there was a vocal school of thought which advocated the development of almost disposable weapons, to be used, in the last resort, by barely trained personnel. Rather more practical was a design which Heinkel produced in response to an RLM requirement for the *Volksjäger* (People's Fighter), a cheap and expendable fighter aircraft weighing less than 2000kg (44001b), to be powered by a single BMW 003 jet engine, with an endurance of 30 minutes and an armament of two 30mm cannon. This craft was to be flown by volunteers from the Hitlerjugend. Design studies were 'invited' from Arado,

Blohm & Voss, Focke-Wulf, Junkers, Heinkel and Messerschmitt on 8 September 1944, to be considered a week later; the prototype aircraft was to fly before the year's end.

Only Messerschmitt declined the invitation. The Blohm & Voss design (P.211) was considered the best, but for some reason, the Heinkel submission (P. 1073) was chosen, placing the engine in a nacelle mounted atop the fuselage; the engine discharged its exhaust between twin rudders, and by that means avoided all the problems of intake and exhaust ducting. By 23 September, a mock-up had been built and work began on the prototype the following day (six days before an official order was delivered). By 29 October a set of final drawings had been produced. Almost amazingly, the prototype flew for the first time on 6 December - three weeks before the deadline - but on a second flight on 10 December it crashed during a high-speed low-level pass, killing its pilot, Flugkapitän Peters, when the starboard wing disintegrated. It was later discovered that a fault in the formulation of the phenolic resin used to bond the plywood from which the wings were fabricated had caused the failure.

By the year's end, a variety of faults in stability had shown up in the second prototype, though these were all cured by mid-January (even if only to the point where an experienced pilot could fly the aircraft; it was still very much of a handful for a novice, though the same was true of the Me 262). By the end of the month, weapons' testing had shown that it would be necessary to replace the 30mm MK 108 with the 20mm MK 151. With that, the Heinkel 162 'Spatz' ('Sparrow', as it was called within the firm; it later became known semi-officially as the 'Salamander') went into production at most of the existing Junkers and Heinkel factories (where the duralumin semi-monocoque fuselage was constructed) and in small furniture factories, where the wings and tail assemblies were produced. Final assembly took place at the Heinkel works at Rostock-Marienehe, at the Junkers works at Bernburg, and at the vast underground factory of 'Mittelwerke GmbH' near Nordhausen. Once again, it was too late, of course, though some 275 aircraft were actually completed and around 800 more were ready for assembly. The *Volksjäger* rarely saw combat, though it was claimed that



Above: The Heinkel He 162, the 'People's Fighter', was to have been operated by barely trained volunteers from the ranks of the Hitler Youth, but it proved very difficult to fly.

Below: The He 162A was straight winged, but designs were drawn up for a version with swept-back wings and another with forward-swept wings. Neither was built.

HEINKEL He 162

Type: Single-seat interceptor fighter
Length: 9.05m (29.71ft)
Span: 7.20m (23.625ft)
Max take-off weight: 2700kg (5952lb)

Max speed: 835km/h (519mph) at 6000m (19,700ft)
Range: 1000km (620 miles)
Armament: 2 x 30mm MK 108 or
2 x 20mm MG 151 cannon



one aircraft - in the hands of Leutnant Rudolf Schmitt of 1/JG 1 based at Leek near the Danish border in Schleswig-Holstein - did shoot down a low-flying RAF Typhoon on 4 May 1945 (the claim was not allowed; the credit went to a nearby flak unit instead) and one was shot down, killing the pilot. Nine other members of JG 1 died and five were injured in flying accidents during conversion from the Fw 190; the He 162 was still very unforgiving. Post-war evaluation by Allied air forces indicated that with a little more development work, it would have been entirely viable, however, and would almost certainly have made a considerable impact, if only it had been available 12 - or even 6 - months earlier.

THE EMERGENCY FIGHTER PROGRAMME

Expedients like the *Volksjäger* were not the only option under consideration in mid-1944. It was becoming increasingly obvious to the Luftwaffe's

Below: He 162 components were manufactured all over Germany and sent to three central locations for assembly. In all, some 275 aircraft were completed, and components for around 800 more were on hand at the war's end.



High Command that it had effectively missed the boat, and that the jet and rocket-powered fighters which were about to enter service would soon be ineffective against a new generation of Allied aircraft such as the B-29 Superfortress with its 11,000m (36000ft) plus ceiling. Just before the end of the year, Kneymeyer issued a specification for a new generation fighter to all the principal producers, with the stipulation that the aircraft should be powered by the HeS Oil engine. Roughly, the performance parameters were a top speed in-level flight of around 1000km/h (620mph) at 7000m (23,00()ft) and a ceiling of 14,000m (45,900ft); it was to be armed with fourMK 108 30mm cannon. By February 1945, three proposals had been received from Messerschmitt, two from Focke-Wulf and one each from Blohm & Voss, Heinkel and Junkers. On the last day of the month, a selection committee sat and chose Focke-Wulf's Project T to go into development as the Ta 183.

THE FOCKE-WULF Ta 183

The two projects from Kurt Tank's design department were the work of a man who has been described as the most important aerodynamicist in Germany at the time, Hans Multhopp. They were essentially similar in character: a fuselage which was no more than a shroud for the single engine, its intake duct and exhaust tube, with the pressurised cockpit and weaponry sited above it, which was to be supported on stubby swept-back shoulder wings (constant-chord in Project I, variable-chord in Project II), with a tail unit cantilevered out behind. The tail unit itself was the factor which differentiated the designs. That of Project I was entirely innovatory: a T-tail, with the horizontal control surfaces located at its upper end; that of Project II was conventional, with the tailplane located low down. Otherwise, considerable attention was paid to ease of manufacture with the sort of resources which could be expected to be available, and the result of that was a projection that each aircraft would require a total of 2500 man-hours (the Me 262 probably never got far below 10,000). No single Ta 183 was ever built, Focke-Wulf's factories having been overrun by late April, but it is widely held that the Soviet Army took a complete set of plans, and the design team of Mikoyan and Gurevich is said to have used them as the basis for the MiG-15, powered by a Russian copy of the British Rolls-Royce 'Nene' turbojet engine. SAAB in Sweden later produced a very similar-looking aircraft as its SAAB-29, this time powered by a copy of the de Havilland 'Ghost'.

THE MESSERSCHMITT P. 1101

Another of the aircraft entered for the Emergency Fighter Competition was also to form the basis of a type built elsewhere, but this time rather more openly. The Messerschmitt company had in fact anticipated the need for a replacement for the Me 262 (who was in a better position to know that aircraft's limitations?) and construction of a prototype to replace it, designed by Woldemar Voigt, had begun in July 1944 as the P. 1101. This was in one particular a remarkable aircraft, for it was constructed chiefly to determine the best angle of wing sweep; its variable-chord wings could be reset (on the ground, not in flight) to any angle between 35 and 45 degrees. Otherwise, the aircraft was conventional in the new mould, with a single engine located deep within the fuselage and exhausting below the extension boom which supported the tail assembly.

The prototype was about 80 per cent complete when it was discovered by the Americans on their arrival in Oberammergau, and it was put on display in the open along with other 'interesting' developments from the Messerschmitt studio. It was still there, deteriorating rapidly, when it was spotted by Robert Woods, Chief Designer at Bell Aircraft, who contrived to have it sent it to the United States, where it was eventually restored and completed, with the help of Voigt himself, as a non-flying mock-up. It formed the basis for the first ever variablc-geometry-winged aircraft, the Bell X-5, the sweep angle of which could be changed in flight to one of three pre-sets: 20, 40 and 60 degrees. This aircraft made its first flight on 20 June 1951, the geometry of the wing being varied in flight for the first time on 15 July.

THE MESSERSCHMITT P. 1110 AND P. 1111

The other two submissions Messerschmitt made were less well developed but somewhat more radical. The P. 11 10 did away with the nose air intake, locating the engine much further back in the airframe, with the duct openings on the fuselage shoulders, just forward of the trailing edges of the constant-chord swept wings. The P. 1 1 1 1 was more adventurous: an all-wing design of near-delta planform with a heavily swept tail fin and rudder, the air intakes of which were located in the forward part of the wing roots. A proposal submitted too late for the competition was a variant of this design, with a wing of narrower chord and a butterfly tail. Under ideal circumstances, all three designs would probably have been built in prototype form and flown against each other, but as it

DORNIER Do 335

Type: Single-seat fighter-bomber
Length: 13.85m (45.44ft)
Span: 13.80m (45.28ft)
Take-offweight: 9600kg (21,164lb)

Max speed: 765km/h (475mph) at 6500m (21,325ft)
Range: 2060km (1280 miles}
Armament: 1 x 30mm MK 103 cannon; 2 x 15mm MG 151 machine guns



was, none ever progressed beyond a partially completed wooden mock-up.

Above: Besides its 30mm forward-firing cannon and 15mm machine guns, the Do 335 could carry a 1000kg (2200lb) bombload, half in its weapons bay and half on hardpoints situated beneath its wings.

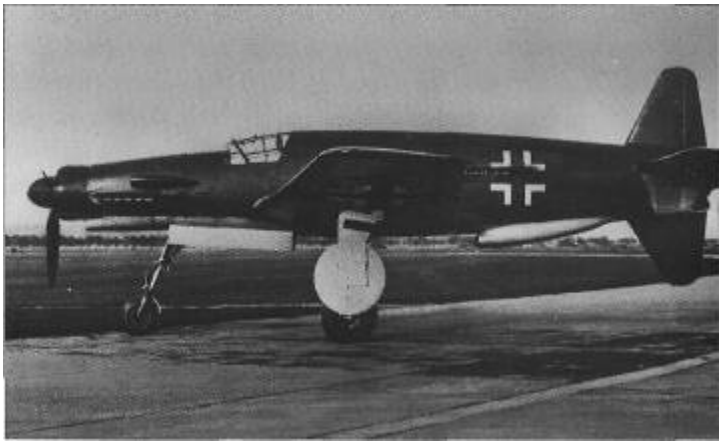
THE OTHER CONTENDERS

The other submissions to the Emergency Fighter Competition were all tailless designs too, which goes to show, perhaps, how far that concept had been accepted in Germany by the end of 1944. Of these designs, Blohm & Voss's P. 212 was perhaps the most radical, with twin stubby fins and rudders at the wingtips, supporting a winglet - half a tailplane,in fact - the rear surfaces of which formed elevators and also acted as additional ailerons. Like all Blohm & Voss's late wartime designs, the P. 212 was the work of the Director of Development, Dr Richard Vogt, who is credited with something like 200 different ideas for new aircraft, virtually none of which even made it to prototype. The design Heinkel submitted as P. 1078C was for a more straightforward flying wing. The wing itself was to have had considerable anhedral, with the tips turned down through 40 degrees over their last 5()cm (20in) or so.

The Junkers P. 128 had a more conventional wing planform, wider but with a narrower aspect-ratio and set at shoulder height, although it had its engine intake ducts located under the wing at about halfway through their chord length. It had fin lets with rudders, located about halfway between wing root and wingtip, which protruded both above and below the wing surface. All this was the work of Heinrich Hertel, a comparative newcomer to Junkers who, until 1939, had worked with Heinkel on the He 176 and the He 178. He left Heinkel largely, we are told, because he had little faith in rocket power, so it was somewhat ironic that he was given the job of re-designing the Me 163 'Komet' (qv) to produce the Ju 248.

Cursory though this analysis has been, we have touched upon all the major German aircraft manufacturers save two: Dornier and Henschel. Claudius Dornier was, if anything, more conservative than even Tank or Hugo Junkers, and would have nothing to do with jet propulsion. His main contribution to aviation innovation lay in his development of a twin-engined fighter-bomber with its powerplants in a single axis:

Below: The Dornier Do 335 'Pfeil' was potentially the fastest piston-engined aircraft ever built, with one 1800bhp Daimler-Benz DB 603 engine in the nose and another in the tail.





Above: Total production of the 'Pfeil' ('Arrow'} remained small, butthat did not prevent the German Air Ministry from ordering prototypes in configurations to satisfy a variety of roles.

one in the nose, driving a tractor propeller; the other in the tail, driving a pusher. The Do 335 'Pfeil' ('Arrow', known unofficially as the 'Ameisenbär' - 'Anteater') was potentially the fastest piston-engined aircraft ever built, yet still exhibited most of the manoeuvrability of a single-engined fighter. It showed no bad manners when flying on only one engine, and could even take off with one inoperative. The only drawback to the arrangement was that it required special measures to abandon the aircraft in an emergency. The rear propeller and upper tail fin were jettisoned, then the canopy was blown off before the pilot could attempt to bale out (though at least one example was fitted with an ejection seat, the first in operational service). Initially, there was considerable resistance to its development from the RLM for the somewhat inconclusive reason that Dornier built not fighters but bombers, and the company had to undertake to build an intruder version before permission to continue with the project was forthcoming. The first prototype made its maiden flight in September 1943, powered by two ISOOhp DB 603 engines. By the end of the war, a version with 2100hp engines was flying. Several proposals were in process of consideration at the war's end, including swapping the rear engine for an HeS 011 turbojet and linking two aircraft together by means of a short central wing section, like the Heinkel He 111Z 'Zwilling' (Twin'; see Chapter Three). Henschel's most important work was to be done in the Held of guided weapons, though the company did propose a turbojet-powered dive-bomber,



Above: Despite its appearance, the Heinkel He 177 was actually a four-engined bomber - each nacelle housed a pair of Daimler-Benz DB 601 engines, each producing 1000bhp, linked to a single propeller.

the Hs 132, which was very well received by RLM. It was somewhat similar in form to the He 162, with a single turbojet mounted in a nacelle above the fuselage and a similar tail assembly (the similarities were not accidental), with a narrow-diameter cigar-shaped fuselage just big enough to accept a pilot in the prone position. The company also worked on a contender for the Emergency Fighter Competition, the Hs 135, with a compound delta wing like that later incorporated into the SAAB 'Draken'.

THE GERMAN HEAVY BOMBERS

Of course, jet and rocket engines powered only a small minority of the new aircraft produced in Germany during World War II. Most of them had 'conventional' piston engines, but the development of these aircraft, too, was far from smooth. During the first three years of the war, at least, German aero-engine manufacturers failed to come up with really powerful piston engines and that caused airframe designers to adopt some quite novel solutions to the problem of attaining high performance levels, both in fighter aircraft and in the elusive heavy/strategic bomber development programme.

Even though the Luftwaffe was a tactical, close-support air force, there was a programme aimed at developing a strategic bomber during the early years of the Third Reich. This resulted in the development of aircraft such as the Junkers Ju 89/Ju 90 and the stillborn Dornier Do 19, but it died with the Luftwaffe Chief of Staff, General Wever, in a plane crash on 3 June 1936, and was not resurrected until halfway through World War II. Even at that relatively late date, there was no suitable powerplant available for aircraft capable of carrying a 2000kg (44001b) bombload to a target 1600km (1000 miles) away at a speed of 500km/h (310mph), and the solution adopted was to couple two engines together to turn a single propeller. The choice fell on the lOOObhp DB 601, linked to form the DB 606 (and later variants had more power, culminating in the DB 613, which had 3600hp available for take-off, with water injection and emergency boost). It was a far from satisfactory solution, and for a long time, the 'siamesed' engines tended to overheat and first vaporise and then ignite petrol in adjacent fuel tanks, with disastrous results.

Both the most important heavy bomber projects - the Heinkel He 177 'Greif ('Griffon') and the Junkers Ju 288C - had pairs of siamesed engines as their powerplant. They were designed to carry both conventional bombloads in internal bays and external racks but also guided glider bombs such as the 'Fritz-X' or the Henschel Hs 293 (see Chapter Seven); odd

suggestions for the Ju 288C included some other, more outlandish features, such as fitting it with the Düsenkanone 280 or the Gerät 104 'Munchhausen', single-shot guns of 28cm and 35.5cm calibre respectively (see Chapter Six). The Ju 388, which had even better performance, was planned as both a heavy bomber and a bomber destroyer, using Hs 298 and Ruhrstahl X-4 guided air-to-air missiles, and was also to have been employed in towing the Me 328 pulse-jet-boosted glider fighter to operational altitude. The only one built in significant numbers was the He 177, over 1000 of which were produced. One was modified to carry the German atomic bomb and many were fitted with forward-firing 5cm and 7.5cm anti-tank guns to be deployed on the Eastern Front. However, it was never entirely successful, even after five years of development. The Ju 288 did not get past the prototype stage. Some 65 Ju 388s of all types were built.

A high-altitude reconnaissance version of the He 177 was developed, powered by four (separate) DB 610 engines of 1750hp and with a new high aspect-ratio wing and a new twin fin tail. Known as the He 274, the prototype was built in Paris at the old Farman works, which were overrun in July 1944 before it could be completed. It was finished by the French and flown from December 1945. An improved version of the bomber, also with four separate engines and a twin fin tail, was built as the He 277, but only eight were completed before the Emergency Fighter Programme was put into effect on 3 July 1944.



Above: Like so many German aircraft projects, the He 177 was a case of 'too little, too late'. By the time it was ready to go into production, the Luftwaffe had little chance of operating a strategic bomber with any degree of success.

THE 'AMERIKABOMBER'

Although they were developed in considerable secrecy, these aircraft do not really meet our criteria for secret weapons, though some 'conventional' piston-



Below: The sole example of the Me 264, the original 'Amerikabomber', first flew in December 1942. Such close attention was paid to its aerodynamic properties that the joints in the wings and fuselage were filled with putty.

engined bombers do. The Luftwaffe, we may recall, was intended as a tactical, rather than a strategic, air force, unlike the USAAF and the RAF, and it never operated really large, long-range bomber aircraft, like the American B-17 Flying Fortress or B-24 Liberator, or the British Lancaster, in any substantial numbers. It had aircraft, like the Focke-Wulf FW 200 'Condor' and the Junkers Ju 290 (though the former was designed as a civilian airliner and the latter was a hasty transformation of another), which were capable of flying very long distances, but these were intended primarily for ultra-long-range maritime reconnaissance, and while they did carry bombs (and variants of both carried glider bombs), they were unsuitable for use in combat conditions. Thus, when the USA declared war on Germany in December 1941, the Luftwaffe found itself without the means of attacking its new-found enemy, and the RLM immediately issued a specification for a suitable aircraft.

Three companies responded: Focke-Wulf with the Ta 400; Messerschmitt with the Me 264; and Junkers with the Ju 390. The Ta 400 was never built; the latter, which was little more than a Ju 290 stretched in wings and fuselage with two more engines, was reasonably straightforward, and the first prototype flew in August 1943. The second protype had a still longer fuselage and carried FuG 200 Hohentweil search radar and five 20mm cannon. On a test flight from Mont de Marsan on the Atlantic coast of France, near Bordeaux, it once approached to within 20km (12.4 miles) of New York before returning safely to base, thus validating the operational concept. A third prototype, this time a version able to carry 1800kg (39701b) of bombs, was begun but never completed.

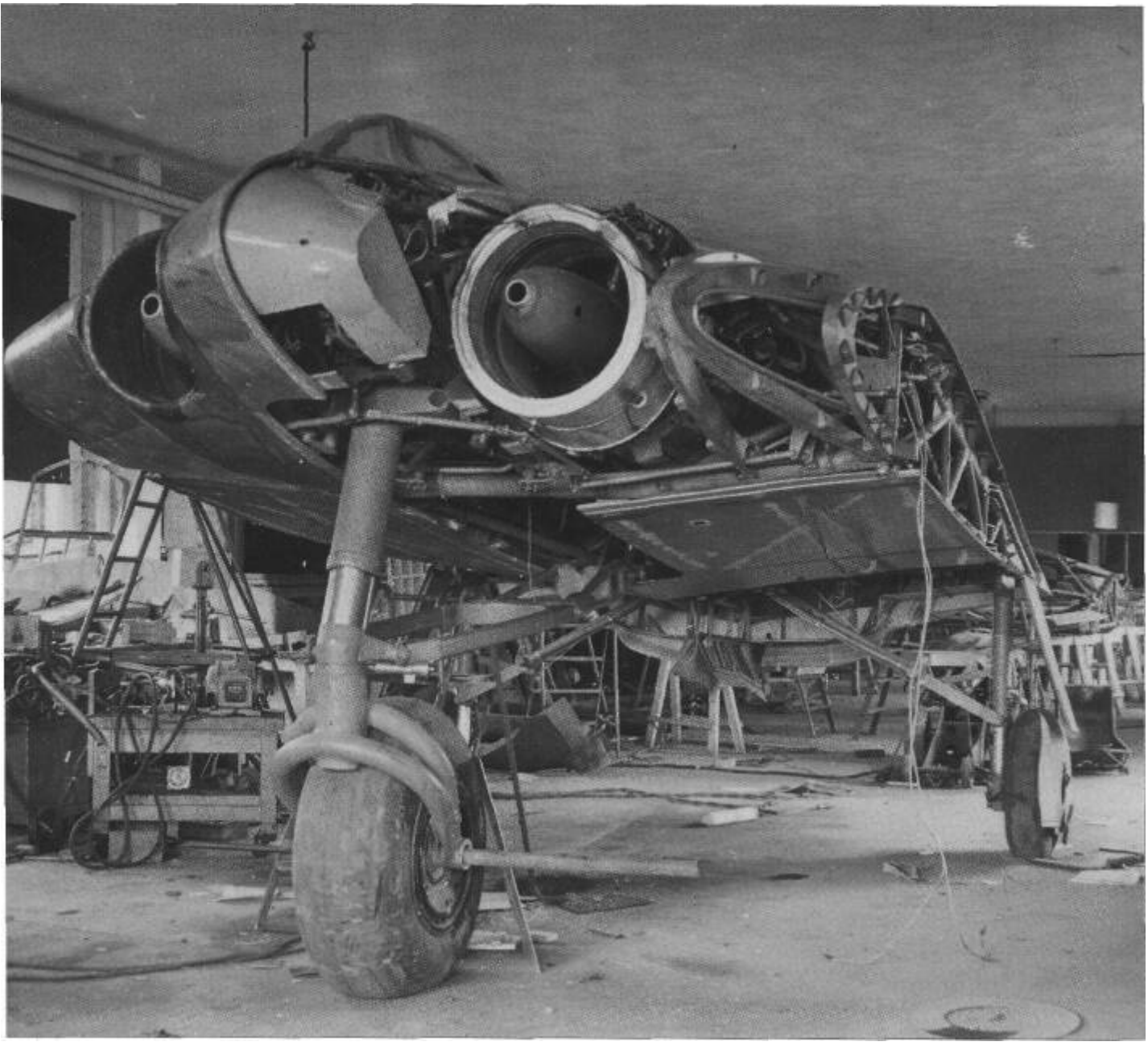
In fact, certain individuals at the RLM had begun to contemplate the possibility of bombing New York long before the United States entered the war, and Willy Messerschmitt for one had begun to think about a design for a suitable aircraft. His company was thus well placed to satisfy the requirement when it was issued in December 1941, and the prototype Me 264 made its first flight just 12 months later. With enough fuel to reach New York and return safely (a flight of anything up to 30 hours!), it could carry 3000kg (66001b) of bombs, and still had enough capacity to carry 1000kg (22001b) of armour plating. It had two complete three-man crews with a sleeping area and galley, and an elaborate defensive armament of four 13mm machine guns and two 20mm cannon. Under overload conditions, the aircraft could be fitted with up to six solid fuel rockets to assist it to take off. A bewildering array of variants and variations were suggested, including one to tow an Me 328 glider fighter for protection, and another which would have been the flying testbed for a steam turbine powerplant. Two prototypes were begun; the first was destroyed in an air raid just as it was about to begin ground tests, but the second was completed and flew, being allocated to Transportstaffel 5, which operated other large aircraft types in the transport role. A version with greater wingspan and six engines was contemplated, but never produced. Thus the first round of the 'Amerikabomber' contest made no more than a token impact, but there was to be a second, as we shall see.

THE '3x1000' BOMBERS

Focke-Wulf, which produced the best German piston-engined single-seater fighter-bomber of the war, the Fw 190, had a genius in its Technical Director, Kurt Tank, but a very conservative one. As a result, the company was a latecomer to jet propulsion; too late, indeed, to see any Focke-Wulf jet fly in other than prototype form. One of those jets - the Fw Ta 183 (qv) - was to prove to be very influential indeed to post-war development. In 1943, however, the company did produce a series of designs to an in-house requirement known as '3x1000' for an aircraft to deliver a 1000kg (22001b) bombload to a target 1000km (620 miles) away at a speed of 1000km/h (620mph). The first two designs had swept wings, one of variable chord and one of fixed chord, and a conventional tail assembly, but the third, which was much more radical in nature, was for a tailless 'flying wing', and shows very clearly the influence of Alexander Lippisch, who acted as a consultant to Tank from time to time. None of the designs was ever realised. Messerschmitt proposed a design to meet the same requirement, the P. 1107, which had moderately swept-back wings and a butterfly tail. Two basically similar designs were projected, the second of them with much greater range, but neither was realised.

THE HORTEN BROTHERS

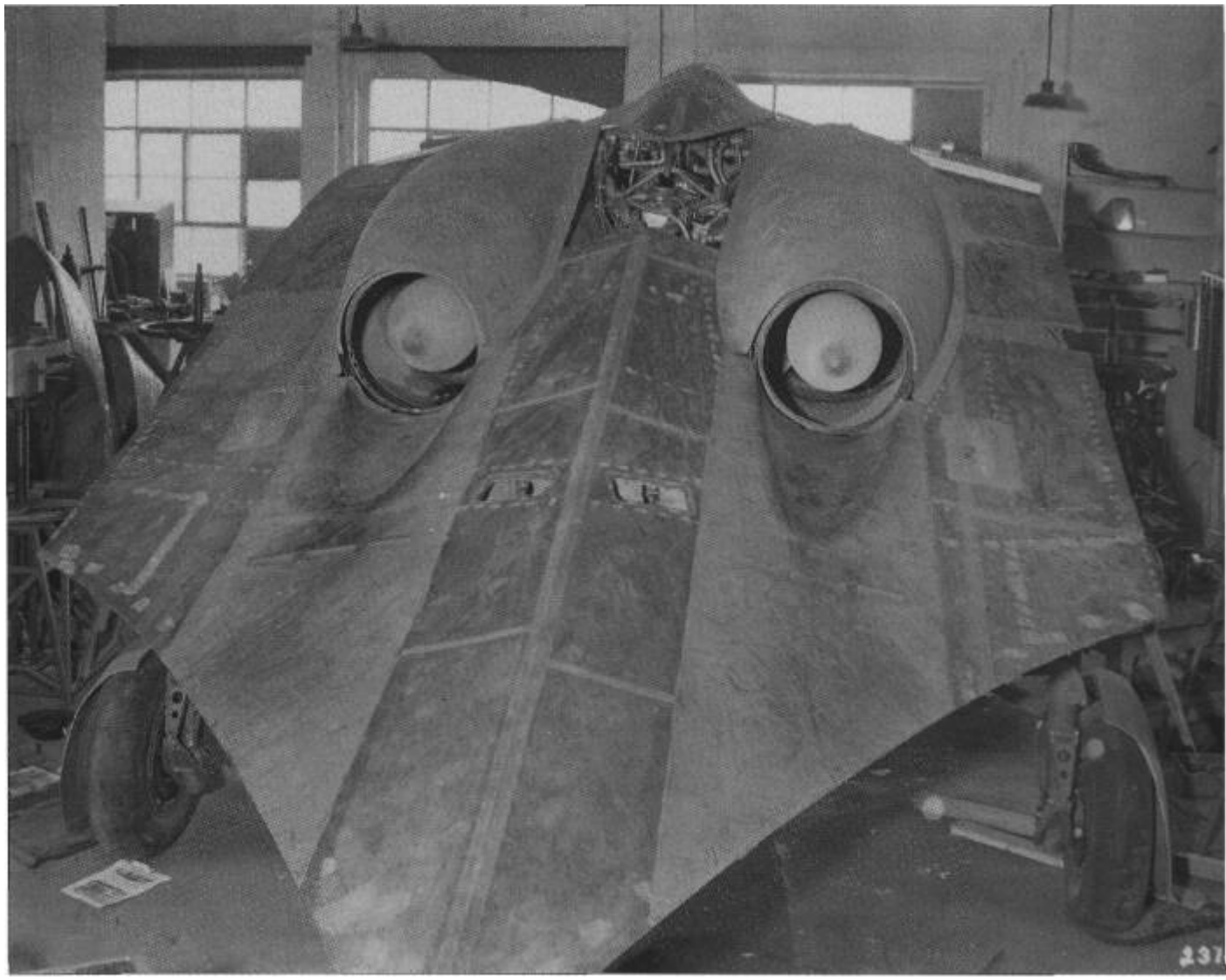
The second of those two aircraft, the P. 1107B, would probably never have had trans-Atlantic range, but during the plan's currency the prospect of bombing the United States - which was now heavily involved in the war against Germany, on the ground in Italy and in the air from bases in the UK - reared up again. Once again, design proposals for an appropriate aircraft were solicited; this time a very different profile emerged, and one which shows just how far aerody-



Above: The first prototype of the Horten Ho IX was completed as a glider, but the second was fitted with twin Jumo 004B engines and logged speeds in excess of 800krn/h (SOOmph). The Ho IX became the Gotha Go 229.

namics had progressed in Germany. The three main contenders were all of delta wing planform, which was clearly emerging as the shape of things to come, either with or without vertical tail surfaces. Alexander Lippisch was by no means alone in advocating it: the Horten brothers, Walter and Reimar, were just as committed and had been producing flying examples of delta wing aircraft, both gliders and powered aircraft, since the early 1930s.

The Mortens' first glider had been a wide delta, with its leading edge swept back at 24 degrees and its trailing edge straight, but the Ho II had its trailing edges swept back, too. Four examples of the latter were built as gliders, and then one was fitted with a 6()hp Hirth motor driving a pusher propeller. Thanks to Walter Morten's friendship with Ernst Udet, the Luftwaffe procurement chief, this was put through a quasi-official trial at the hands of one of the best-respected test pilots of the day, Hanna Reitsch. She reported that its handling characteristics were favourable, that it was not vulnerable to spin or stall,



Above: Gotha engineers had misgivings about the ultimate stability of the Go 229, and planned to halt the programme. They were overtaken by events, however, and produced only one prototype, with four more under construction.

but that it was not very manoeuvrable. A series of designs, each better executed and more radical than the last (and each of them tailless), followed, and by the time of the Ho V, power had become the norm. By 1940, the Hortcns were operating a Luftwaffe design studio known as 'Sonderkommando 9' at Göttingen, and soon produced plans for the Ho VIII (a 60-seat transport aircraft, powered by six pusher propellers), and the Ho IX, a turbojet fighter with twin Jumo 004B engines. The first prototype of the latter was completed as a glider, and the second as a powered aircraft. It was destroyed in an enforced single-engine landing, but not before it had logged speeds in excess of 800km/h (500mph). It was to go into production as the Gotha Go 229, with four MK 103 30mm cannon and a 1000kg (22001b) bombload. Only one prototype, with the more powerful Jumo 004C engine, was completed before the war's end, though four more were begun. Calculations suggest that the Go 229 would have had a top speed of over 1000km/h (620mph) and indeed, it was presented to Hermann Goring as a contender for the '3x1000' project, but engineers at Gothaer Waggonfabrik were far from happy with its straight-line stability as it had a tendency to 'Dutch roll', yawing around the vertical Z axis while rolling from side to side around the X axis. The engineers planned to halt construction after the sixth prototype. The Hortens agreed, and produced a new design with a very pronounced, almost exaggerated, V-shaped fin, the leading edge of which came almost to the nose and included the cockpit. Lippisch

HORTEN Ho IX (GOTHA Go 229)

Type: Single-seat fighter-bomber
Length: 7.47m (24.51ft)
Span: 16.78m (55.05ft)
Max take-off weight: 8500kg (18,740lb)

Max speed (projected): 1000km/h (620mph) at 6100m (20,015ft)
Range: N/A
Armament (projected): 4 x 30mm MK 103 cannon; 2000kg (4400lb) bombload



Above: The Ho IX/Go 229 would probably have been capable of speeds in level flight in excess of 1000km/h (620mph), which would have made it by far the fastest production aircraft of its day.

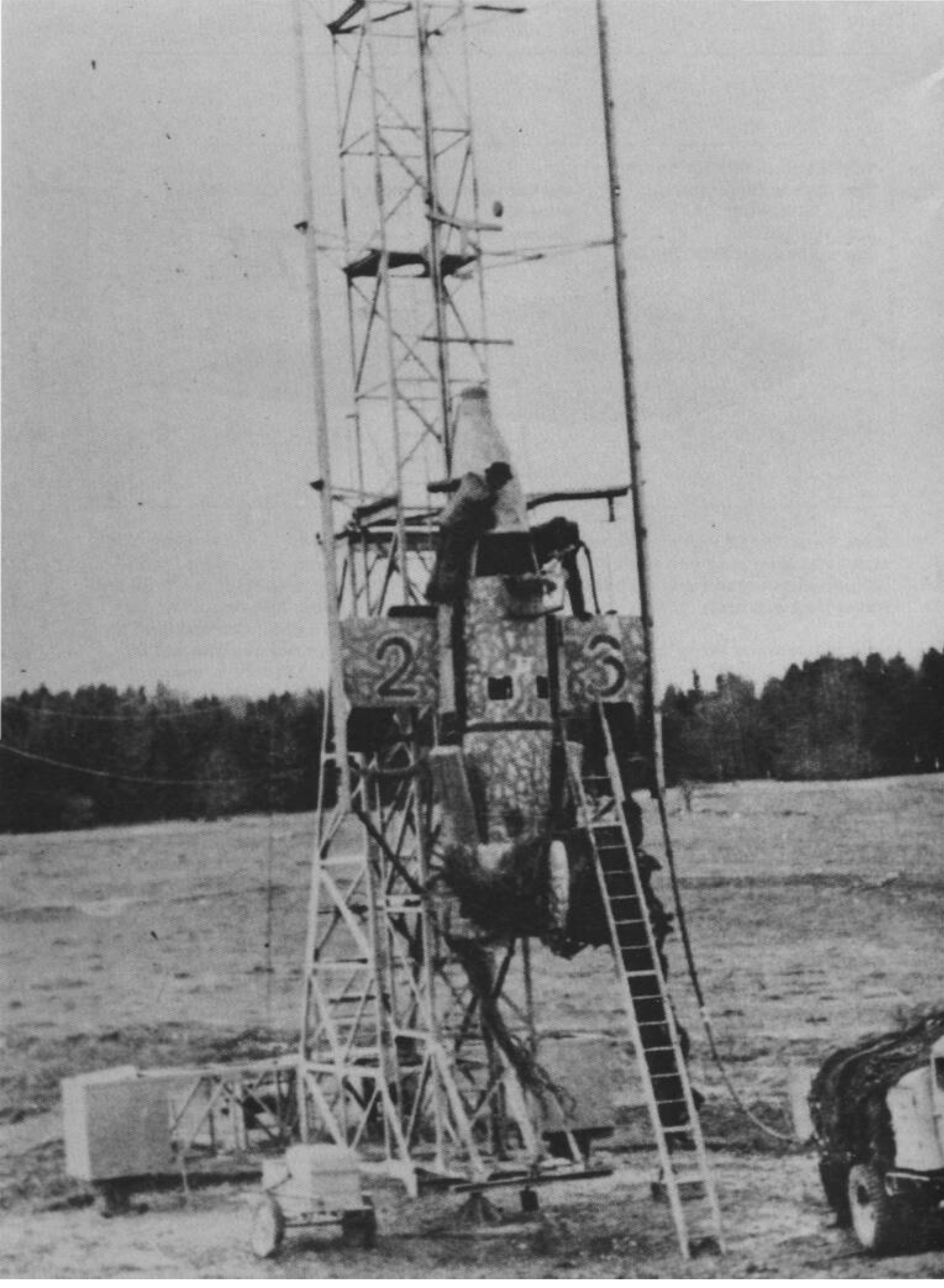
produced several very similar designs. But the Hortens did not give up the tailless concept either, and also produced for a single-engine interceptor, though by the time they reached the third evolution, this, too, had become a delta with a conventional fin tail.

RE-ENTER THE 'AMERIKABOMBER'

By the time the Ho IX/Go 229 project was underway, the RLM had resurrected the 'Amerikabomber' programme, but the planemakers selected - Arado, Focke-Wulf, Heinkel, Junkers and Messerschmitt - had made little progress. Siegfried Kneymeyer then contacted the Hortens and asked them to turn their attention to a bomber with trans-Atlantic range. Not surprisingly, they came up with a flying wing, essentially an enlarged Ho IX, which they called the P. 18. All the would-be contenders were summoned to a conference at the RLM in February 1945, and the Horten design was selected for production. The brothers were instructed to work with designers from Junkers and Messerschmitt, but the proposed consortium soon fell apart when more conservative elements insisted on adding a large fin and hinged rudder to the design. Reimar Horten then went directly to Goring with a modified plan for the P. 18B, employing four HeS 011 engines in place of six Jumo 004s or BMW 003s, saving 1000kg (22001b) with little loss of thrust. The aircraft, he confidently predicted, would have a range of 11,000km (6835 miles) at 850km/h (530 mph) and fly at an altitude of 16,000m (52,500ft) with a 4000kg (88001b) bombload. He was told to go ahead and build it, but by that time the war had only 10 weeks to run and it is doubtful whether detailed plans were drawn up, though they may have been later, as both brothers continued to work in aviation for the rest of their lives, Walter eventually becoming a leading light in the new Luftwaffe, Reimar in the aircraft industry in Argentina.

THE JUNKERS P. 130/P. 140

Junkers had, in addition to Hans Wocke, two other extremely talented designers in Ernst Zindel and Heinrich Hertel. These three soon responded to the new-found interest in all-wing aircraft and proposed one such of their own as Project 130. It is suggested that Hertel had produced the Ju 287 design only as a means of gaining experience in the sort of aerodynamics required by the P. 130, but it is worth bearing in mind that he had acquired some relevant experience with the Ju 322 (see Chapter Three). Similar in character to the Hortens' P. 18B, the P. 130 had a shorter range (around 5800km; 3600 miles), and was apparently intended to operate against targets in Soviet Asia and in England from bases in Prussia. The 'committee-modified' version of the P. 18A, with the addition of the long triangular tail fin, became the Junkers P. 140, with the range to carry 4.06 tonnes (4 tons) of bombs to New York. Like the P. 18B, it was ordered into production, but work had hardly begun before the underground factory in the Harz mountains where it was to have been built was overrun.


2
3

CHAPTER TWO

Rocket-powered Aircraft

Rocket-propelled interceptor aircraft were very attractive to the German Air Ministry, for they seemed to offer a realistic possibility of being able to threaten the high-flying Allied bombers which, by 1944, were decimating the country's industrial base. This was particularly true since they did not require fossil fuel, which was in very short supply by that time, and could be constructed cheaply, largely from plywood; a considerable effort was put into developing such aircraft, but ultimately to no avail.



Had we been considering the history of thrust-powered flight in something like chronological order, rather than in terms of the impact the new technology had on the course of aviation in World War IT, we would have examined the rocket before the jet. In fact, there is little conflict here, for the first effective demonstrations of the two types occurred almost simultaneously and in the same place: in the last months before the outbreak of war, at Ernst Heinkel's factory at Rostock-Marienehe. While neither type was actually conceived as a weapons platform, and even though neither did what was hoped of it, thanks to a series of poor design decisions, both demand inclusion here because of the influence - both positive and negative - they exerted. We have seen how the jet-propelled He 178 was deficient because its designer failed to solve the problem of how to induct air to the engine efficiently. This, it must be said, would have been hard to foresee. The main fault of the rocket-powered He 176, on. the other hand, was glaringly obvious, at least to the cognoscenti. Unfortunately, there were few of them around in 1939.

Above: The Messerschmitt Me 163B-1 'Komet'.

Left: The Ba 349 had four solid-fuel booster rockets and a liquid fuel sustainer motor, Launched vertically, it was to have climbed to 14,000m (45,900ft) in one minute.

THEHEINKELHe176

The rocket-propelled aircraft designated the He 176 by the *Reichsluftfahrtministerium* (RLM - the German Air Ministry) was powered by a Walter Rl motor

using hydrogen peroxide. Earlier versions (more accurately, existing He 112 fighters with auxiliary motors) had used a power unit developed by Wernher von Braun (qv), which used liquid oxygen and alcohol, a rather more volatile mixture. The near-explosive decomposition of hydrogen peroxide into superheated steam when it comes into contact with a catalyst such as calcium, potassium or sodium permanganate was to become a mainstay of German propulsion programmes in a number of very different areas, as we shall see. The He 176 flew for the first time on 30 June 1939. The aircraft probably never exceeded the standard it had been designed to beat, 700km/h (435mph), which was below the world speed record of the day. It was essentially too heavy both for its powerplant and for its short, stubby wings. The RLM showed little interest in it, favouring the design which would become the Messerschmitt Me 163 'Komet' (qv). Heinkel abandoned the project.

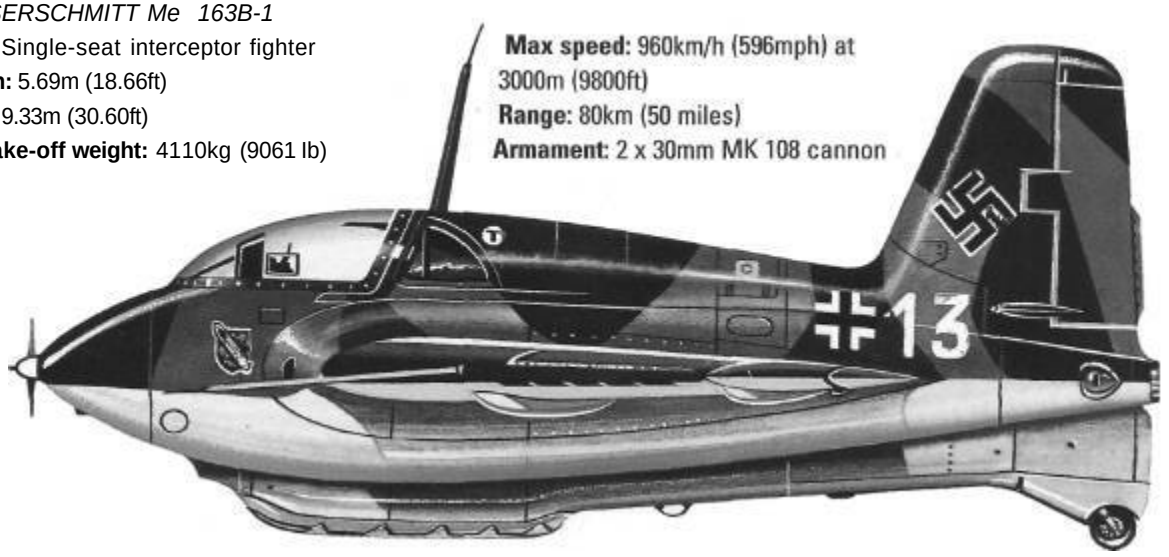
ALEXANDER LIPPISCH

Alexander Lippisch was a self-taught aerodynamicist who had worked at Zeppelin/Dornier after World War 1, then at Rhön-Rossitten-Gesellschaft (RRG - which developed gliders for meteorological research, amongst other things), and later, when RRG was absorbed into it, at the *Deutsches Forschungsinstitut für Segelflug* (DFS - German Glider Research Institute). Lippisch maintained that had Heinkel had even a narrow understanding of the nature of gliders, he would have realised that he needed a large wing area (and a small wing loading) to make an aircraft such as the He 176 fly adequately, as it had only very marginal power reserves. Instead, Heinkel had given his proto-rocket aircraft short, stubby wings which were really little more than control surfaces, and his experiments failed in direct consequence. Lippisch went further than that, of course. Like the Horten brothers, he was a staunch and unremitting advocate of the tailless, delta-pianform flying wing, and was the first to fly such a design, in 1931. Three years before that, however, Lippisch had produced a rocket-propelled glider for automobile manufacturer Fritz von Opel, who saw the new technology mostly in terms of its ability to attract crowds, but who was interested enough (and rich enough) to provide seed money for would-be pioneers. Opel lost interest in the early 1930s, after rocket-powered gliders had been the death of a number of pilots. Lippisch's 'Ente' ('Duck') became the first rocket-powered aircraft to fly, with Fritz Stammer at the controls, on 11 June 1928. By 1933, Lippisch had designed a variety of

Below: The Messerschmitt Me 163 'Komet' interceptor first went into action in August 1944. It accounted for only about a dozen Allied bombers in six or seven months.



MESSERSCHMITT Me 163B-1
Type: Single-seat interceptor fighter
Length: 5.69m (18.66ft)
Span: 9.33m (30.60ft)
Max take-off weight: 4110kg (9061 lb)
Max speed: 960km/h (596mph) at 3000m (9800ft)
Range: 80km (50 miles)
Armament: 2 x 30mm MK 108 cannon

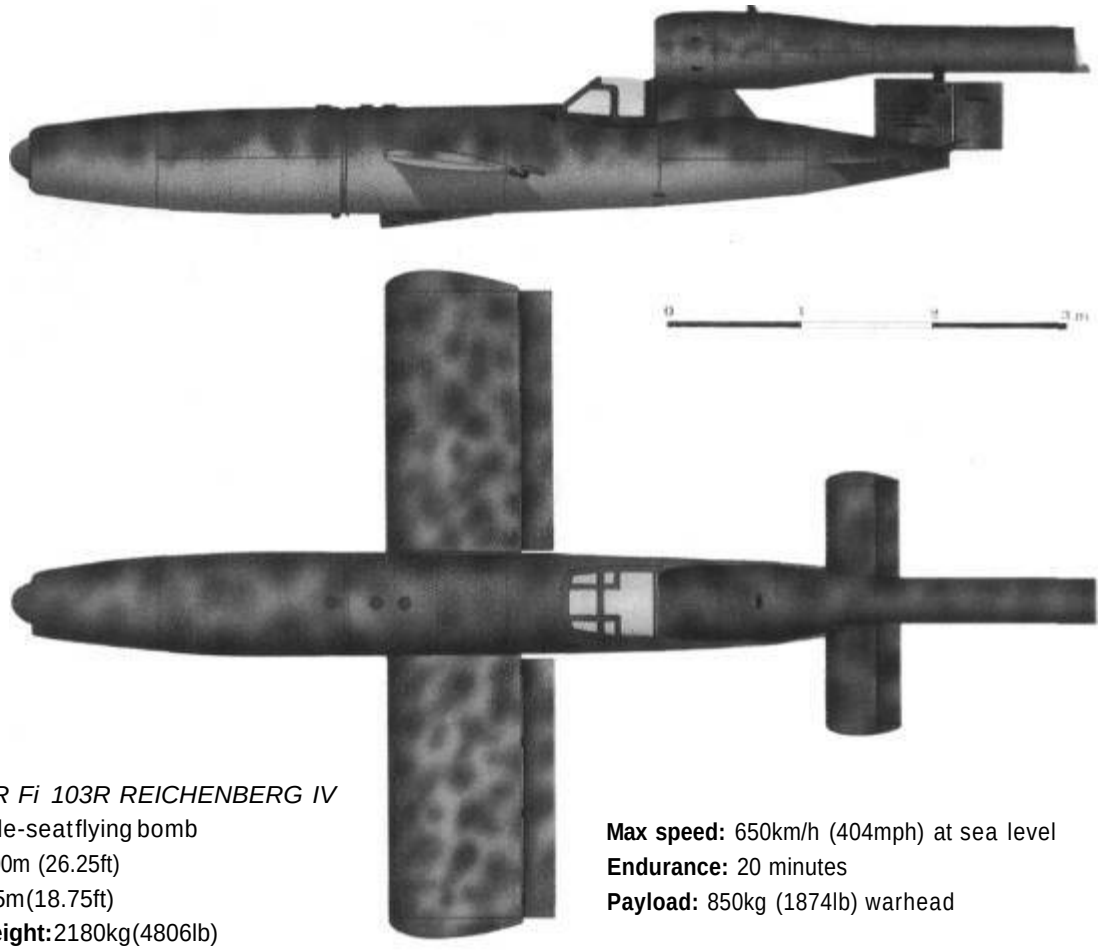


delta-wing gliders and had begun to fit small engines to them. He collaborated with Focke-Wulf and with Gerhard Fieseler, and with the latter, built the two-seat, twin-engine (pusher and tractor) Delta III 'Wespe' ('Wasp') and Delta IV, only to see both crash at the cost of one pilot's life within a fortnight. RLM promptly banned tailless aircraft, and it was some time, and then only at the urging of Professor Walter Georgii, the Director of DPS, before the ban was lifted. A modified Delta IVb followed, with the RLM designation DPS 39, and in 1939, orders were issued for the construction of a version to be powered by a Walter rocket motor. DPS built the wings, which were of near-delta planform, and Heinkel built the rest of the airframe, alongside the He 176 with which it shared its powerplant. The design's concession to the RLM was the small wingtip rudders, but after wind-tunnel testing, Lippisch concluded that these would only cause flutter and, ultimately, main spar failure. Thus, the DPS 194, its successor, acquired a single, central fin and rudder. Using as its 'fuel' T-Stoff (an 80 per cent aqueous solution of hydrogen peroxide plus oxyquinoline as a stabiliser) and Z-Stoff (an aqueous solution of sodium and potassium permanganates to promote decomposition), the Walter RI-203 rocket was to propel the prototype at speeds of up to 500km/h (310mph). It was clear from the outset that this was a major achievement and Lippisch was ordered to Messerschmitt's Augsburg research centre with his research and development team in January 1939. There the DPS 194 metamorphosed into the Messerschmitt Me 163 'Komet' ('Comet').

Above: 'White 13' - an Me 163B-1a of 1/JG 400, which operated from near Leipzig between July 1944 and April 1945, defending the Leuna-Merseburg refinery complex.

THE Me 163'KOMET'

The 'Komet', which preceded the jet-propelled Me 262 into service by a little over two months, was a radical and adventurous approach to the problem of how to defeat the heavily armed and protected bomber aircraft which were flown in formations designed to create an impenetrable defensive box. Its designation, all of them were decided by the RLM, is somewhat misleading, for Messerschmitt AG actually had little to do with its development, which remained in the hands of its creator. In the spring of 1941, the prototype of the new aircraft began gliding trials; towed to a height of up to 8000m (26,250ft), it was soon achieving speeds of up to 850km/h (530mph) while retaining a high degree of controllability, and during the summer it was sent to the rocket development establishment at Peenemiinde-West on the Baltic coast, to be fitted with a rocket motor - an improved model of the Walter Rl incorporating a degree of thrust control but still using T-Stoff and Z-Stoff as its fuel. The development programme at Peenemünde was fraught with accidents, some fatal, as time after time the volatile fuels spontaneously exploded. On one occasion, an entire building was demolished. However, it also resulted in the Me 163 VI breaking the world speed record repeatedly until the test pilot, Heini Dittmar, finally exceeded 1000km/h (620mph), almost killing himself in the



FIESELER Fi 103R REICHENBERG IV
Type: Single-seat flying bomb
Length: 8.00m (26.25ft)
Span: 5.715m (18.75ft)
Launchweight: 2180kg (4806lb)

Max speed: 650km/h (404mph) at sea level
Endurance: 20 minutes
Payload: 850kg (1874lb) warhead

Above: The Reichenberg IV, as the manned version of the VI flying bomb was known, was little more than a fantasy, though prototypes did fly.

process when the aircraft became suddenly uncontrollable as compression shock (shocks caused by airflow over the wing surface locally exceeding the speed of sound) induced negative lift and massive vibration. In the event, Dittmar managed to regain control and land successfully. The RLM, impressed, ordered prototypes of an operational aircraft, the Me 163B, to be armed with a pair of MG 151 20mm cannon and powered by a more powerful 509-A2 rocket motor using the somewhat less unpredictable combination of T-Stoff and C-Stoff (30 per cent hydrazine hydrate, 57 per cent methanol, 13 per cent water) as its fuel and producing 1500kg (33001b) of thrust. Around 2.032 tonnes (2 tons) of propellant (very nearly half the entire weight of the aircraft) was enough to take it to its operational ceiling of 12,100m (39,700ft) in 3.35 minutes, and the pilot then had a further four and a half minutes of powered flight available: thus, he would actually have been gliding, unpowered, during most of his mission.

Two Me 163B-las were handed over to a special Luftwaffe unit early in 1943 to allow pilot familiarisation to begin, though it was July before training actually commenced. The high landing speed of the 'Komet' (around 220km/h; 140mph) combined with the fact that the pilot was committed to it from the outset, having no power available to allow him to regain height for a second attempt, resulted in many accidents, most of them fatal. The first operational unit, equipped with Me 163B-la aircraft, with a pair of 30mm cannon in the wing roots and a considerable degree of armour protection for the pilot, began forming at Wittmundhaven in May 1944, and first went into action as 1/JG400 on 16 August. It scored its first success some days later, when Leutnant Hartmut Ryll downed a B-17 near Leipzig. In all, some 300 Me 163s in various versions were constructed (and rights to it were sold to Japan, where five powered and over

50 unpowered versions were built before the war's end), but the aircraft was only a very limited success, accounting, it is believed, for little more than 12 American B-17s. An improved version, known originally as the Ju 248, was produced at Junkers and then taken over by Messerschmitt as the Me 263. It was somewhat larger, had a wheeled undercarriage rather than skids, and was powered by a Walter 509C motor. It was produced in prototype form only.

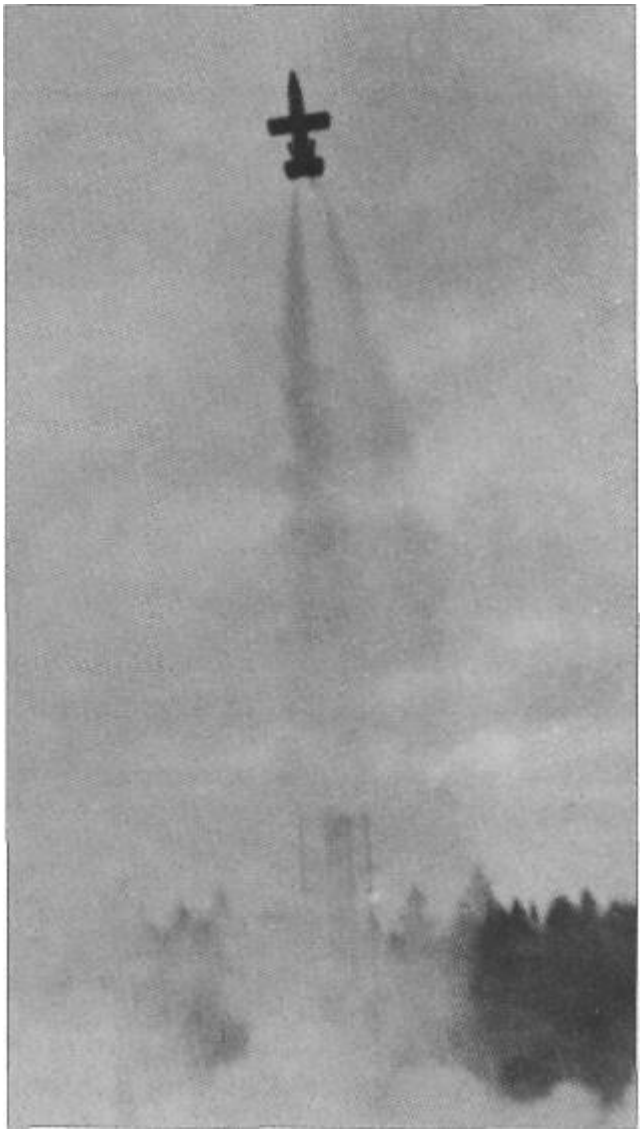
THE SELBSTOPFERMÄNNER FIGHTERS

In fact, like the Me 262, the 'Komet' was too little, too late. So desperate was the situation in Germany by the summer of 1944 that individual fighter pilots had taken to ramming Allied bombers, and units such as IV/JG3 and TI/JG300 were formed as *Sturmgruppen* (assault groups) with that as an accepted fall-back tactic using Fw 190A-8/R2s fitted with frontal armour. They had a measure of success: between 7 July 1944 and the end of March 1945, when they ceased to operate, they accounted for around 500 Allied bombers, but only 10 of them by ramming. In April 1945, Sonderkommando Elbe was formed from volunteers; they trained for 10 days in ramming tactics, and then went into action. In all, they rammed and downed eight, but at a high cost to themselves: a total of 77 Bf 109s and Fw 190s. If such potentially self-sacrificial *Selb-Stopfermänner* tactics were to be employed, then clearly a much less sophisticated aircraft, using little in the way of strategic materials, could be employed instead of some of the best piston-engined fighters of the entire period.

At this point we need to take a very short diversion to consider the nature of *Selbstopfermänner* tactics. It was never the stated intention to require or even ask aircrew to commit suicide in Germany in the way that it was in Japan, and great pains were taken to maintain that the very reverse was actually the case. The *Selbstopfermänner* were expected only to employ their aircraft as weapons in the last resort (though recruits to the *Sturmgruppen* were required to take an oath that they would indeed do this if necessary), and to make every effort to ensure that the attack left them with the possibility of escape. As will be noted when discussing the manned Fi 103s, the possibilities of this happening were remote, and it must be concluded that there was a secret agenda, and that the men (and women; Hanna Reitsch was an advocate of such tactics) concerned knew exactly what they were being called upon to do, and that the disclaimers were there only for public relations purposes.

THE Ba 349'NATTER'

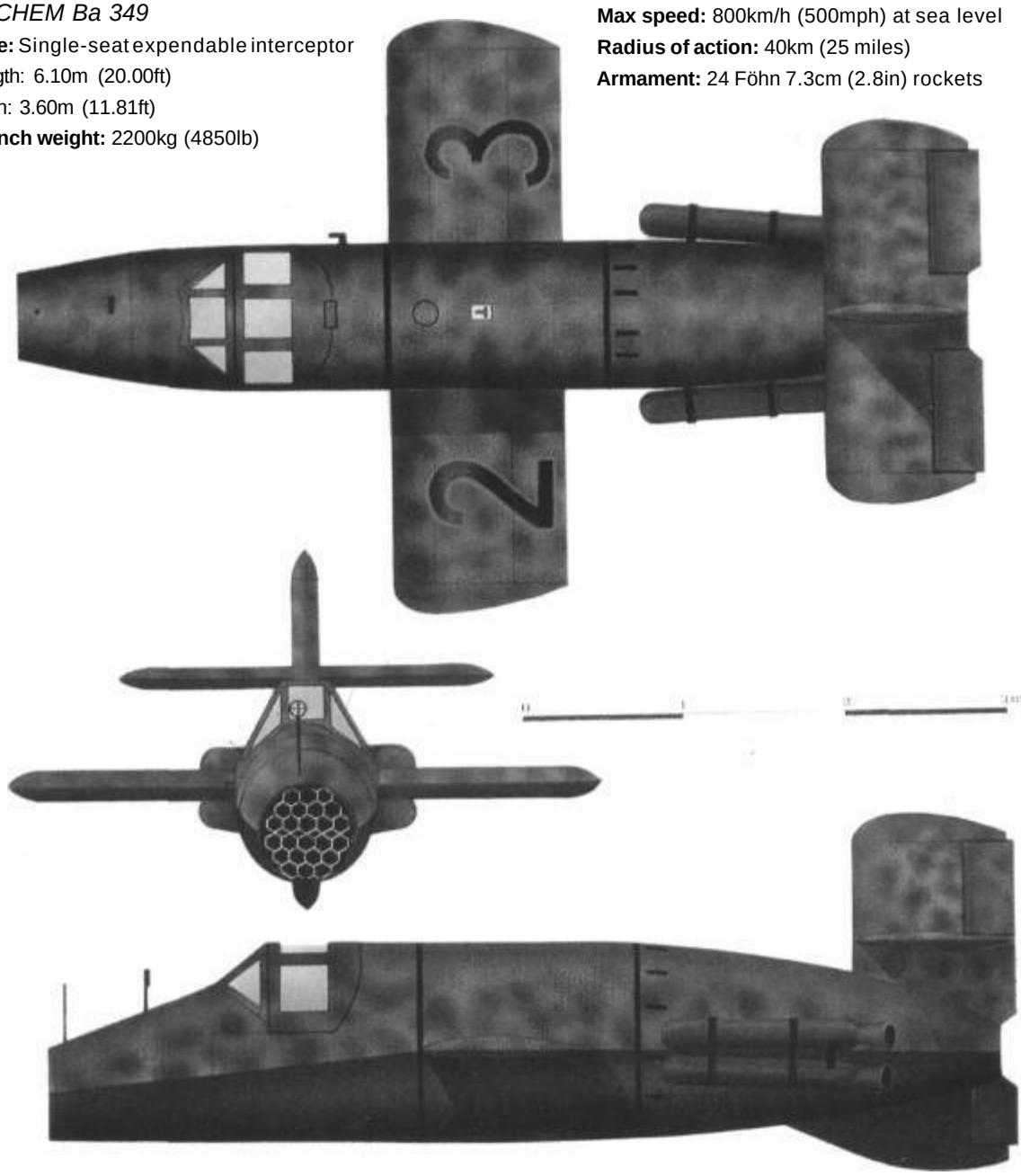
The 'Komet' was hardly a sophisticated aircraft. However, according to Dr Erich Bachern the 'Komet' was over-sophisticated. Bachern was an experienced glider pilot and one-time Technical Director of Fieseler AG, which was latterly a manufacturer of wings for Henschel missiles and control surfaces for the A4 and where Bachem had designed the Fi 156 'Storch' ('Stork') observation and light utility aircraft. He claimed that a wooden glider, simple enough to have been built in a carpentry workshop and propelled by a similar rocket motor to that used in the 'Komet',



Right: The launch of the Ba 349 was so violent that the pilot was expected to black out; the climb to operational altitude was under a simple automatic guidance system.

BACHEM Ba 349
Type: Single-seat expendable interceptor
Length: 6.10m (20.00ft)
Span: 3.60m (11.81ft)
Launch weight: 2200kg (4850lb)

Max speed: 800km/h (500mph) at sea level
Radius of action: 40km (25 miles)
Armament: 24 Föhn 7.3cm (2.8in) rockets



Above: The 'Natter' was conceived as the simplest means of getting a man within range of the high-flying bombers. The array of rockets in the nose were its sole weapons.

aided by four solid-fuel boosters so that it could take off vertically, would do the job equally well. It would climb to 14,000m (45,900ft) in little over a minute under control of a simple automatic guidance system, whereupon its pilot, by now hopefully having regained consciousness after blacking out under the forces generated at take-off, would take over and make a diving attack on the enemy bomber formation on his way back to earth. He would bale out to land by parachute only when he had fired his only armament (the 24 Henschel Hs 217 'Föhn' 7.3cm or R4M 5.5cm unguided rockets contained in an array in the nose), and had reduced his speed to around 250km/h (155mph), while the 'aircraft' from the cockpit back also descended by parachute in the hope of recovering the rocket motor for re-use. From 22 December 1944, a series of 11 unmanned launches were made on the power of the booster motors alone, and on 23

February 1945, a single, unmanned test launch took place using the Walter motor as well. Some days later a manned launch was ordered by the SS *(Schutzstaffeln:* the Nazis' private army) which, by that time, had control of all secret weapons projects, even though the unmanned programme had not been completed and there were grave doubts about the aircraft's viability. The pilot, one Lothar Siebert, was killed when the Ba 349 power-dived into the ground from a height of 1500m (4900ft) after having rolled on to its back. The testing programme continued, and perhaps 20 aircraft (some reports say 36) intended for operations were produced, but none flew in combat. It is thought that two examples remain, both in museum storage: one in the USA, the other in Germany.

Ernst Heinkel proposed a very similar aircraft to the Bachern 'Natter' ('Viper'). The P. 1077 'Julia' (it never received an RLM designator) was also to have been powered by a Walter 509 motor and four solid-fuel Schmidding 533 boosters. It was to have taken off from an inclined ramp, to climb to 15,000m (49,210ft) in 72 seconds, and to have been armed with two MK 108 cannon. It was a high-wing monoplane with almost square-planform wings with considerable anhedral at the tips, and drawings showing two different tail assemblies - one with a single dorsal fin and high-set stubby tailplanes; the other with a single high tailplane terminating in dorsal/ventral fins - were produced. It is probably better considered as a manned missile than an aircraft. There is no account of how the pilot was supposed to complete the mission and return safely to earth.

There is some question whether the 'Natter' actually fits our criteria for *Selbstopfermänner* aircraft at all, since the pilot was expected to break off his attack and turn for home before ejecting (indeed, he was provided with an escape system), but there is less doubt in similar concepts put forward by Zeppelin and DPS, both of which proposed what were essentially motor-assisted gliders to be towed into attack position by aircraft. The Zeppelin proposal - the 'Rammer' - had a solid-fuel rocket motor; the DPS aircraft, which went into development as the Messerschmitt Me 328, had an Argus pulse-jet like that which powered the Fieseler Fi 103 flying bomb (qv). There were high hopes of the latter, in particular, but like the Ba 349, it never got past the prototype stage. There was a third, very similar, project, the Sombold So 334 'Rammschussjäger', which, despite its name, was not actually intended to ram. It, too, was powered by the Walter 509 motor and armed with rockets, and was to have been towed to operating height. Like the Me 328, it started out as a parasite escort fighter project but never got further than a wind tunnel model. Blohm & Voss proposed a pure glider fighter, with no powerplant at all, as the Bv 40. Armed with 30mm cannon and towing a proximity-fuzed bomb on a cable, the Bv 40 was to have been towed to a position above the incoming bomber 'box' by a Bf 109 and then released. Its limited acceptance was perhaps indicative of the state of mind in Germany by 1944 when prototypes were built and tested.

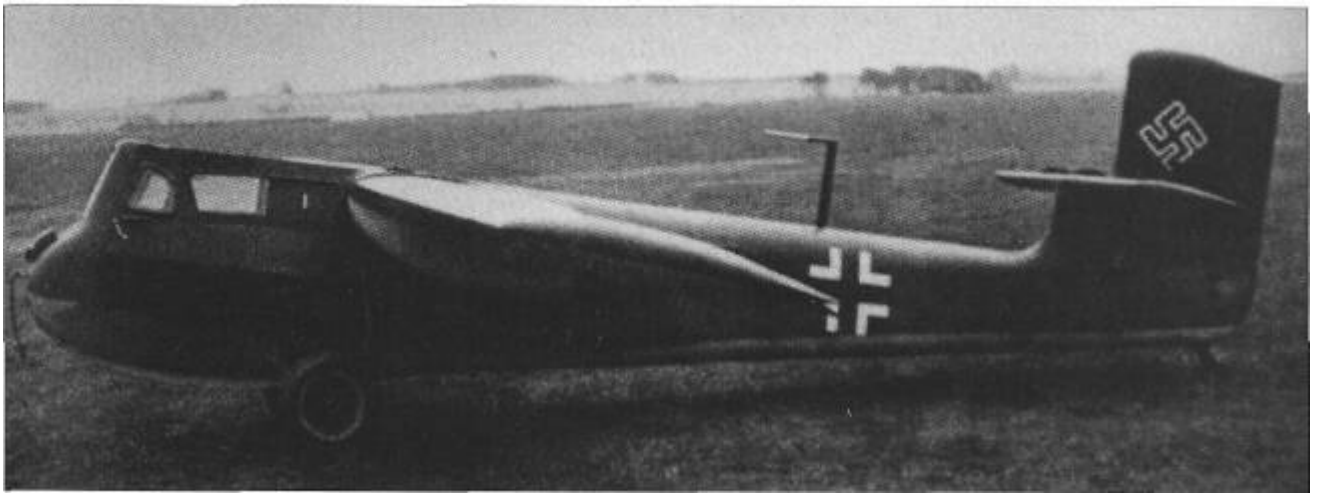
THE ZEPPELIN'RAMMER'

The Zeppelin 'Rammer' never received an RLM designation, which is an indication that perhaps it was not taken entirely seriously. It was to have been a small conventional aircraft with straight, constant-chord wings and tailplane, and was to have been towed to its operational altitude by a Bf 109 or a Bf 110 and cast loose, whereupon it would start its Schmidding 533 solid-fuel rocket motor and head for the bomber formation, first firing its load of 14 R4M 5cm rockets and then trying to ram or sideswipe the bomber aircraft, using its hugely strong wings. The wing's leading edges were to have been covered in 3cm- (1.18in-) thick steel, and they were to have had three continuous parallel main spars, fabricated from thick-walled steel tubing, running from tip to tip to slice through fuselage, tailplane or wings. The pilot, who flew the aircraft in the prone position, was not expected to take to his parachute, but was to have landed the aircraft on any convenient piece of open ground so that it could be recovered and re-used. It is thought that no prototype nor even a mock-up of the 'Rammer' was actually constructed.

THE MESSERSCHMITT Me 328

The history of the Me 328 - which, like the 'Komet', started life as a DPS project - began in 1941, rather earlier than those of the other 'last-ditch' fighters. It was concieved as an escort fighter, to be towed by a Heinkel He 177 bomber on a semi-rigid bar (the 'Deichselschlepp' system, which was also under consideration for use with manned glider bombers and auxiliary fuel tanks) or mounted on a Dornier Do 217 or a Messerschmitt Me 264 in a 'Mistel'-like arrangement (qv). A variety of versions were projected: a pure glider; with Argus pulse-jets; and with a Jumo 004 turbojet. Only the pure glider and the pulse-jet versions were produced (and then only in prototype form). The ubiquitous Hanna Reitsch was responsible





for completing a test programme on the two prototypes of the glider version, cutting loose from tow planes at altitudes of 3000-6000m (9800-19,700ft). Ground launches, using both cable-type catapults and rocket-assisted rail carriages, were also undertaken, with equal success. Even with reduced wingspan, the aircraft performed very satisfactorily, and it was planned to build up to 1000 for use as disposable bombers, to be flown by volunteers from 5/KG200, the so-called 'Staffel Leonidas'.

Seven prototypes of the Argus pulse-jet-powered version were built by a glider maker, Jacob Schweyer Segelflugzeugbau. It was intended for use as a fighter aircraft, to be armed with two MG 151 machine guns. Tn static testing it soon became obvious that the same problems which were to plague the early development of the VI flying bomb - notably, excessive vibration - would make the project difficult to bring to a successful conclusion, and the manned flight programme was suspended in mid-1944, after only a few test flights had been made. Nonetheless, planning still went ahead, and a version was projected, employing no less than four Argus 109-014 pulse-jets, two mounted below the mid-set wings in addition to the original pair mounted above the rear fuselage, their jet tubes protruding behind the fin below the tailplane.

Bomber versions of both these aircraft were also proposed (and would actually have made greater sense since the pulse-jet's characteristics were unsuited to its use as a fighter powerplant). At Hitler's insistence, work on the bomber version continued long past the point when anything other than token use could have been made of it. Perhaps the most far-fetched suggestion for a version of the Me 328 was that with folding wings and twin pulse-jets, designed to be launched from a catapult set up on the foredeck of a submarine.

Left: No more than 36 Ba 349s were constructed; none was ever sent into combat, and most finished like these three battered examples in the hands of GIs in Bavaria.

Above: The Blohm & Voss Bv 40 was an unpowered glider and was to have been towed into position above the approaching bombers before making its attack.

THE BLOHM & VOSS Bv 40

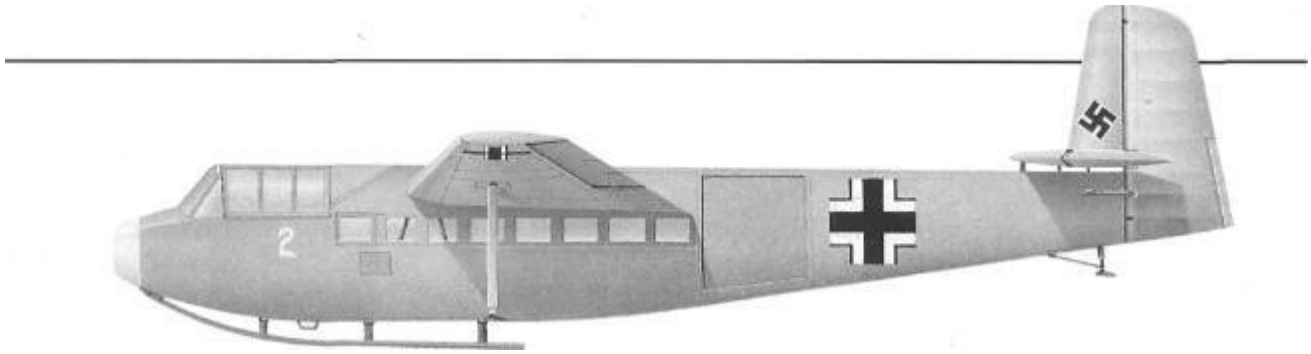
The simplest and cheapest - and perhaps the most sensible - proposal for a *Selbstopfermänner* fighter came from Blohm & Voss's Richard Vogt in mid-1943. The Bv 40 was a simple small armoured glider, armed with a pair of 30mm cannon and fitted with a considerable degree of frontal protection, constructed by unskilled workers from non-strategic materials, which was to have been towed to a position above the bomber formations by a Bf 109G and then cast loose to prosecute a head-on diving attack. One proposed innovation was the 'Gerät-Schlinge', which was really nothing more than a towed aerial mine on a long cable, and which was to be exploded when it was within the bomber formation (although the bomb tended to trail directly behind the glider, rather than some way below it, and it was difficult to place as a result). R4M rockets and 250kg (55()lb) bombs, to be dropped into bomber formations from above, were also suggested, as was a version to carry four aerial torpedoes. Six prototypes were constructed, and five flew before the project was cancelled in late 1944. In an attempt to resurrect it, Vogt suggested fitting it with Argus pulse-jets mounted under the wings, but he was unsuccessful, the Me 328 having taken up what small degree of enthusiasm existed for such a solution.



CHAPTER THREE

Hybrid Aircraft and Gliders

During World War II, Germany made extensive use of unpowered aircraft in the transport role, and though they met with diminishing success, they proved a useful addition to the Reich's logistical fleet. In a parallel development, technology developed for glider bombs was applied to the guidance of unmanned powered aircraft too, the flight to the vicinity of the target being under the control of the pilot of a single-engined fighter mounted piggyback on the explosives-packed bomber.



Even after the new German Air Force was established, the unpowered aircraft still occupied an important place in its order of battle, perhaps because almost all Luftwaffe pilots recruited before Germany openly re-armed had learned to fly in gliders. As we have seen, many important new developments in aviation sprang from the *Deutsches Forschungsinstitut für Segelflug* (DFS).

Above: The DFS 230 carried Luftwaffe paratroops into action against the Belgian fortress of Eben-Emael.

Left: The 'Mistel' was a fighter mated with an unmanned bomber, the nose of which was an explosive charge.

THE DFS 230

Gliders were eventually to be developed in Germany in all shapes and sizes and for a variety of roles. We have seen them as both bombers and fighters, but they were actually more effective, at least in combat terms, as troop carriers and transports. The first to see action was the diminutive DFS 230, a conventional glider with straight, high aspect ratio wings, developed from a prototype built by Rhön-Rossitten-Gesellschaft in 1932, which could carry eight combat-equipped soldiers. In a very real sense, the DFS 230 was a secret weapon par excellence, for in its combat debut, when Luftwaffe paratroopers used it to assault and capture the huge Belgian fortress at Eben-Emael on 10 May



Above: The difficult and demanding Troika-Schlepp' - requiring the service of three Bf 11 Os-was the original method of getting a fully loaded 'Gigant' glider into the air.

1940, it achieved complete tactical and strategic surprise, and allowed the Wehrmacht to cross into Belgium virtually unopposed. Despite that success, once their existence was known, gliders proved to be an expensive way of getting infantry into combat, and after a near disaster in Crete, were not employed in that role by the Luftwaffe, although they were used in an even more dramatic way in September 1943, when commandos led by Otto Skorzeny landed 12 DPS 230s on a narrow strip of land in front of the Rifugio Hotel on the Gran Sasso and liberated deposed Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. From then on, it was left to the Allies to employ them, notably in Sicily in July 1943, in Normandy in June 1944, and at Arnhem in September of that year. That is not to say that the Luftwaffe had given up on them by any means.

THE DPS 228 AND DPS 346

DPS later built a single prototype of a cargo-carrying glider, the DPS 331, in 1941, but by that time the main thrust of the Institute's work lay in the development of high-performance experimental sailplanes. The most significant of those was the DPS 228, planned as a high-altitude photo-reconnaissance aircraft, to be transported to an altitude of 10,000m (32,8()()ft) or more and released, a rocket motor then taking it to an altitude of 23,00()m (75,400ft). The rocket motor was then to have been used intermittently to maintain altitude until its fuel was exhausted, whereupon the DPS 228 would glide back to friendly territory. Depending on thermal conditions, it was confidently expected that the aircraft would be able to return from targets over 1000km (620 miles) away. Only a few were constructed. Many test flights were made, all of them it is believed (though there are differing reports) without rocket power, and a new pressurised cabin, with the pilot in the prone position, was eventually developed and tried out just days before the war's end. Both the original cabin, in which the pilot sat upright, and the later version, which was very much more effective, were attached to the rest of the airframe by explosive bolts. Set free, the nose cone deployed a parachute and descended with the pilot still on board until the outside temperature and pressure reached life-supporting levels, whereupon his seat or couch was ejected by compressed air and he made a normal parachute descent.

A development of the DPS 228, the DPS 346, was designed as a supersonic trials aircraft. It was to have had two rocket motors, variable-chord swept wings and a Multhopp-style T-tail, but was otherwise similar to the DPS 228 in its later incarnation, although constructed entirely of stressed aluminium rather than wood. An unpowered prototype was to have been built (in wood). It is believed that this aircraft and a number of somewhat modified DPS 346s were constructed in the Soviet Union after the war, and there are persistent but unsubstantiated claims that the former was the first aircraft to exceed the speed of sound with DPS test pilot Wolfgang Ziese at the controls in May 1947, some five months before Chuck Yeager's supersonic flight in a Bell X-l on 14 October.

THE GIANT TRANSPORT GLIDERS

At the other end of the performance scale, two projects to develop heavy-lift gliders capable of carrying up to 22,000kg (48,5001b) of cargo - the approximate weight of a combat infantry company, with all its equipment - were ordered up by the RLM: one of them from Messerschmitt, as the Me 321 'Gigant' ('Giant'); the other from Junkers, as the Ju 322 'Mammut' ('Mammoth'), originally named 'Goliath'. The Messerschmitt aircraft was ultimately to be the most successful by far, with about 200 built, but the Junkers 'Mammut' was the more interesting of the two, despite being a constructive failure.

THE Me 321'GIGANT'

The Me 321 was conventional in that it had a fuselage to which the high-set wings and empennage were attached. It was constructed from welded steel tubing and wood with a covering of fabric and wood, and its fuselage was rectangular in cross-section, very tall towards the nose (which had clam-shell doors for loading and unloading vehicles) and tapering towards the tail, with side doors at the rear for passengers. The cockpit was located on top of the fuselage, level with the leading edge of the wing, which was straight and tapered, with a span of 55m (180.5ft), braced by struts to the fuselage floor at the point where the fixed wheels were mounted. The tail was composed of a tall fin and a braced tailplane. The aircraft performed perfectly from the first flight, which took place at Leipheim in March 1941, and was quite capable of lifting the design payload. The first examples entered service in May 1941, when a squadron of 18 was formed. Originally, the 'Giants' were towed either by a trio of Bf 110s (the so-called 'Troika-Schlepp') or by a single Ju 290, and later by the specially developed He 111Z 'Zwilling' ('Twin'), which was, in effect, two He 111s joined at the wing, outboard of the engines, the junction being effected at a fifth engine, thus giving one outboard of each fuselage, and three in the wing area between them. Rockets of various types were mounted to assist take-off, and there were plans to mount Argus pulse-jets to increase the aircraft's gliding range after release. The principal work of the 'Giant' was to transport material to the Eastern Front. It had a crew of two and was armed with four 7.92mm machine guns.

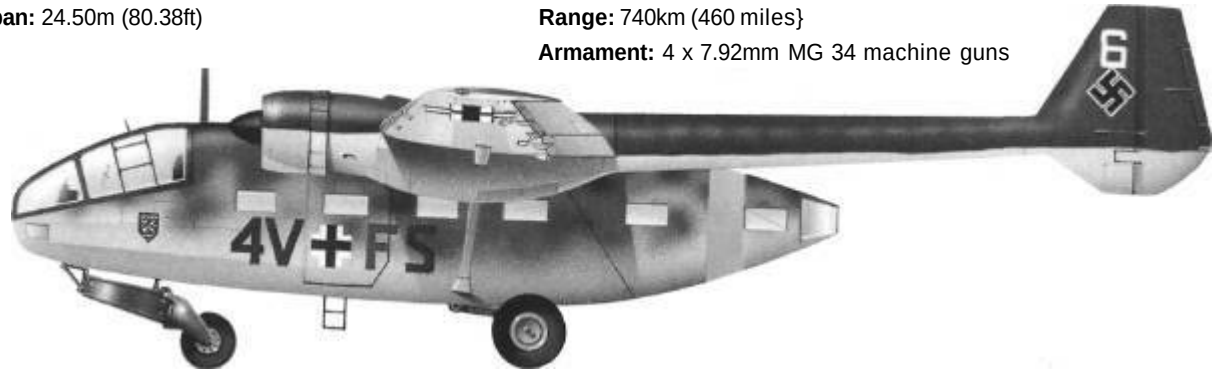
Even before the prototype glider had taken to the air, work was in hand to transform it into a powered aircraft. This consisted mainly of strengthening its structure and contriving mountings for engines, initially four supercharged Gnome-Rhone 14Ns, which produced around 1150hp each. The prototype flew in April 1942 and since it was considered to be underpowered, the next aircraft had six engines, as did the aircraft of all subsequent productions. The Me 323, as it was designated, was something of a handful in the air, requiring two flight engineers to keep the engines balanced, and two gunners, with a total of five 7.92 mm (later 13mm) machine guns, plus locations for 10 MG34 infantry machine guns in the fuselage sides. It often needed the assistance of a tow-plane or rocket motors to get off the ground, especially when heavily laden. It could carry around 16.25 tonnes (16 tons) of payload, and had seats for 130 passengers (though many more were carried in evacuation operations, for

Below: The heavily laden 'Gigant' - this is an Me 323 - proved sickeningly vulnerable to air-to-air attack. In April 1943, no fewerthan 20 were shot down in one operation.



GOTHA Go 244B
Type: Transport
Length: 15.80m (51.83ft)
Span: 24.50m (80.38ft)

Max take-off weight: 7800kg (17,196lb)
Max speed: 290km/h (180mph) at 3000m (9800ft)
Range: 740km (460 miles}
Armament: 4 x 7.92mm MG 34 machine guns



Above: Like the Messerschmitt 'Gigant', the much smaller Gotha Go 242 also made the transition from glider to powered aircraft, becoming the Go 244 in the process.

example). It first became operational in November 1942, and was used to supply units of the Afrika Korps from a base in Sicily. Although it was largely successful, it did have its spectacular failures. On 22 April 1943, no less than 21 Me 323s, ferrying petrol, were shot down in a single operation. Production continued until mid-1944, and around 200 examples were built in all.

THE Ju 322 'MAMMUT'

The heavy glider Junkers produced was anything but conventional. Designed by Heinrich Hertel, it was simply an enormous flying wing, inside which it carried almost all of its payload, with a tall fin carried on a boom-like extension at the tail. In overall form it was somewhat reminiscent of the Junkers-G 38, a commercial passenger-carrier which made its first flight in 1929. On RLM instructions, the Ju 322 was constructed entirely from wood. With a span of 62m (203.5ft) and a length of 30.25m (99.25ft) it had a wing area of 925m^2 (9952 sq ft). The centre section of the wing's straight leading edge housed a top-hinged loading door, with a glazed cupola to the port side of it containing the flight deck. The upper surface of the wing was flat, and there was considerable dihedral on the lower surface. At the centre point, it was over 3m (9.8ft) thick. The prototype did fly in April 1941 but by that time its payload had been cut to half of the required 22.35 tonnes (22 tons) as the 'cabin[1] floor was simply not up to the task: a tracked vehicle actually broke through it during loading trials and the aircraft proved to be chronically unstable. It landed safely and was towed back to the airfield at Merseburg. Given a larger tail fin in an attempt to counter the instability, it made a few more test flights before the project was abandoned on the orders of the RLM. It was then cut up for fuel, along with a completed second aircraft and the components of 98 more which were already in the process of construction.

THE GOTHA Go 242/244

Somewhat more practical than either of the giant gliders and more numerous by far was the Gotha Go 242. It was a shoulder-wing monoplane with a simple square-section fuselage culminating in twin booms linked by a cross-plane to form the tail. A loading ramp at the rear of the fuselage pod let down to allow loading and unloading of a small vehicle such as the amphibious Kübelwagen, or 21 fully equipped troops. Over 1500 were built, of which 133 were converted into Go 244s, fitted with two VOOhp Gnome-Rhone engines in forward extensions of the tailbooms.

A few of the gliders were converted to allow them to alight on water; they carried a small catamaran assault boat with a 1200kg (26461b) explosive charge suspended between its hulls. The mission profile envisaged for them saw the pilot setting down near an enemy ship and taking to the assault boat, setting off in it at high speed toward the ship and locking the controls before baling out to be rescued later by seaplane or submarine. No such mission ever took place, though it is worth remembering that members of the Italian Navy's Xth MAS flotilla disabled the cruiser HMS *York* with explosive-packed motor boats at Suda Bay in Crete in March 1941, so the idea was not that far-fetched.

HYBRID AND COMPOSITE AIRCRAFT

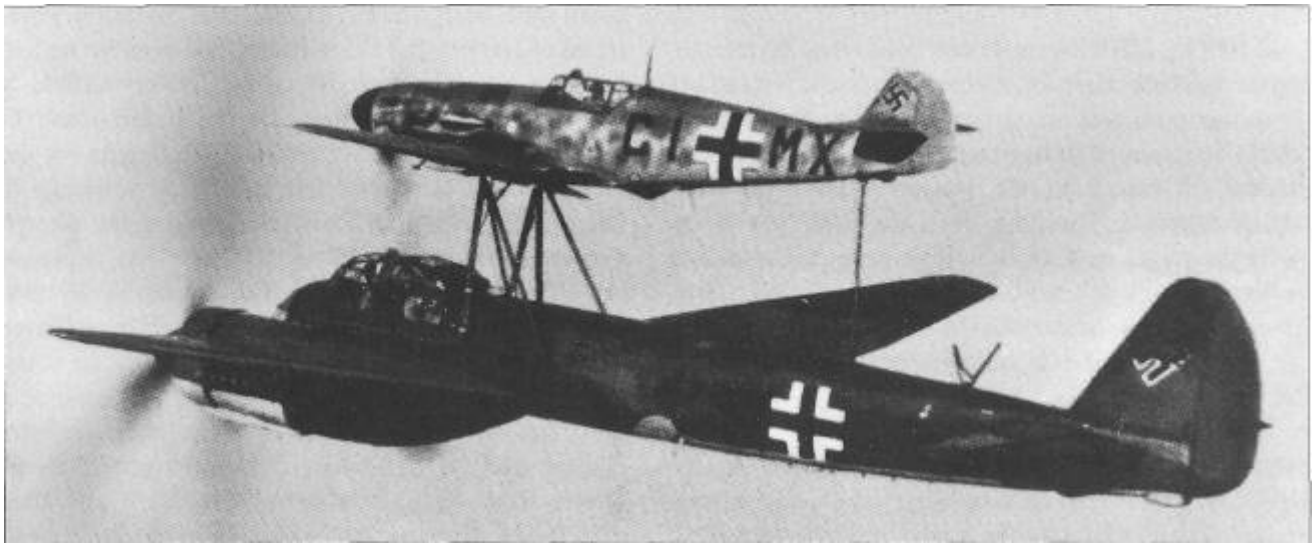
Engineers on both sides during World War II gave considerable thought to the problems associated with guiding unmanned explosives-packed aircraft to a target. We shall see in Chapter Five how the USAAF used remotely controlled B-17s to complete the destruction of V weapons sites in France in 1944, but long before that, in 1940, the RLM had turned the problem over to DPS. The parameters the Institute was given included supporting parasite fighter aircraft and refuelling heavily loaded bombers in flight as well as guiding a flying bomb to its target zone, and the first tentative solution was to tow one aircraft with another using either a flexible cable or a semi-rigid bar which could contain or support a fuel hose. There was a persistent belief that such a system had merit, and experiments with it continued until 1945, but by late 1941, one of the Institute's teams had begun to work on a means of mounting one aircraft on another, piggyback-style, and in January 1942 the 'Mistel' ('Mistletoe') concept received official approval. Soon, Junkers and autopilot-maker Patin were ordered to collaborate with DPS, and within little over a year, work had begun on assembling a prototype combination of Ju 88A-4 and Bf 109F-1.

'MISTEL' 1

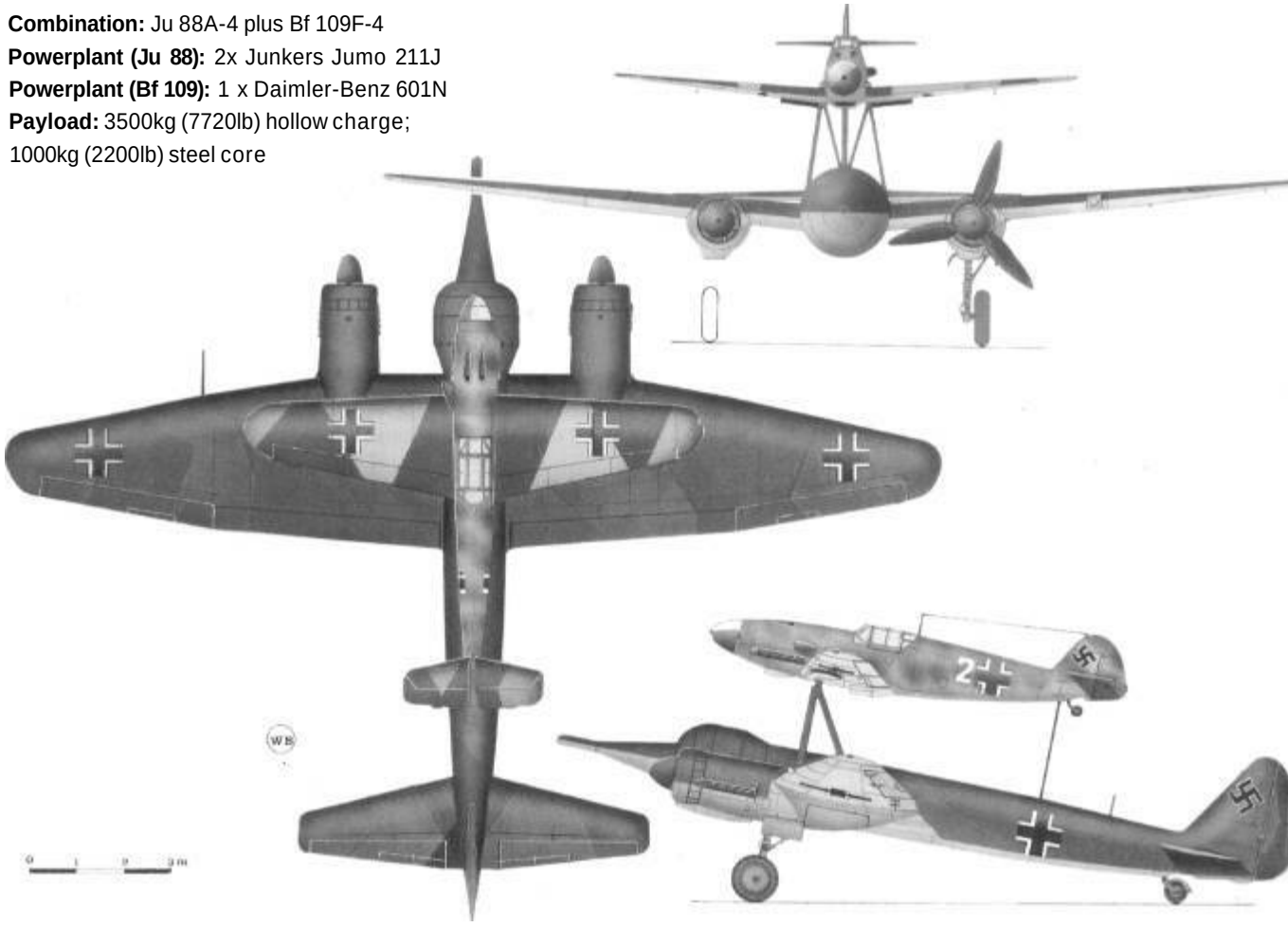
DFS's first task had been to devise a suitable structure to co-locate the two aircraft so that the stresses acting on them would be transmitted between the two main spars, with coupling links which could be sundered either mechanically or explosively. The result was a pair of tripod struts, the apex of which hooked into plates on the underside of the Bf 109's wing roots, the two outer bases of each located on load-bearing plates which traversed the main spar, while the inner legs located on to it directly through the fuselage top. A single pole supported the Messerschmitt's tail and kept the fuselage axes parallel. In later combinations, the fighter sat at a 15-degree nose-down angle.

The steering and control system was located in the rear of the Junker's fuselage and consisted of a master compass, a steering compass and a three-axis autopilot from Patin. This apparatus was used to steer the combination in normal flight via servos and two simple thumb switches in the fighter's cockpit, one for rudder and ailerons, the other for elevators, with the fighter's controls remaining free. However, the two aircraft's control systems could be linked, and thus operated from the fighter by the usual combination of stick and pedals (via servos, once again), at will. Either the bomber's two engines alone, or all three, could be used, depending on the speed and range required, all fuel being supplied from the host aircraft. This was by no means the only modification needed to the bomber component - in fact, the aircraft were virtually gutted and rebuilt - but the amount of work needed on the fighter was minimal. In order to accommodate the explosive 'warhead', the existing Ju 88 nose section, including the glazed cupola which formed the cockpit cover, was removed entirely, and a solid bulkhead built up. The 3500kg (7720lb) hollow charge, with its distinctive proboscis-like extension

Below: One of the earliest'Mistel' combinations (they were known unofficially as 'Vater und Sohn' - father and son) matched the Messerschmitt Bf 109F with the Junkers Ju 88A-4. Testing began in July 1943.



'MISTEL' 1
Combination: Ju 88A-4 plus Bf 109F-4
Powerplant (Ju 88): 2x Junkers Jumo 211J
Powerplant (Bf 109): 1 x Daimler-Benz 601N
Payload: 3500kg (7720lb) hollow charge; 1000kg (2200lb) steel core

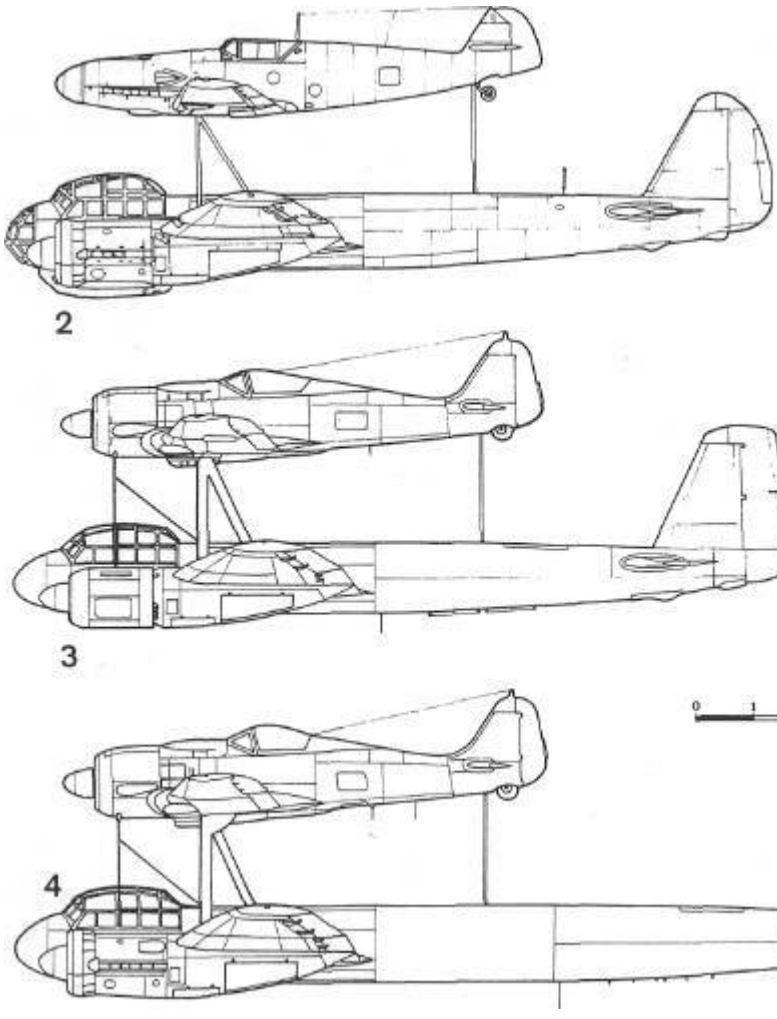


Above: The operational 'Mistel' (this page) paired a fighter with a bomber whose nose was replaced with a warhead. Trainers (facing page) retained the standard nose.

and 1000kg (22001b) steel core, could then be mounted on the bulkhead; for training missions, a standard two-man nose section, stripped of all non-essentials, could be mounted in its place. Operationally, the procedure of launching the bomber component was straightforward. The pilot lined the combination up with the target in a shallow dive using his standard reflecting gunsight, activated the automatic pilot, and then broke free. Some elected to attempt to suppress local flak before setting out to return to their base.

'MISTEL TARGETS REVEALED

The first flight of the combination took place in July 1943, and the testing procedure was successfully completed by October, by which time development work on the warhead was well advanced and 15 combinations had been ordered from Junkers, who were responsible for the conversion itself. By April 1944, a small unit, designated 2/KG101, and under the command of Hauptmann Horst Rudat, had been set up and had begun training, initially at the Junkers airfield at Norhausen, later at Kolberg on the Baltic coast. In mid-month, a staff paper outlined the targets for the unit (initially with just five pilots) as shipping in Scapa Flow, Gibraltar Roads and Leningrad, though the latter two were soon rejected as being impractically far away. Scapa Flow was chosen as the first objective, and the aircraft were to take off from Grove in Denmark and cross the North Sea following a line of pre-positioned radio buoys. Planning had reached a fairly advanced stage when the Allies landed in Normandy, and in mid-June, 2/KG101 moved to St Dizier, from where five 'Mistels' took off just after dark on 24 June to attack shipping in the Baie de la



'MISTEL'SI
Combination: Junkers Ju 88A-4 plus Messerschmitt Bf 1Ü9F-4

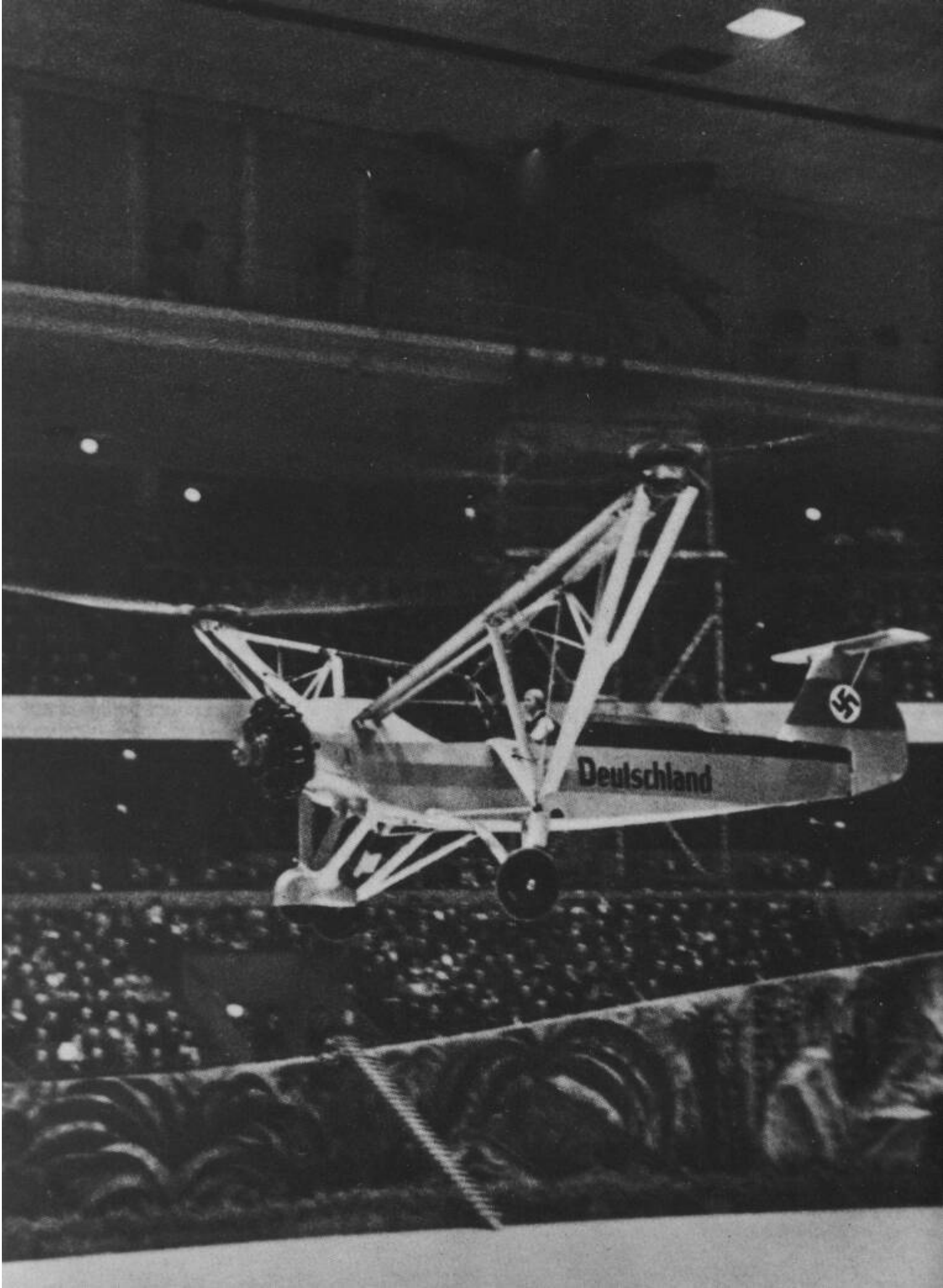
'MISTEL' S2
Combination: Junkers Ju 88G-1 plus Focke-WulfFw190A-8

'MISTEL S3c
Combination: Junkers Ju 88G-10 plus Focke-Wulf Fw190A-8

Seine. Four of the five aircraft involved were reported to have hit shipping targets, the fifth pilot jettisoning his host bomber after a mechanical failure.

Over the course of the next four months, more units were trained in the operation of the combination and two more 'Mistel' raids took place, one on shipping in the English Channel, the other on Scapa Flow. Neither was successful. In the course of the latter, three aircraft crashed and the other two failed to find the target. By now, other combinations had been ordered which paired more recent models of the Ju 88 with Fw 190s, and the factory at Bernberg was producing them from new - not re-cycled - aircraft. Attention turned east in November 1944, and training for Operation 'Eisenhammer' commenced, which was a campaign aimed at destroying electrical power stations in the Soviet Union. As the Allied armies closed in on the Reich from east and west, bridges in particular became important targets, and through the spring of 1945, it was against river crossings and bridgeheads that the 'Misteln' were used exclusively. The last operation took place on 16 April 1945.

Many other combinations of aircraft types were projected (and in some cases built) for use in 'Mistel' operations, including Dornier Do 217K/DFS 228, for reconnaissance, the host aircraft acting as a mobile, high-altitude launch pad; Do 217/Fw 190, for pathfinder missions, the fighter protecting the host aircraft; and Ta 154/Fw 190, Me 262/Me 262, Ju 287/Me 262 and Ju 268/He 162 combinations, all of which were proposed for use against high-value targets, where approach speed might have been thought to make ä significant difference. By 1945, DFS was working on remote-control systems using both the radio link and the television guidance system specially devised for the Hs 293 guided bomb (see Chapter Seven). A test aircraft had been prepared, but it was destroyed by fire before trials could begin.


Deutschland

CHAPTER FOUR

Rotary-win g Aircraft

Rotary-wing aircraft were first demonstrated as early as 1907, but it was 1936 before a satisfactory design for a helicopter was developed, in Germany. The Reich's scientists took the lead in this field, and by 1945 had developed operational rotary-wing craft and demonstrated just how effective they could be in combat conditions.



Rotary-wing aircraft can be divided into two basic types: autogiros and helicopters. Autogiros, such as that devised by Juan de la Cierva, derive their lift from their forward momentum, which is supplied by a conventionally positioned propeller, and their rotors are unpowered. They can take off only with a run, they cannot fly except in the forwards direction, and they cannot hover, but they can descend and land almost vertically. Cierva made the first successful flight in an autogiro in January 1923, having found that it was necessary to articulate the blades where they joined the hub. For some years, autogiros seemed set to overshadow true helicopters, examples of which had been flying since 1907, but once Cierva's articulated rotor head arrangement was adopted, the latter surged to the fore once more, although work on autogiros continued, too. By the late 1930s, Germany had become the centre of helicopter development; in the period up to May 1945, almost 20 rotary-wings of different types were designed there, including autogiros,

Above: The Flettner Fl 282 'Kolibri' was a fully operational helicopter despite its somewhat rudimentary appearance.

Left: 'Dare anything' test pilot Hanna Reitsch shows off the Focke Achgelis Fa 61 inside Berlin's *Deutschlandhalle.*



Above: The Fa 223 'Drache' {'Kite') was the first truly viable transport helicopter. This example was constructed in Czechoslovakia after the war, from salvaged parts.

girogliders and manned kites. The only work of any note undertaken elsewhere was that of the Russian emigre Igor Sikorsky in the United States. Sikorsky made his first experiments with rotary-wing flight in 1909, but did not achieve comparative success until 30 years later, though he was to become crucial to the type's development.

THEFOCKEACHGELISFaGI

In the early 1930s, Professor Heinrich Karl Focke began building CiervaC.19 autogiros under licence in Germany - and separately from his partnership with Georg Wulf - and soon began experimenting with helicopters. Focke collaborated with Gerd Achgelis, who flew a Kurt Tank-designed Fw 44 'Steiglitz' ('Goldfinch') in aerobatics displays (as did Ernst Udet), and soon produced a design for a twin-rotor helicopter, the Fa 61. This resembled the Cierva machine in that it was composed of a conventional fuselage with a front-mounted radial engine (a BMW Bramo Sh 14, of 160hp), but differed in having two outrigger-mounted three-bladed rotors, driven by shafts in centra-rotation to neutralise torque effect. There was a small conventionally placed propeller, but only to assist engine cooling. The tail had a fin and rudder and top-mounted stabilisers, and the craft sat on a tail-wheel undercarriage but with a nose wheel to prevent it from nosing over. The rotors had cyclic pitch control (that is, the angle of attack of the individual blades was varied during the rotation cycle) which gave longitudinal and directional control, and differential operation of the two cyclics gave lateral control by inducing asymmetric lift. The Fa 61 made its maiden flight in the hands of Ewald Rohlfs on 26 June 1936, lasting 28 seconds. But by the following year, Rohlfs was setting and breaking records regularly. On the anniversary of the maiden flight, he established a height record of 2440m (8000ft) and an endurance record of lhr:20min:49sec. The following day he set straight-line and curcuit distance records and a speed record of 122.553km/h (76.1 mph) over a 20km (12.5 mile) course. Hanna Reitsch broke the straight-line record with a flight of almost 109km (67.7 miles) between Bremen and Berlin four months later, and in February the following year, she actually flew the helicopter inside the *Deutschlandhalle* in Berlin to demonstrate its controllability. On 29 January 1929, Karl Bode established a height record which was to remain unbroken for some time when he took the machine to 3427m (11,240.5ft).

The Fa 61 was hardly a secret weapon. Indeed, it was developed very publicly and was really little more than a concept demonstrator, but there was much better to come both from Focke Achgelis and from a competitor, Anton Flettner, during the course of the war. The Wehrmacht was quick to appreciate the operational possibilities the type opened up. In 1938 Focke Achgelis began work on a genuine transport helicopter known originally as the Fa 266 'Hornisse' ('Hornet'), and later as the Fa 223

'Drache' ('Kite'). The new aircraft was essentially an enlarged version of the Fa 61, with the same boomed-out twin-rotor layout, but it was much more powerful, with a supercharged 650hp Bramo 323 Q3 'Fafnir' engine, and more flexible and easier to fly, thanks to the introduction of collective pitch control. Previously, ascent had been controlled by the throttle, a very hit-and-miss affair; with the introduction of collective pitch control, the degree of lift was controlled by adjusting the pitch of the rotor blades, and engine speed stayed constant. The fuselage, 12.25m (40ft) long, was fabricated from steel tubes and covered with fabric except on the engine compartment, where sheet metal was used. It was divided into four compartments: the cockpit, with seats for pilot and observer; the load compartment, with a starboard-side door, where self-sealing fuel and oil tanks were also located; the engine compartment; and the tail section, which was a conventional fin and rudder with a top-mounted stabiliser, adjustable for trim.

UNUSUAL ENGINE MOUNTING

The method of mounting the engine was somewhat bizarre. Both it and the gearbox were located in two large-diameter rings, which were attached to four longitudinal fuselage members by adjustable cables, with struts to prevent fore-and-aft movement. There was a gap in the fuselage covering at the forward end of the engine compartment, through which cooling air entered, and another at its after end, whence it escaped. The rotor blades were made from wooden ribs attached to a high-tensile steel tube, and covered with plywood and fabric. The rotor discs were inclined inwards by 4.5 degrees, and slightly forwards, and normal speed of rotation was 275rpm, a 9.1:1 reduction from engine speed.

The 'Drache' (it was also known as the 'Draken': 'Dragon') could carry up to four passengers in the load compartment but during troop manoeuvres in 1944, it carried 12 fully equipped soldiers, the other eight travelling outside on tractor seats on the outriggers. Its total payload capacity was around 1.27 tonnes (1.25 tons). A Fieseier 'Storch' aircraft and a Volkswagen car were lifted in demonstrations, and small field pieces were transported during army manoeuvres; large loads were slung from a winch on a load-bearing beam via a port in the aircraft's floor.

The Fa 266 prototype was completed at the end of 1939 and, by now redesignated as the Fa 223, made its first free flight in August 1940 after more than 100 hours of static and tethered hovering trials. Karl Bode flew it to the RLM test centre at Rechlin in October 1940, and set a batch of new records: a speed of 182km/h (113mph); a vertical rate of climb of 528m (1732ft) per minute; and an altitude of 7252m (23,295ft) where normal operational limits were 120km/h (74.5mph) and 4880m (16,010ft). The RLM promptly ordered 30 for evaluation in the anti-submarine, reconnaissance, rescue, training, and transport roles and it was decided before series production commenced to build standardised aircraft which would be equipped according to the requirements of their mission.

The first prototype, -VI, was wrecked on 5 February 1941 after having made 115 flights, when a power failure occurred while it was in a low hover. In June 1942, the second and third prototypes, along with seven pre-production machines and much of the tooling, were destroyed in an air raid. Production was then moved from Bremen to Laupheim in southern Germany but did not restart until February 1943. More aircraft were destroyed when the new factory was bombed in its turn, in July 1944, and as a result, the number of Fa 223s completed was probably no more than 12. Three were still in operational service at the end of the war; one was destroyed by its pilot and two were seized by the Americans. One of them was subsequently flown to England by Helmut Gersenhauer, the Luftwaffe's most experienced helicopter pilot, and was flown for around 170 hours in trials before crashing from a height of 18.3m (60ft). After the war, development of the Fa 223 continued in France (with Professor Focke's assistance) and in Czechoslovakia, where two were constructed from salvaged parts. That the Fa 223 was not more widely produced, when all concerned agreed that it was a useful addition to the Luftwaffe's catalogue of aircraft, is understandable only within the terms of the struggle for the allocation of resources going on within the Third Reich at the time. Clearly, it had no champion sufficiently powerful to push it high enough up the list of priorities. Had -V12 not broken down when transporting the captured Italian dictator, Benito Mussolini, from the hotel on the Gran Sasso in September 1943 when he was rescued by Otto Skorzeny, perhaps things might have been different!

THE Fa 225

The Luftwaffe's interest in gliders dated back to the time before Germany was permitted an air force, when the only means she had of training pilots was to set up gliding clubs and schools. As well as acting as



Above: The Fa 330 was not a true helicopter but an unpowered girokite; it was designed to be towed behind a submarine as an observation platform.

a valuable means of instructing personnel, gliders were to become important in themselves in a number of roles. The first operational use of a glider to transport troops and equipment directly into combat occurred on 10 May 1940, when Luftwaffe paratroops siezed and held the Belgian frontier fortress of Eben-Emael after landing on it in DPS 230 gliders. This was to be the most effective type in German service during World War II, but it could be employed only where there was a suitable, fairly large, landing site. Focke Achgelis suggested improving on this by substituting a three-bladed rotor unit from an Fa 223 for the wings of a DFS 230, producing what was in effect an externally powered autogiro or giroglider, which, when cast loose, would simply autorotate to the ground at a very steep angle of approach, and would thus be able to land in an area not much larger than itself. It was to be towed behind the Luftwaffe's maid-of-all-work, the Ju 52, and in tests carried out during 1943, it was found to be practicable to land it and come to a halt within 18.3m (60ft). Though the Fa 225, as the hybrid glider was known, worked well enough, by the time it was ready to go into production, the Wehrmacht's operational requirements had changed and the project was shelved.

THE Fa 330'BACHSTELZE'

The Fa 225 was not the only unpowered rotary-wing aircraft Focke Achgelis was to design. Early in 1942, the company was asked to devise a simple single-seat girokite to be towed behind a submarine, from which an observer would be able to monitor a much wider area than would a look-out stationed on the boat itself. The result, the Fa 330 'Bachstelze' ('Water Wagtail'), was simple in the extreme: two steel tubes, the shorter, which supported the rotor assembly, being set at right-angles to the longer, which held the simple rudder assembly and the pilot's seat and rudimentary controls, by means of which he could tilt the rotor head (which gave longitudinal and lateral control) and turn the rudder to change direction. The pitch of the rotor blades could be adjusted, but not in flight. Coarse pitch gave the best flying performance, but made launching rather more difficult. The Fa 330 was launched by setting the rotor turning (by hand if there was a wind; by means of a rope wound around a drum in the rotor head if there was not) and then pushing the whole machine backwards. Recovery was by means of a winch under normal circumstances, but in an emergency, the pilot could release the rotor, which deployed a parachute from its stowage behind the pilot's seat as it flew off. The winch held 150m (492ft) of towing cable, which permitted the kite to fly at an altitude of 120m (395ft); from there, the horizon was 4()km (25 miles) away, a marked improvement over the 8km (5 miles) horizon from the boat itself. Without its pilot, the girokite weighed 82kg (1801b), and could be assembled and dismantled in a matter of minutes. Minimum speed required to stay aloft was 27km/h (17mph).

Something like 200 Fa 330s were produced by Weser-Flugzeugbau and were deployed aboard Type IX ocean-going U-boats, but little is known about their operational history beyond the fact that two or three crewmembers from each boat were taught how to fly them in the wind tunnel at Chalais-Meudon near Paris. They were said to be very easy indeed to operate, and would fly quite happily hands-off for short periods, but were unpopular with their pilots for reasons of self-preservation.

AMBITIOUS FOCKE DESIGNS

Focke Achgelis also produced two very much more ambitious designs, one of them, the Fa 269, for a convertiplane, which would have landed and taken off vertically but then turned the shaft carrying the rotors

through 90 degrees to bring them to the position of pusher propellers. Such an arrangement (but employing more efficient tractor propellers) was not to be successfully introduced until Boeing-Vertol perfected the V-22 Osprey in the late 1980s. The Fa 269 was really little more than a flight of fancy, and it is to be doubted if the technology of the day could actually have realised it. The Fa 284 was much more practical, being, in effect, a stretched version of the Fa 223, with a fuselage which was largely of lattice construction and twin 1600hp BMW 801 engines. Tt was designed to carry heavy loads underslung, in exactly the same way as its 1970s equivalent, the Sikorsky S-60 (CH-54B) 'Flying Crane', did. Some parts are said to have been manufactured before the project was cancelled in late 1943 and plans were drawn up to produce a twin Fa 223, essentially two aircraft joined, in-line, by a short fuselage section. This section is known to have been produced, but the complete aircraft was not.

By far the most adventurous of Professor Focke's designs was presented under the auspices of Focke-Wulf rather than Focke Achgelis. Known as the 'Triebflügel' ('Thrustwing'), this was a tail-sitting VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) aircraft which derived its lift from three wings which rotated around the fuselage just aft of the cockpit, under the power of tip-mounted ramjets giving about 840kg (18501b) of thrust, the wings being brought up to operating speed by three jettisonable rockets. In flight, the wings would be rotated around their individual axes until they became conventional aerofoils as the aircraft itself rotated until its axis was horizontal rather than vertical. No real development work was ever done on the concept, and the viability of the design is a matter of speculation, but three tail-sitting VTOL aircraft were built post-war, two in the USA and one in France. The American designs, from Lockheed and Convair, were somewhat more conventional, in that they used fixed wings and contra-rotating propellers in the nose, while the French SNECMA 'Coleopter' was powered by a tail-mounted turbojet and had an annular wing, control being achieved through four swivelling fins. All three aircraft flew after a fashion, but all projects were eventually cancelled. The objective has since been achieved by vectoring the thrust of a turbojet in a more-or-less conventional airframe.

ANTON FLETTNER

Having turned his attention to the problems of rotary-wing flight in 1930, Anton Flettner first produced a helicopter with two 30hp Anzani piston engines mounted on the ends of two rotors, each turning a two-bladed propeller. While this arrangement eliminated the problems associated with torque (which the Focke Achgelis designs overcame by means of two contrarotating rotor sets, and which other designers,

Below: The Fl 282 was the most sophisticated of all German helicopters of World War II. This later version - captured by US forces - even had protection for the pilot.



notably Sikorsky, counteracted by means of a powered tail rotor), it was only marginally successful in other ways. When it was destroyed during tethered testing, it was not rebuilt. Flettner next built a two-seat cabin autogiro for the *Kriegsmarine* (German Navy) but the single example of the Fl 184 caught fire in flight and was also destroyed.

THE Fl 185 AND Fl 265

Clearly, Anton Flettner was still searching for a valid way forward, for his next design, designated the Fl 185, was substantially different again, almost a cross between a helicopter and an autogiro, its 140hp Siemens-Halke engine being linked to a single rotor and two variable-pitch pusher propellers located on outriggers. For vertical take-off and landing, the aircraft functioned as a helicopter, the majority of the power going to the rotor, and the two conventional propellers, providing thrust in opposite directions, only counteracting the torque. For forward flight, the rotor autorotated and the two propellers received all the power and gave forward thrust. The Fl 185 flew only a few times before Flettner abandoned it and turned his attention to a new design using synchronised intermeshing contra-rotating twin rotors (like those of the Kaman H-43 'Huskie' of the 1960s) with differential collective pitch control.

The single-seat Fl 265 was very similar in appearance to the Fl 185, with its front-mounted radial engine with cowl and cooling fan, enclosed cockpit and stubby tailfin. However, gone were the Fl 185's outriggers and propellers, and the rotor head assembly, with its paired, inclined shafts, each with a two-bladed rotor, was much more complex. The design was completed in 1937, and the following year, the *Kriegsmarine* ordered six aircraft for evaluation purposes. The prototype made its maiden flight in May 1939, and was later destroyed when its rotor blades struck each other in flight.

Other Fl 265s were used extensively for operational trials with naval units - cruisers in the main, but also submarines - in the Baltic and the Mediterranean with considerable success, and completely validated the concept of deploying VTOL aircraft with warships. Aircraft also operated with army units, both in the reconnaissance and logistical roles, and a Luftwaffe trial involving a Bf 109 and an Fw 190 fitted with camera guns demonstrated that the helicopter was very difficult to shoot down. The two fighters, amongst the best in the world, we may recall, attacked the Fl 265 for 20 minutes but tailed to score a single hit. The outcome of the various trials was that Flettner was ordered to proceed with volume production. In fact, he had already proceeded with the design of an updated version, the two-seat (some prototypes were single-seat) Fl 282 'Kolibri' ('Hummingbird'), and it was this aircraft which went into manufacture.

THE Fl 282'KOLIBRI'

The most important modification Flettner made to the design of the new aircraft was to re-locate the engine behind the pilot's seat, which gave him and the observer a much-enlarged field of view. The drive was taken off the front of the crankshaft through a reduction gearbox and transmitted up and back through a

Below: The Fl 282 was ordered in 1944 after sea trials aboard the cruiser *Köln* had shown it could be flown even in adverse conditions. Only Allied bombing prevented the aircraft going into service.

FLETTNER Fl 282 V21
Type: Single-seat open-cockpit helicopter
Length: 6.56m (21.52ft)
Max take-off weight: 1000kg (2200lb)
Max speed: 150km/h (93mph) at sea level
Range: 170km (106 miies)
Ceiling: 3290m (10,800ft)
Armament: None





Above: An American airman examines the tiny rotor-tip jets which Friedrich von Doblhoff proposed to use to eliminate the effects of engine torque in his WNF 342.

universally jointed drive shaft and a cross-shaft connecting the two rotor shafts, which were set at an inclusive angle of 24 degrees, and inclined forward by 6 degrees. The rotor blades were mounted so that they were parallel when they were at 45 degrees to the aircraft's centreline. The fin and rudder were much larger than in previous Flettner designs, steering being accomplished by a combination of rudder movement and differential collective pitch control.

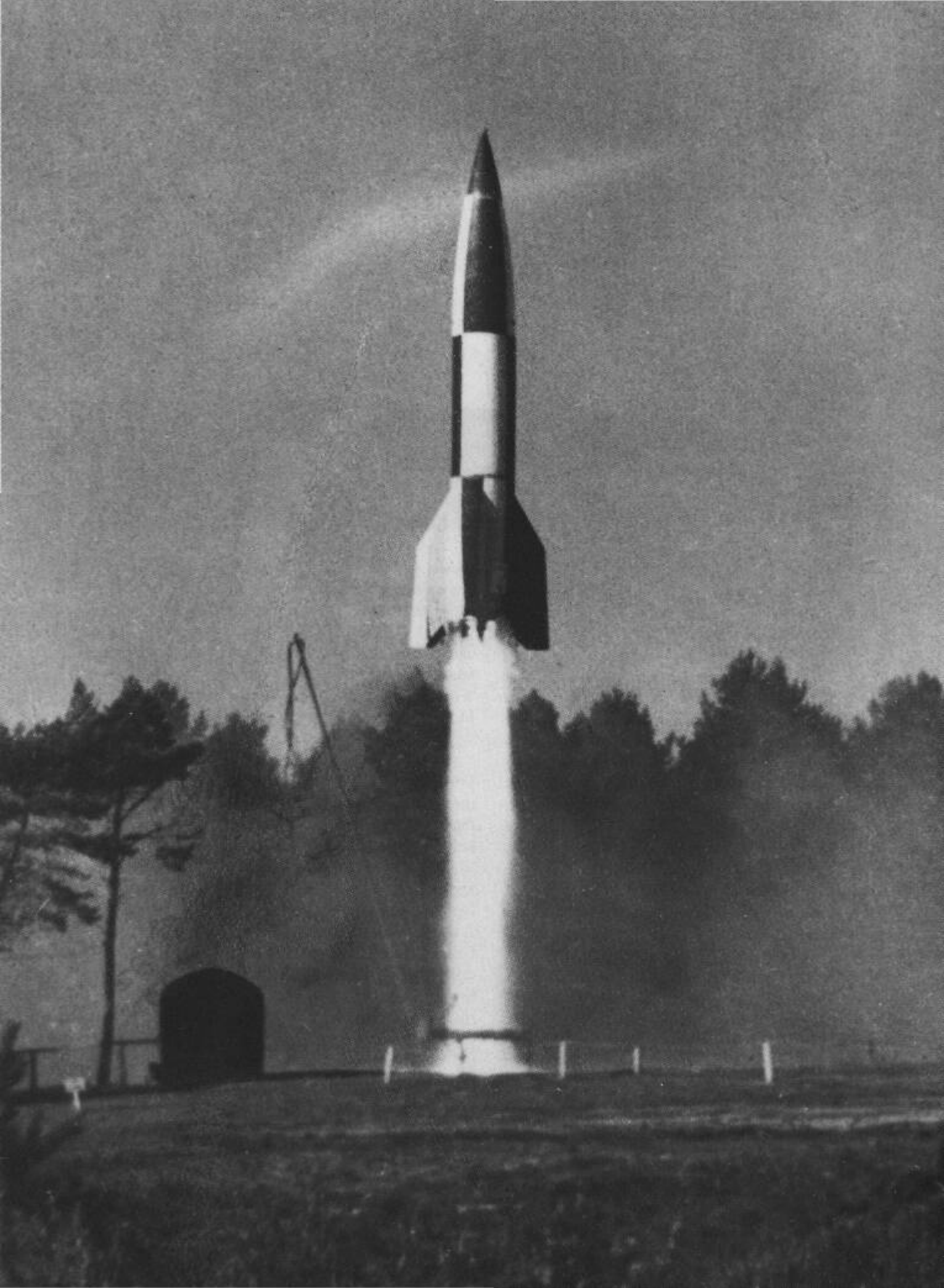
The 'Kolibri' proved to be very satisfactory indeed, despite a pronounced vibration period as the engine was run-up, with a maximum speed in level flight of 150km/h (93mph), a vertical rate of climb of 91.5m/min (300ft/min), a hover ceiling of 300m (985ft), and a service ceiling of 3290m (10,800ft). Its range, with just the pilot and maximum fuel aboard, was 300km (185 miles). Some 50 pilots were trained to fly it, most of them by Flettner's test pilot, Hans Fuisting. It was extremely manoeuvrable and very stable and at forward speeds in excess of 60km/h (37mph) could be flown hands-off once the controls were balanced.

SEA TRIALS

From 1942, trials at sea aboard the cruiser *Köln* demonstrated that the aircraft was usable even in very poor weather conditions, and by the following year, 20 were in service with the *Kriegsmarine* in the Mediterranean and the Aegean. In 1944, an order for 1000 Fl 282s was placed with BMW, which began tooling up for production at its Munich and Eisenach plants, but before manufacture could begin, both they and the Flettner works at Johannisthal were very badly damaged by Allied bombing. Anton Flettner went on to design a 20-seat passenger helicopter, the Fl 339, but never got beyond the development stage.

THEDOBLHOFF/WNF342

Friedrich von Doblhoff is rather less well-known than the other helicopter pioneers in the Third Reich, but the machines which he designed, and which were built by Wiener Neustadter Flugzeugwerke in the Vienna suburbs, represented yet another innovatory approach to the solution of the torque problem. Doblhoff used small rotor-tip jets to drive the blades. A combustible air/fuel mixture was fed to small combustion chambers in the rotor tips using a compressor driven by a conventional piston engine. The mixture travelled by way of the rotor hub and passages in the rotors themselves, before being ignited. The piston engine also drove a small fan which blew air over the tail surfaces for the purpose of steering. Only four prototypes were built; the first three had fixed-pitch blades, and were only ever used in static/tethered tests, but the fourth had a most ingenious (and very complex) arrangement which allowed collective pitch control. The last prototype was behaving well in its trials and had been flown at speeds of up to 45km/h (28mph) when the programme was halted by the arrival of Soviet forces in 1945.



CHAPTER FIVE

Surface-to-Surface Missiles

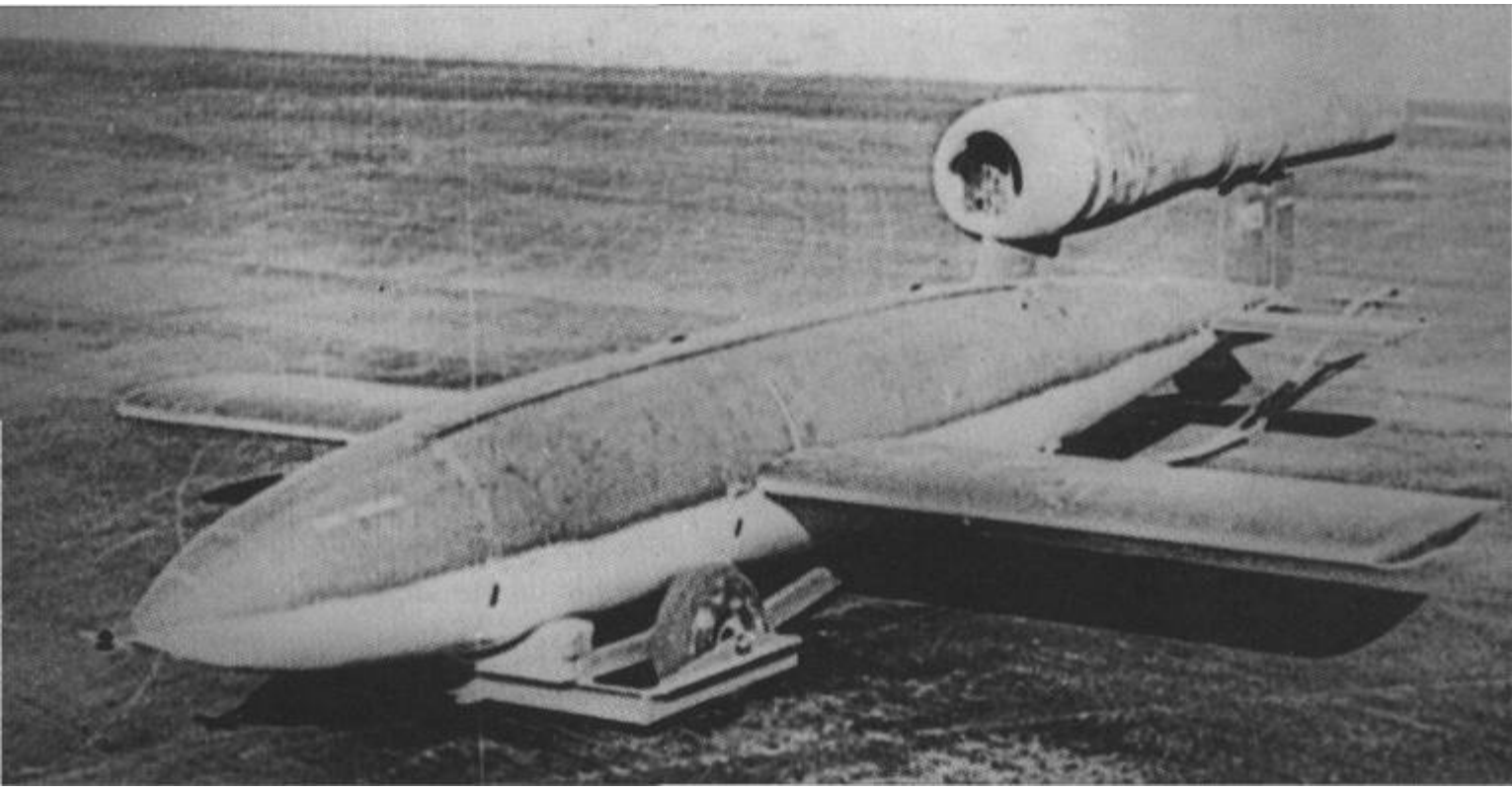
Until the outbreak of World War II, rocketry was hardly a science at all; until then it had consisted of really nothing more than a few scattered and sporadic attempts to shoot small projectiles straight up into the sky, virtually for the sake of it. All that changed when it became clear that the rocket had potential as a long-range weapon of war, and nowhere was this potential better understood than in Germany, where much of the pioneering work on rockets had been done anyway.



Most famous of the German secret weapons of World War II - and by far the most effective - were the surface-to-surface missiles used to bombard the United Kingdom and targets on the mainland of Europe, particularly the port of Antwerp, from late June 1944. As well as the so-called 'Vengeance Weapons', the VI and V2, there were other types (though only one was operational, and then only in a very limited sense), designed to supply data on flight characteristics and to act as concept vehicles for operational types. Not surprisingly, given the success of the V2 ballistic missile, there were plans to develop it still further, though none passed the prototype stage, and most existed only on paper. Many of the scientists and engineers who worked on Germany's rocketry programme went on after the war to become prime movers in the rocketry and space exploration programmes of both the United States of America and the Soviet Union, and were thus instrumental in both putting man into space and establishing a technology which has become a mainstay of modern civilisation.

Above: The Fi 103 R-the manned VI.

Left: This A4 - or V2 - was captured by British forces and fired by British scientists near Cuxhaven in 1945.



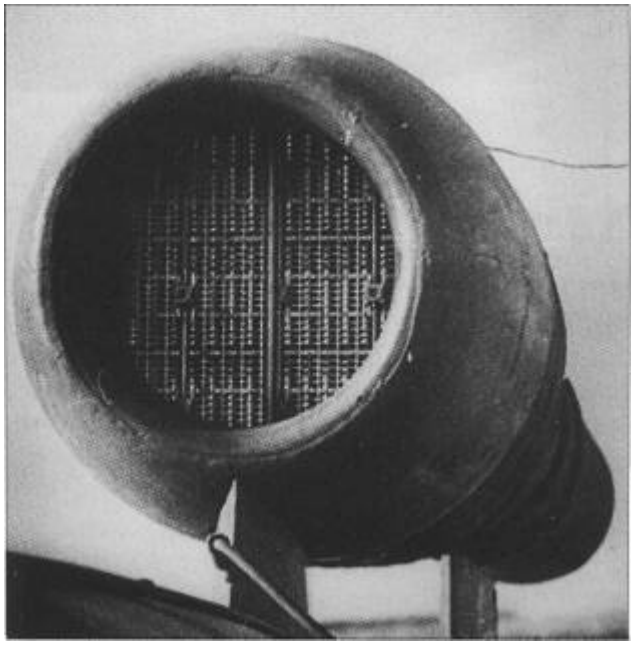
THEFIESELERFM03-THEV1

The Vergeltungswaffe l (the revenge, or retaliation, weapon), or V1, had a plethora of names. To the Luftwaffe, it was the Fliegerabwehrkanonezielgerät 76 (Flakzielgerät 76, or just FZG 76), but that was a cover-name: *Fliegerabwehrkanonezielgerät* means 'anti-aircraft gun aiming device' or conceivably 'anti-aircraft gun target device'. Its official codename was 'Kirschkern' ('Cherrystone') and it was also known as 'Krahe' ('Crow'); while to the RLM it was the Fi 103; and to the airframe manufacturers, Fieseler, it began life as P. 35. To the British public it was the Buzz-bomb, the P-Plane or the Doodlebug, while the RAF knew it as 'Diver'. In effect a first-generation cruise missile, it was an unmanned air-breathing jet aircraft with an explosive warhead and a simple guidance/targeting device, and to relate its history from the very start, we need to go back to 1928.

Paul Schmidt worked primarily in the associated fields of fluid dynamics and aerodynamics, but in 1928 he began experimenting with a simple form of thrust engine known as a pulse-jet. In essence, a pulse-jet is a tubular combustion chamber with a matrix of small, rectangular, spring-loaded flap-valves at the front, into which a suitable fuel (it need be no more exotic than petrol, and low-octane petrol, at that) is injected. The device must be accelerated by

Above: The infamous V1 self-propelled guided bomb. The proto-cruise missile carried a warhead of 830kg (1832lb) of amatol to targets up to about 240km (150 miles) away.

Below: The Argus pulse-jet - small flaps in the aperture were forced open against a spring by air pressure and forced shut by fuel exploding in the jet pipe behind.

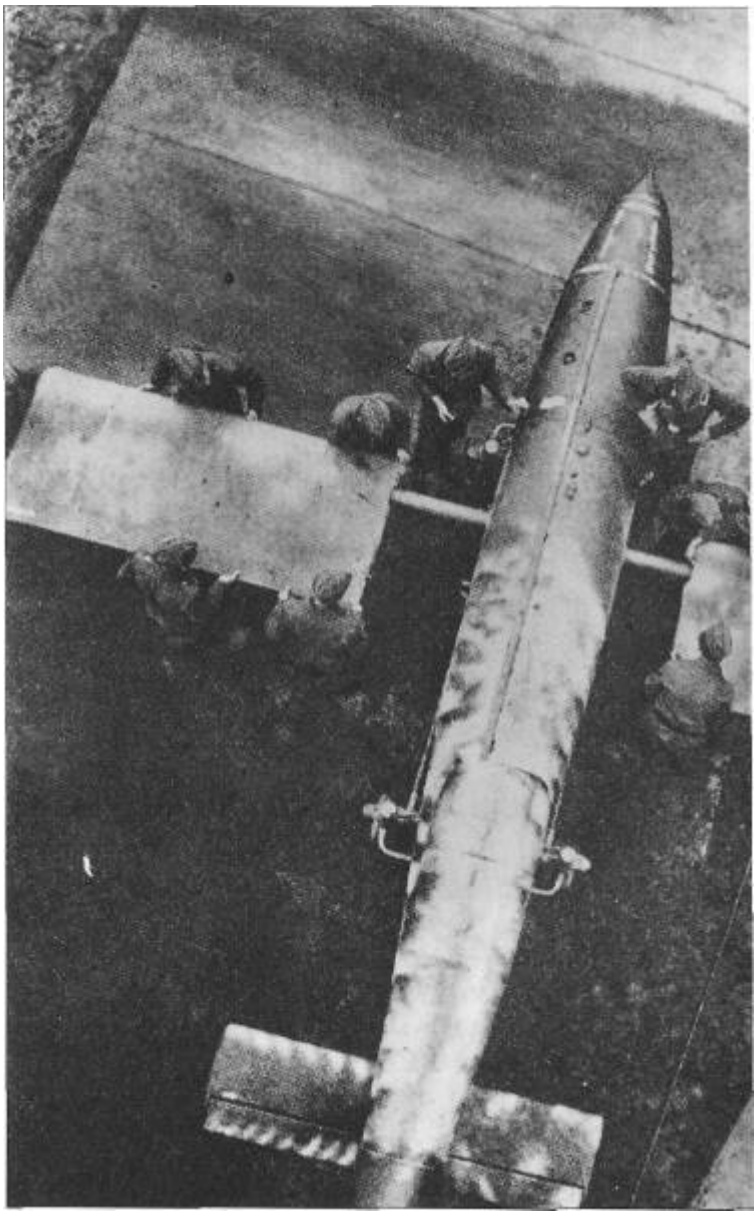


some external means to a critical threshold velocity, something of the order of 300km/h (I86mph), before it will work, though there is the option to supply it with air under sufficient pressure and in sufficient quantity by means of a blower system. As the device travels forward, air is forced past the flap-valves and into the tube; the act of opening the flap-valves opens a second valve, which admits a quantity of petrol under pressure into the tube to form an explosive mixture (in exactly the same way that a petrol engine's fuel injection system does), and also activates a sparking plug. The primary result of the explosion is to blow shut the flap-valves, closing off both air flow and petrol flow, and this has the secondary effect of turning aimless explosion into directed thrust. As the pressure within the tube is reduced to below that of the air trying to rush into the engine from the front, the flap-valves are forced open again, and the whole process is repeated, and so on, many times per second; for example, the Argus 109-014 engine used in the operational Vis cycled 47 times per second.

CHEAP AND SIMPLE

In addition to its inability to self-start, the pulse-jet motor has other limiting factors: it works less effectively as the ambient air pressure drops, and functions poorly at much above 3000m (9800 feet); it operates at a fixed speed, though the dimensions of the combustion chamber can be varied to modify it; and the flap-valves are liable to burn out after a relatively short time. But it has several things in its favour, too: firstly, it works; secondly, it is simple to manufacture; and thirdly, it costs very little.

All in all, it was just the thing to power a short-range surface-to-surface missile, and this was one of the uses Schmidt suggested for it after failing to interest anyone in a vertical take-off aircraft powered by it. He submitted a design to the RLM in 1934. Initially it was poorly received, but after a number of rather more eminent scientists, including Wernher von Braun, took up Schmidt's case, both the RLM and the *Heereswaffenamt* (HWA - the German Army's weapons development and procurement office) took more notice. At last Schmidt got development funds, even if not in great amounts. By 1940, Schmidt's pulse-jets were giving over 500kg (1 lOOlb) of static thrust, but the RLM had started to look elsewhere for alternative developers. It looked, in fact, to the rather more prestigious Argus Motoren-Gesellschaft, where Dr Fritz Gosslau and his team began to develop a pulse-jet engine from first principles. They were not permitted to see Schmidt's engine until March 1940; they adopted his valve system in part, but mostly stuck with their own design. By the end of the year, they had produced a small engine of 150kg (3301b) static thrust, and on 30 April 1941 this engine made its first flight, beneath a Gotha Go 145 two-seater biplane trainer. During the summer, small cargo gliders made flights under pulse-jet power alone, which validated the concept, but it was a further year before the RLM took the next step, and on 19 June 1942,



Above: The flying bombs were delivered to the launch sites dismantled, but it was a simple process to assemble them. Here the VTs wings are being introduced over the tubular main spar.



Above: V1s were launched on ramps by steam catapults. When they reached around 400km/h (250mph), their own powerplants took over and the guidance system took them in a gentle climb to their cruising altitude.

ordered Gerhard Fieseler to begin developing an airframe for a flying bomb. In the meantime Argus carried on developing the powerplant, Walter began work on a catapult launching system, and Siemens set out to produce a guidance system using an existing autopilot as a basis.

The airframe was actually the work of Robert Lusser who, we may recall, was involved in the original P. 1065 project at Messerschmitt, and Willy Fiedler. Development took 18 months, and it was early December of 1942 before the first (unpowered) example was launched from an Fw 200 'Condor' over the test range at Peenemiinde-West, to be followed by the first catapult launch on Christmas Eve. In one form or another, a total of perhaps 350 missiles were expended in the course of testing. At the start, testing did not proceed smoothly. The situation was complicated by the necessity to test all the components together, which made fault isolation difficult, but eventually the design of the air intake and the fuel-supply system were identified as the seats of the worst problems, and when they were re-thought, the bomb flew much more reliably. However, it flew considerably more slowly than had been envisioned, at around 600km/h (370mph), which made it vulnerable to interception by existing fighter aircraft. Consequently, there was a non-stop programme to improve the Vl's performance, both by upping the output of the Argus 109-014 motor (by injecting nitrous oxide into the combustion chamber, for example) and by replacing it with a more powerful unit such as the 109-044 or the Porsche 109-005 turbojet - both of which produced 500kg (1 lOOlb) of static thrust - or by an unspecified ramjet. By the war's end, experimental models were flying at almost 800km/h (500mph). By then, they were faced with much faster interceptors, such as the jet-powered Gloster 'Meteor' which scored its first combat victory on 4 August 1944 when it destroyed a VI by tipping it over with its wingtip to destabilise it. This was not as risky a manoeuvre as one might think, and was deemed preferable to shooting the flying bombs down at close range, with the attendant risk of damage to one's own aircraft. In fact, the Vis were a much easier target for guns on the ground than they were for aircraft, since they flew straight and level and at a fixed speed; more were destroyed by this means than by any other.

DESIGN MODIFICATIONS

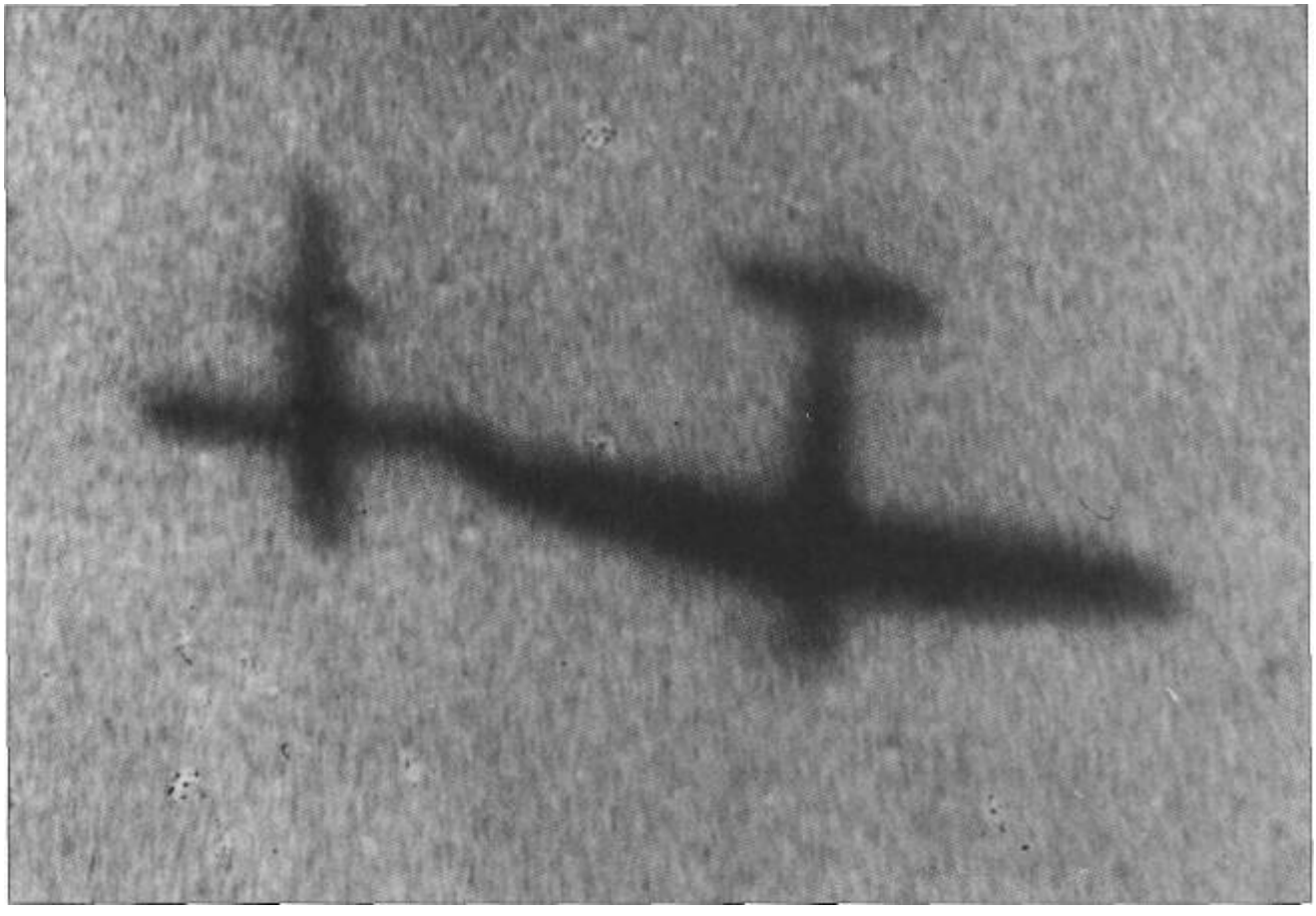
Not entirely surprisingly, the guidance system and its installation proved to be problematic, too. The first difficulty actually showed up before the Fi 103 airframe was completed, and involved the positioning of the engine vis-ä-vis the fuselage. Tests carried out with engines mounted on Do 17 and Ju 88 aircraft showed that the pulse action produced considerable vibration, particularly if the exhaust stream passed over the fuselage, and so the design was modified to move the entire engine aft so that it overhung the tail by some considerable extent. Close attention had to be paid to the mountings, and eventually a system was adopted which combined a pivoted yoke at the front secured with a single pinned lug to the tail fin, both of the mountings in rubber bushes. However, there were still problems with vibration. The guidance system itself relied on a gyroscope for control in all three axes, linked to a master compass set to the desired heading before launch for azimuth control, and an aneroid barometer for altitude control. Corrections were transmitted to the servo-motors acting on the

rudder and elevators by means of compressed air. The distance flown was computed by means of an air-log driven by a small airscrew in the nosecone, and when a predetermined figure had been reached, a pair of detonators exploded, locking the elevator and rudder and deploying two spoilers, forcing the aircraft into a dive. This somewhat complicated procedure was necessary because the temperature in the jet pipe was high enough, even after just a few seconds' running, to sustain ignition alone, as there was no critical timing to worry about, and so the rather simpler method of cutting the current to the spark plug would have had no effect. It would perhaps have been possible to cut the fuel supply instead, though since the fuel system was pressurised this was not entirely predictable either, and in any event, it was actually more desirable for the vehicle to go into a powered dive. For some time the fuel did tend to cut out as the VI tipped over. This was not a feature, but a fault which was eventually corrected.

The bomb was equipped with three different types of fuze: an electrical impact fuze, powered by an onboard battery and with a resistor/condenser circuit which held enough charge to detonate the device if the battery connection was severed on impact; an

Below: Since V1s flew at a constant speed, at constant height and on a straight course, it was relatively simple for anti-aircraft gunners to establish a box barrage, particularly at night when the jet flare was obvious.





Above: The preferred way to destroy the bombs from the air was to tip them off course - not as risky a business as one might suppose. The aircraft pictured in this gun camera shot is, from its wingform, a Spitfire.

electro-mechanical all-ways fuze with a trembler switch; and a mechanical (clockwork) delayed fuze. The impact fuze had three actuators: one in the nose and one in the belly (both of which functioned by pressure); and an inertial switch in the fuze itself. The fuzing system was so good that of the first 2500 to hit the UK, only four failed to go off.

The launch system was less problematical than other elements, and employed a simple steam catapult, the steam being generated by the reaction of the same T-Stoff and Z-Stoff (basically hydrogen peroxide and calcium or potassium permanganate, as we might recall) used in rocket motors. The catapult track was a slotted tube 42m (138ft) long, inclined at an angle of six and a half degrees (later, a track half that length was employed), on a concrete and steel bed, within which a dumbell-shaped free piston ran. The piston incorporated a fin which protruded through the slot in the tube, and engaged with a simple trolley on which the missile sat. The slot was sealed by a tubular strip which trailed behind the piston to be forced into the slot by the pressure of the steam. The fuel to generate the steam was contained in tanks on a trolley, which also held the forged steel steam generation chamber, secured to the rear of the launch tube by a bayonet fitting. Alongside the rear of the ramp, there was a starter unit which contained the equipment necessary to get the pulse-jet operating.

LAUNCHING THE V1

The launch procedure was straightforward. The pulse jet was fired up and allowed to run for seven seconds, bringing it up to the correct operating temperature. The valve on a large bottle of compressed air was then opened by remote control, forcing 60 litres (13.2 gallons) of T-Stoff and 5 litres (1.09 gallons) of Z-Stoff into the steam generation vessel. Their reaction generated a large volume of super-heated steam, and as soon as the pressure in the chamber built up sufficiently, a restraining bolt sheared, whereupon the piston was free to travel up the tube, carrying launch trolley and missile with it. By the time it reached the end of the track - little more than half a second later,

having been accelerated at a rate of around 16 *g* - the whole assembly was travelling at around 400km/h (25()mph) and the pulse-jet had started to run independently. The piston was literally fired out of the tube and fell to earth some distance away (along with the launch trolley) to be recovered later, while the flying bomb began its climb to operational height at a rate of about 150m (492ft) per minute. The guidance system corrected its course as it went, and the aneroid capsule reset the elevators for level flight when the pre-determined altitude was reached.

The Fieseler Fi 103 A-1, the original and technically most common version of the flying bomb, was about 8m (26ft) long. Its wingspan was of around 5m (17ft) although there were two different wings produced in slightly different form and dimensions, and it had a maximum fuselage diameter of 0.84m (2.75ft); the warhead comprised 830kg (18321b) of Trialen (amatol), which was sometimes supplemented by incendiary bombs. Provision was made to replace the explosive with gas, though this never happened in practice. A full load of 75-80 octane fuel added 515kg (11331b) to the all-up launch weight total of 2180kg (48061b). It had an autonomous range of 240km (150 miles) at a maximum speed of 645km/h (400mph), and an operational ceiling of 3000m (9800ft). It was fabricated from sheet steel pressings, with an aluminium nosecone and sheet-steel wings around a single tubular steel spar. The emphasis was on keeping costs to a minimum, and little effort was put into reducing weight by employing more exotic materials. In 1945, the Fi 103 F-l was produced. Basically similar to the A-l, its warhead contained

Below: Very few V1 s were recovered intact after they had been brought down, but some failed to explode and gave up their secrets instead. Here, RAF personnel are seen examining one in a bean field, somewhere in Kent.



FIESELER Fi 103 (V1) STANDARD MODEL

Type: Cruise missile
Length: 8.32m (27.3ft)
Span: 5.30m (17.39ft)
Launch weight: 2180kg (4806lb)
Max speed (later models): 800km/h (497mph)
Range: 240km (150 miles)
Warhead: 830kg (1832lb) of amatol



Above: The Fieseler Fi 103, to give the V1 its official name, was unleashed in earnest against England in Operation Boxroom, which began in June 1944.

436kg (9621b) of amatol, and its fuel tanks were enlarged from 568 litres (125 gallons) to 756 litres (166 gallons), increasing range to 370km (230 miles).

THE V1 CAMPAIGN BEGINS

The first operational Vis were launched in the early hours of 13 June 1944. Just 10 missiles were deployed: four crashed immediately; two fell into the sea; and four hit the Home Counties (one in Sussex, one near Sevenoaks in Kent, one in the south-eastern suburbs of London, and one in Bethnal Green, north of the Thames). Two days later, *Unternehmen Rumpelkammer* (Operation Boxroom) commenced in earnest, and between 2200 hours on 15 June and 12 noon the following day, 244 Vis were launched, most of them against London and some against Southampton which was the re-supply base for the invasion force, even then trying to fight its way out of the beachhead in Normandy. More than half of the flying bombs launched (144 in all) crossed the English coast, and 34 were shot down by anti-aircraft guns and fighter aircraft.

This campaign from launch sites in the Pas de Calais continued until the end of August, by which time Allied troops were closing in. The Luftwaffe's Flakregiment 155 (W), its name a cover like the FZG 76 designation, had been set up in August 1943 under the command of Colonel Max Wachtel, and it packed up and moved to Holland with the intention of concentrating activities on Antwerp. By that time, it had launched 9017 missiles, 6725 of which had reached England. As many as 2340 landed in the Greater London area, the vast majority of them exploding as planned. Other reports suggest that 8892 missiles were launched with the UK as their target during the entire war, and still others put the total at fractionally over 10,000. As early as 7 July, the ground launches had been supplemented by air launches from Heinkel He 111 bombers of HI/KG 3, based at Gilze Rijen in Holland, which carried one missile each on a pylon located just outboard of the starboard wing root, and launched it at an altitude of 450m (1500ft) over the North Sea. By the end of August, over 400 missiles had been deployed in this way, mostly against London, but some against Southampton and Bristol.

Air-launched operations against targets in the United Kingdom recommenced in mid-September in a campaign which lasted until mid-January. A total of around 1200 missiles were launched (some of them at targets as far north as Manchester, though only one reached that particular objective), but only around 20 per cent of them got through to populated areas and just 66 landed on London, still the prime target in the UK. During the same period, around 1600 missiles were air-launched against Antwerp and Brussels. In all, they cost the Luftwaffe 80 aircraft shot down.

On 3 March 1945, a new campaign against London started from sites in Holland, using F-l missiles with greater fuel capacity and a smaller warhead, but this was of only very limited success. The last flying bomb landed in London on 29 March. In all, a total of 2419 Vis had hit London and 2448 had struck Antwerp (though these were not the only targets, of course), representing roughly 25 per cent of those launched. It is estimated that VI rockets were responsible for the deaths of perhaps 12,000 people. Official figures put the death toll in the UK at 6184, with 17,981 injured. Altogether, around 34,000 Vis were



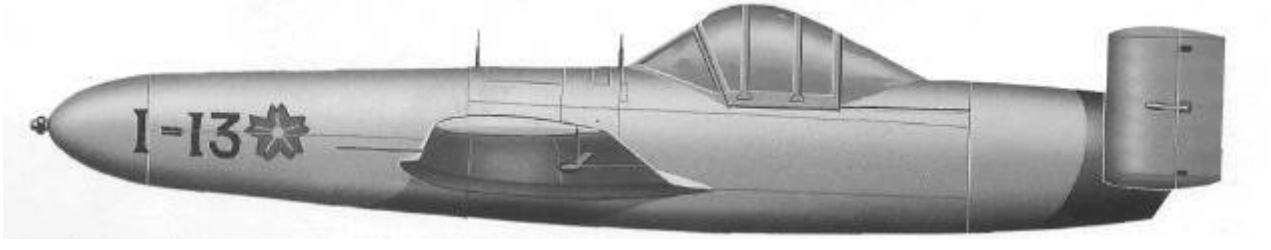
produced, by Fieseler, Volkswagen (initially with a marked lack of success), and 'Mittelwerke', the underground factory at Nordhausen in the Harz mountains staffed almost exclusively by slave labour. The V1 was very cost-effective, even if it was at best only 20 per cent effective. Estimates of the unit cost vary, but around 5000 Reichsmarks seems reasonable at a time when the standard German infantry rifle, the Mauser 98K, was costing RM56, and a PzKpfw IV tank over RM 100,000.

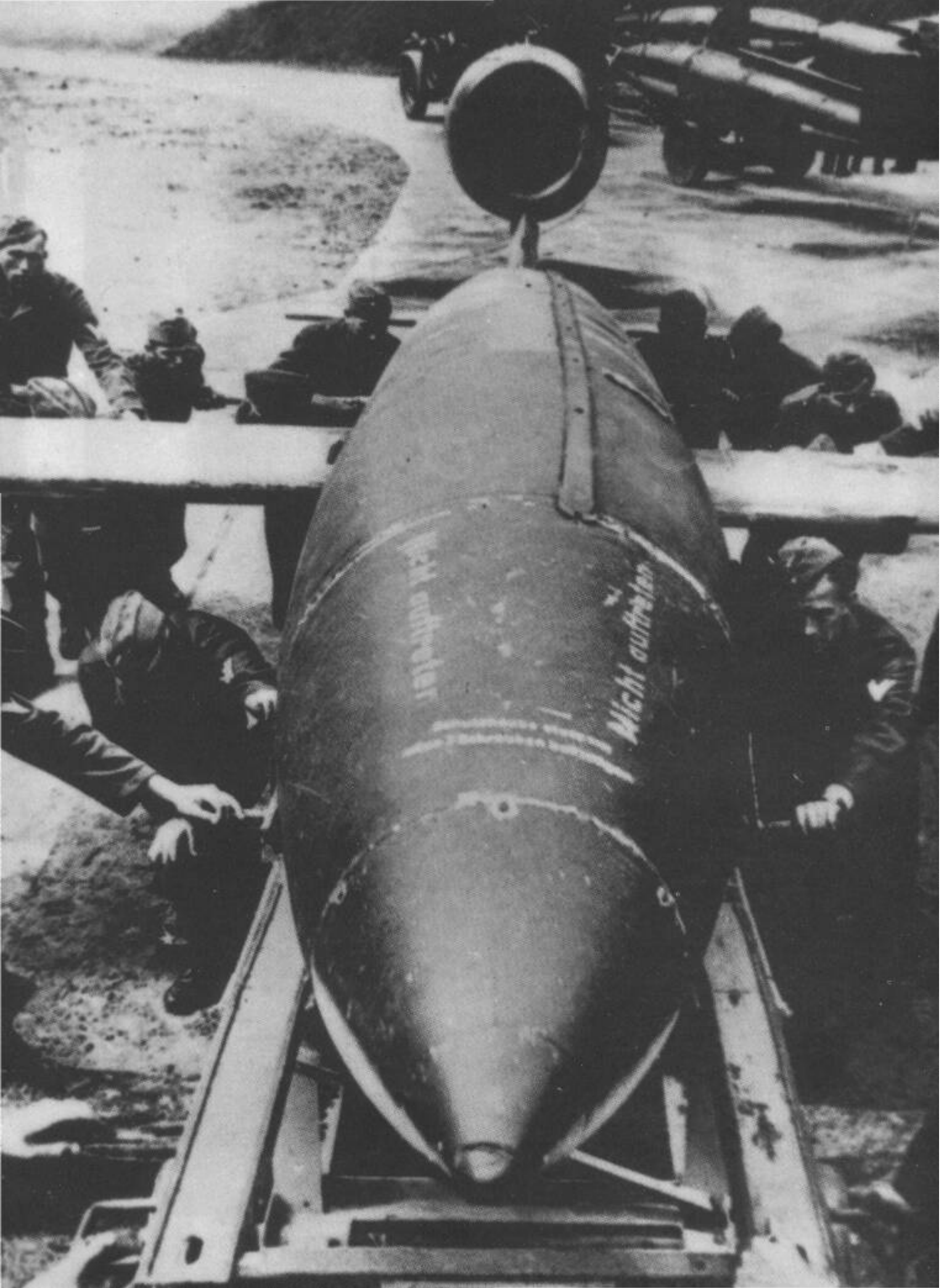
Above: The Reichenberg IV, seen here, was the operational version of the manned flying bomb, with a warhead but without the landing skid on its belly or flaps on the trailing surface of the wings. None was ever flown in combat.

Below: The Japanese Navy also worked on a manned flying bomb, the Yokosuka MXY7 'Ohka'. Simpler than the Reichenberg, it had rocket boosters to accelerate its gliding attack and only rudimentary flight controls.

YOKOSUKA MXY7 'OHKA'

Type: Single-seat suicide missile
Length: 6.066m (19.9ft)
Span: 5.12m (16.8ft)
Max take-off weight: 2140kg (4718lb)
Max speed: 649km/h (403mph) at 3500m (11,482ft)
Range: 37km (23 miles)
Warhead: 1200kg (2646lb) of explosives




Nicht aufklappen

Left: A complete VI weighed some 2.032 tonnes (2 tons), and it was customary to manhandle it into position at the foot of the ramp on its launch cradle.

THE SELBSTOPFERMÄNNER BOMBER

Desperate times breed desperate men, and both remaining arms of the Axis began to consider formalised suicide tactics, perhaps from as early as late 1943. The most famous of these was the Japanese Kamikaze (Divine Wind) campaign against ships of the Royal and US Navies from the time of the Battle of Leyte Gulf (23-26 October 1944), but Germany, too, made preparations for the use of such tactics, the most significant of those involving a manned version of the Fi 103 flying bomb. This was actually the first vehicle considered, but it was rejected in favour of a glider version of the Me 328, while a unit equipped with Fw 190s, known as 'Kommando Lange[1], or the 'Staffel Leonidas', was formed to begin training for missions which involved the pilot placing his aircraft - carrying the maximum possible bombload - in a steep dive aimed at the target before baling out and taking to his parachute. Eventually, the Me 328 project lost momentum, and it became clear that the chances of penetrating anti-aircraft defences in a Fw 190 carrying a sufficient bombload to be effective were extremely slim.

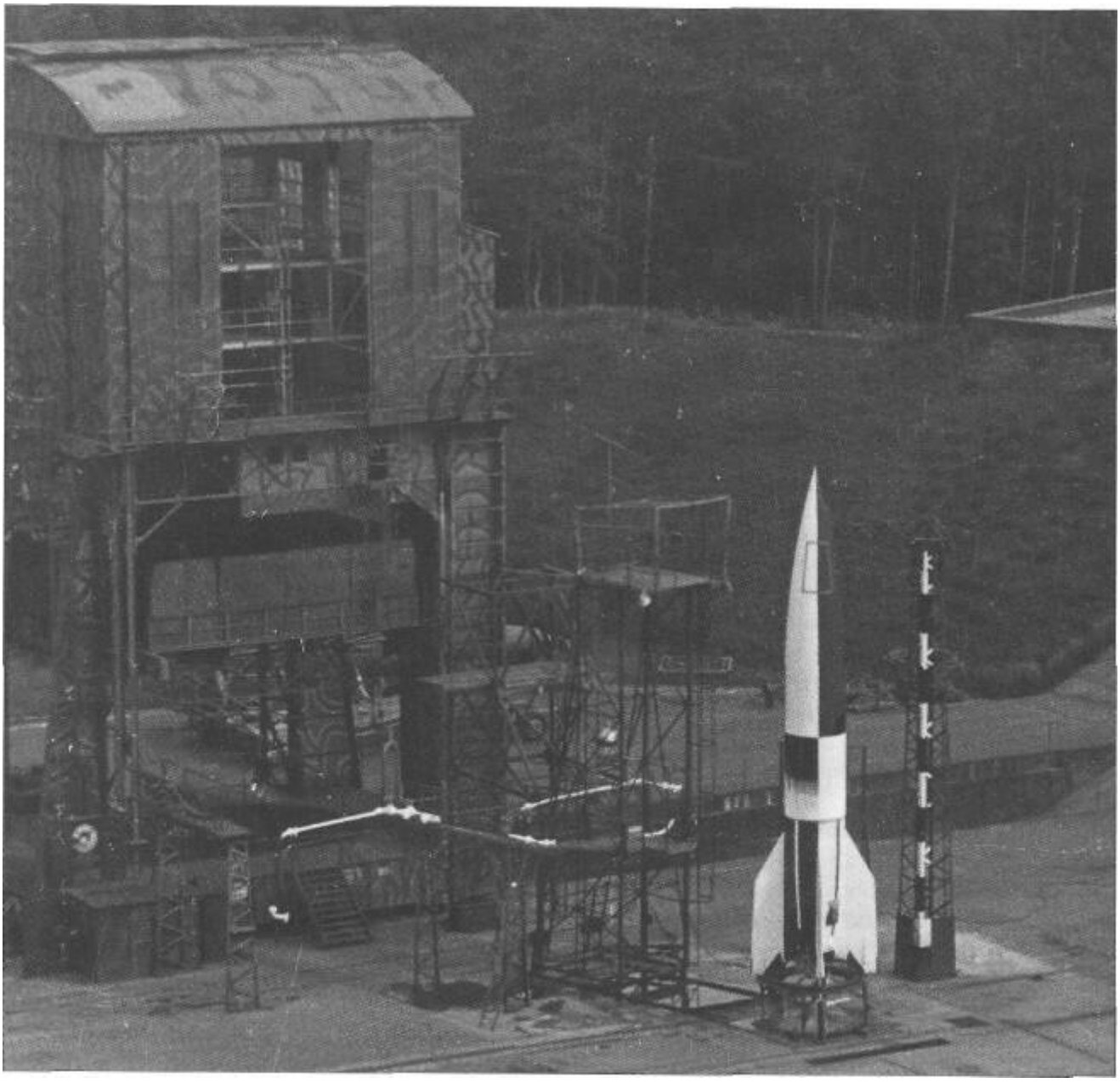
Attention returned to the use of the Fi 103. Designs for four different versions were worked up by DPS, and Henschel converted four standard VI missiles. The operational codename for the project was 'Reichenberg', and the four versions of the aircraft received 'R' prefixes, I through to IV. The Fi 103 R-I was a single-seater with ballast in place of its warhead; it had skids and landing flaps, but no motor: it was constructed for the test programme. The R-II was similar, but with a second cockpit in the nose section. The R-III was designed for advanced training, and was essentially the R-I equipped with an engine. The R-IV was the operational model, with no landing aids but with ailerons, and with the warhead reinstated. There are suggestions that the warhead might have been replaced with a cannon and the aircraft used as an interceptor, too. About 175 are thought to have been built in all.

The test pilots for the development programme were Heinz Kensche and the ubiquitous Hanna Reitsch, and they reported favourably on the aircraft's performance in flight (though there were hair-raising moments, apparently) but were not so enthusiastic about landing it. One can imagine that landing was hardly a consideration as these aircraft were never meant to be landed after use, except on training flights. The intention was for the pilot to aim the aircraft at its target and then bale out, but frankly, the arrangements made for him (or her) to exit the aircraft were somewhat cynical. The cockpit was located well aft - aft of the trailing edge of the wings - and almost underneath the motor's air intake, against which it jammed before it had been opened through the 45 degrees necessary to jettison it. Even if the pilot succeeded in freeing it, he would have had little chance of levering himself out of the cockpit in a steep dive at speeds in excess of 1000km/h (62()mph) without being seriously injured, if not killed. Although thousands volunteered for the *Selbstopfermänner* bomber programme and 70 were accepted for training, they were never asked to go into action, so in the final analysis, it is not important. Japanese pilots who flew the 'Ohka' flying bombs in the latter stages of the Kamikaze campaign were treated more honestly: they were sealed into their aircraft and knew they had no chance of getting out. The efficacy of the Japanese Kamikaze campaign gives some indication of the sort of results they were expected to achieve. Between 21 February and 15 August 1945,17 ships were sunk and 198 damaged for the loss of 930 aircraft, both flying bombs and escorts.

THE'AGGREGAT'ROCKETS

In the aftermath of the defeat of 1918, Germany was severely limited in terms of the weapons she could possess. As we noted earlier, there was a large-scale campaign to circumvent the restrictions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles by establishing development programmes abroad, but there were other avenues open, too; for instance, as early as 1929, the *Heereswaffenamt* began to look into rocketry as an alternative to long-range artillery, and set up a trials and proving ground about 32km (20 miles) south of Berlin at Kummersdorf. Captain Walter Dornberger, a professional soldier who had been sent by the Army to the School of Technology at Charlottenberg, and had earned an MA in ballistics there, was put in charge of the project in 1930 under the HWA's head, Karl Becker, himself very enthusiastic.

In 1927, a group of keen amateurs, centred on Hermann Oberth, author of *Die Rakete zu den Planetenräumen (The Rocket into Interplanetary Space),* published in 1923, formed the Society for Space Travel, the *Verein für Raumschiffahrt.* They began to experiment with rocket motors, and were funded initially by

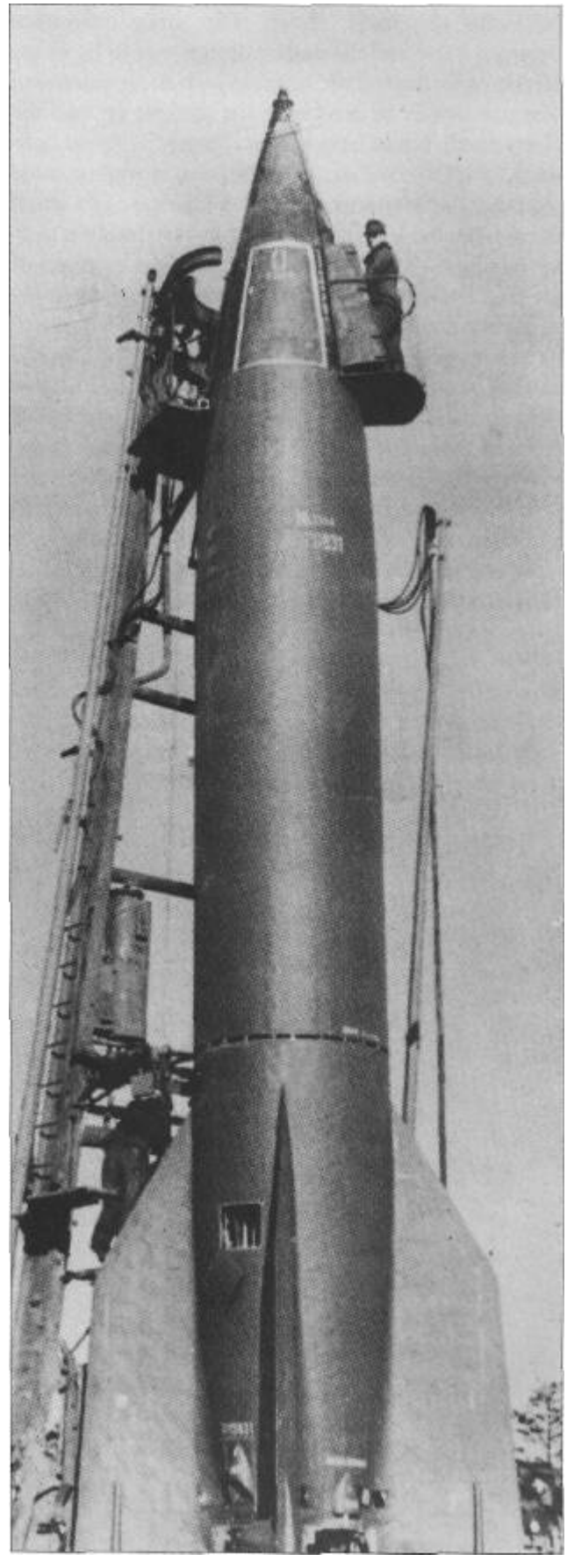


Above: The launch pad at the Peenemünde research station, deep in the pine forests of the island of Usedom on the remote Baltic coast. All the test flights of the A4 were initiated from this site.

Fritz von Opel (who, we may recall, had commissioned a rocket-powered glider from Alexander Lippisch, and had also built a rocket-assisted car, the RAK 2), and funded latterly by a 10,000-franc prize Oberth won in 1929 for his book *Wege zur Raumschiffahrt (Ways to Spaceflight).* In 1930, a promising student named Wernher von Braun joined the Society and the following year, they successfully flew a small rocket fuelled by liquid oxygen and petrol. By then, funds were running short, but fortuitously, the Society was approached by Dornberger, who arranged for them to receive a series of small grants. In 1932, von Braun, just graduated from the Berlin Technical Institute with a BSc in mechanical engineering, went to work at Kummersdorf and by December 1934, his group had launched two liquid-oxygen- and alcohol-fuelled rockets, designated A2, which had reached altitudes of over 2500m (8200ft).

In 1935, work started on a new rocket, the A3, which weighed 750kg (16551b) and stood 7.6m (25ft) tall. It, too, was fuelled by A-Stoff (liquid oxygen, at -183 degrees C) and M-Stoff (methyl alcohol, or methanol), but this time the motor produced 1500kg

Right: A technician is photographed making last-minute adjustments to the guidance system prior to launching an A4 rocket, which has been brought to the vertical position by the mobile erector.



(33001b) of thrust for 45 seconds instead of the 300kg (6601b) for 16 seconds of the A2. More important, perhaps, was the new method of stabilisation which von Braun's team devised. Whereas the A2 was stabilised by its centre section being spun by an electric motor to create a gyroscopic effect, the A3 would have small molybdenum 'rudders' (more accurately, vanes) acting to deflect a portion of the exhaust stream under the control of gyroscopes. The A3 also had four rudimentary tail fins, though these hardly extended outside the diameter of the body. Its payload consisted of an instrumentation package, and it was to return to earth on a parachute. The first A3 launch took place on 6 December 1937 from the island of Greifswalder Oie, off the Baltic coast. The new stabilisers worked, but other elements of the design, in particular the overall aerodynamics, were faulty, and the rocket was never entirely a success, although three examples were launched.

THEMOVETOPEENEMUNDE

By then, the research group was fast outgrowing the facilities at Kummersdorf. The A2s were actually launched from the island of Borkum, off the mouth of the River Ems in the North Sea. In early 1936, the HWA and the RLM joined forces to purchase a large area of suitable land, an isolated peninsula around the village of Peenemünde on the island of Usedom, off the Baltic coast close to the present-day border with Poland. They also bought the adjacent Greifswalder Oie, and it was to this location that both moved their rocket development programmes. The Army were located to the east of the site, in an area known as *Heeresversuchsanstalt-Peenemünde* (HVP), and referred to as *Electromechanische Werke* (EMW) as a cover, where Dornberger was appointed Head of Weapon Test Section 11, with von Braun as his Technical Director. It was here that the first successful ballistic missiles the world had ever seen were developed and tested, and the name Peenemünde soon took on a new significance.

After the failure of the A3 to live up to expectations, development work on the A4, which was always intended to be a military rocket, was halted. Instead, von Braun turned to the design of another research rocket, the A5, somewhat larger than the A3

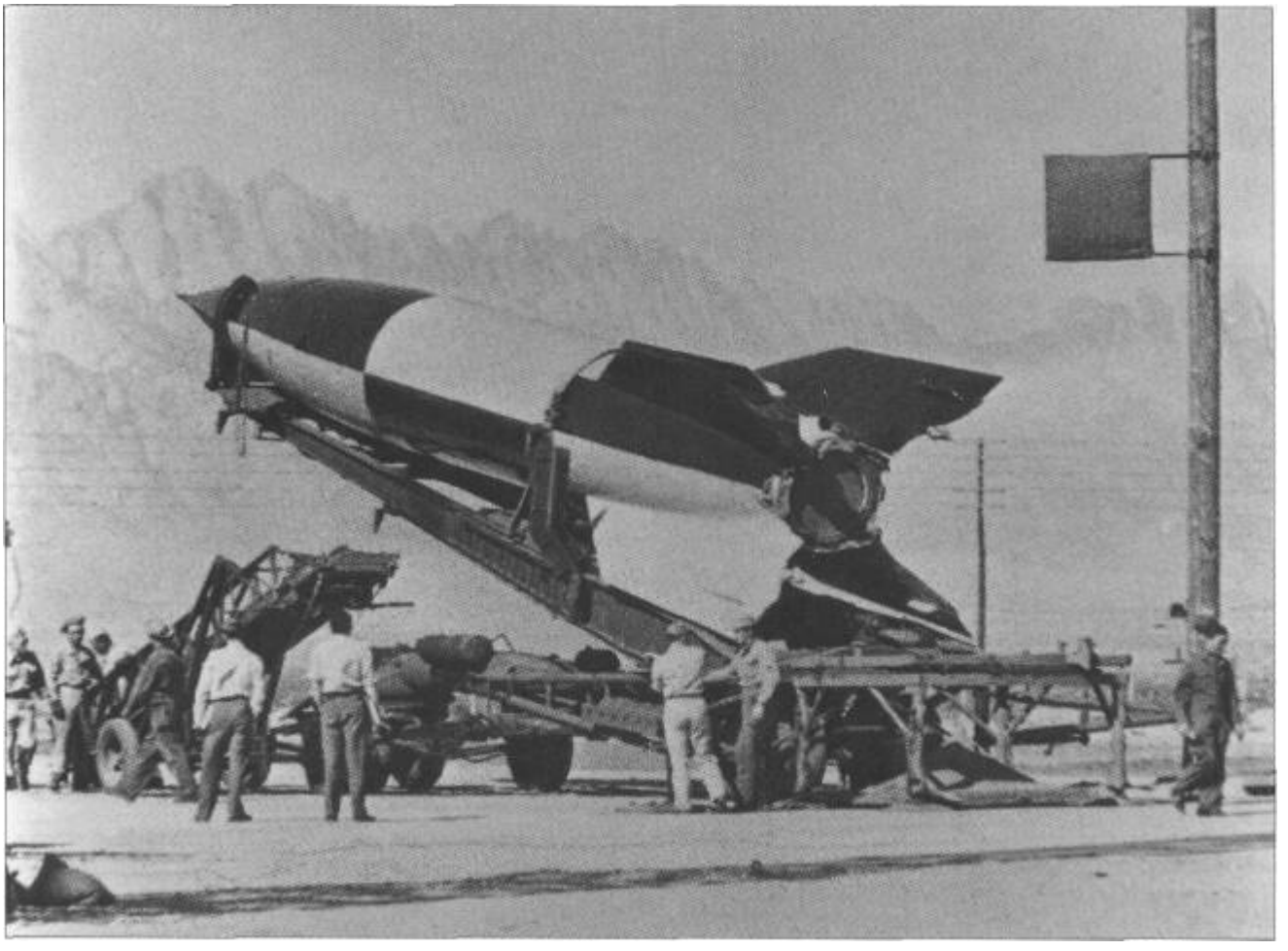
but with the same motor. The main difference between these and the earlier design was to be in the profile of its flight path, because now the requirement was not simply to send a rocket straight up into the atmosphere, but to launch it at a terrestrial target hundreds of kilometres away, and for that, a sophisticated guidance package was required. In the case of a small device like the V1, basic direction was simply a matter of aligning the launch ramp with the azimuth of the target, and then relying on a gyrocompass to apply small corrections. But steering the ballistic missile to its target would be quite another matter, since it would have to be launched vertically, and then tipped over in the precise direction of the target to an angle of 41 degrees from the horizontal and maintained there. Range was determined by the length of the burn, and that meant that propellant cut-off had to be precise and instantaneous. Cut-off was actuated initially by a radio signal from the ground, and was the only external factor applied after the launch sequence had been initiated (and this, too, being later automated). Without going too far into the intricacies of the matter, to achieve a proper degree of directional stability in a ballistic missile it is necessary to be able to control its movement in three axes: pitch (to achieve and maintain the proper angle of climb); yaw (side-to-side movement, to correct the heading); and spin, which is a natural tendency of a cylindrical body in motion, but which makes controlling pitch and yaw by means of rudders almost impossible, and which must be damped out. To make matters worse, the characteristics of the missile - in particular the all-important centre of gravity - change as its fuel is consumed, and its flight characteristics change no less drastically as it climbs into and through the upper atmosphere and then descends again on its parabolic course.

Below: The RAF launched a major raid on Peenmünde on the night of 17/18 August 1943, and caused considerable damage, particularly to accommodation blocks. Both slave labourers and research staff died in the raid.

EPOCH-MAKING RESEARCH

All in all, the problems of guidance were the most complex Wernher von Braun's team had to face, and they solved them definitively and, we may add, with nothing more sophisticated than slide-rules and mechanical calculators; it is perhaps significant that some of the first simple computers were produced to solve ballistic problems. The team used three-axis gyroscopes controlling small rudders built into the tips of the fins, supplemented by deflector vanes,





Above: Many of the A4s captured intact found their way to the United States (as did most of the development team). This A4 is being readied for launch, probably at the White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.

made now of graphite rather than molybdenum, in the exhaust stream during the first few seconds of flight, when the airflow over the conventional control surfaces was insufficient. The team's work on the remote north coast of Germany under increasingly difficult conditions between 1938 and 1945 was actually to change civilisation itself - if not in the sense that at least some of them intended - by enabling man to leave earth for the first time.

During 1938, work proceeded on the new design, and by the year's end, four unguided launches had been made to a distance of 17km (10.6 miles), and an altitude of 11,000m (36,000ft). Work on the guidance system continued. By October 1939, a month or so into World War II, the guidance and control package - in fact, every essential component of the A4 except its warhead and motor - had been assembled in the rocket, and test firing commenced. The results were successful, and in early 1940 Dornberger thankfully ordered work on the A4 to begin once again, with a production target date of mid-1943. He bargained without Adolf Hitler.

By July 1940, it seemed that Hitler's war would be over by the year's end, with virtually all of Europe under his control, the Soviet Union pacified by treaty, and Britain isolated. It was then that the Führer gave the fateful order to cancel any research project which could not be guaranteed to show results within 12 months. One of the first casualties was Dornberger's war rocket. Or so, at any rate, went the theory. In fact, Dornberger managed to evade the directive by continuing to work on individual components, including the 25,000kg- (55,1251b-) thrust engine, and was also able to continue the A5 programme, which was still supplying much-needed data on flight characteristics.

In fact, test firings of the new motor, the brainchild of Dr Walter Thiel, had already begun. These tests had revealed that there would be additional problems in its operation, relating purely to scale, particularly in



cooling it and supplying it with sufficient fuel. The calculations had shown that to obtain 'the required thrust, it would be necessary to deliver almost 125kg (2751b) of fuel to the combustion chamber every second. The earlier rockets had required very much less, and it had been sufficient to pressurise the propellant tanks with nitrogen. But now it was necessary to devise a means of actually pumping the fuel and the liquid oxygen from tank to burner. The method chosen was a steam turbine, and the means of generating the steam was the same as that used in the Vl's launch catapult: the near-explosive decomposition of T-Stoff into super-heated steam when it came into contact with the catalyst Z-Stoff. The turbine thus powered produced around 675hp and ran at 500()rpm.

TO THE MARGINS OF SPACE

Thanks to a long catalogue of setbacks (and, we may imagine, the need to keep the project at least partially hidden from those who would have preferred more resources to have gone into their own laboratories), the hand-built prototype A4 was not ready for static testing until 18 March 1942, and even then, it exploded. Von Braun's team built another one, which exploded too, but eventually they managed to make enough progress to dare a test flight. Scheduled for 13 June, it was a failure. Von Braun returned if not to the drawing board, at least to the workshop, and readied another prototype. After a second failed test launch, on 16 August, happily for von Braun and Dornberger, the third attempt on 3 October proved more successful. The missile flew over 200km (125 miles) to an altitude of 85km (53 miles) and thus into the ionosphere at the margins of space; it returned to earth within 4km (2.5 miles) of its intended target. Now all that remained was to sell the concept as a weapon of war; by late 1942 that was not much of a problem.

Hitler endorsed the V2 programme, as it soon became known, on 22 December, It was held up by shortages of strategic materials and by the RAF, which sent a mixed force of 596 aircraft to drop 1828 tonnes (1800 tons) of bombs on Peenemünde on the night of 17 August, losing 40 aircraft and killing around 800 people on the ground - most of them conscripted Polish labourers, but including Dr Thiel - and setting back the programme by perhaps two months. It had seemed for a while that the Army-sponsored A4 would lose out to the Air Force's Fi 103, but a demonstration of both before high-ranking government officials in May 1943 came at a bad time for the latter, and the A4 programme survived. As the war situation worsened that year, Hitler became more and more interested in the A4, eventually giving it the highest priority, allocating production facilities at one of Henschel's factories and at the Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen. Both sites were bombed before production could start up, in fact, and A4s were instead assembled at the 'Mittelwerke' underground factory at Nordhausen from components manufactured all over occupied Europe. First deliveries were made in July 1944, and from September, the month when the V2 campaign started, a steady output of over 600 a month was maintained. Meanwhile, a training and test unit was established and launch sites were selected.

There were two opposing views as to how the V2s should be deployed. The *Oberkommando des Heeres* (OK.H - Army High Command) wanted huge, well-protected fixed sites, and selected three locations in Northern France from which rockets could be launched against England. The first of these, at Watten, near St Omer, was destroyed by the USAAF on 27 August 1943 while construction was still in an early phase; the second, at Siracourt, and the third, in a quarry at Wizernes, were truly massive affairs, over one million tonnes (one million tons) of reinforced concrete being cast into a protective dome, beneath which storage and launch chambers, and accommodation, were hollowed out. They were both destroyed by the RAF in July 1944 as part of Operation Crossbow (the broader campaign to destroy the VI launch sites) using 'Tallboy' penetration bombs, and finished off with remotely controlled B-17 Flying Fortresses, packed with explosive, the following month. With that, the thoughts of the high command turned to the sort of mobile launchers that Dornberger had been advocating all along.

30-VEHICLE BATTERY

Given the complexity of the missile itself, the launch procedure was quite straightforward. One of the trucks in the battery's 30-vehicle convoy carried a circular launch platform fabricated from steel, which incorporated a blast deflector. This was set up on the ground at the rear of the missile transporter and levelled by means of screw jacks in its four legs. TheFR-Anhanger-S missile transporter, commonly known as the 'Meillerwagen' after its manufacturer, was

Left: Some captured A4 rockets were launched from sites in Germany into the German test target zones. Here, British personnel prepare to launch a V2 using the original equipment, including the 'Meillerwagen' erector/launcher.

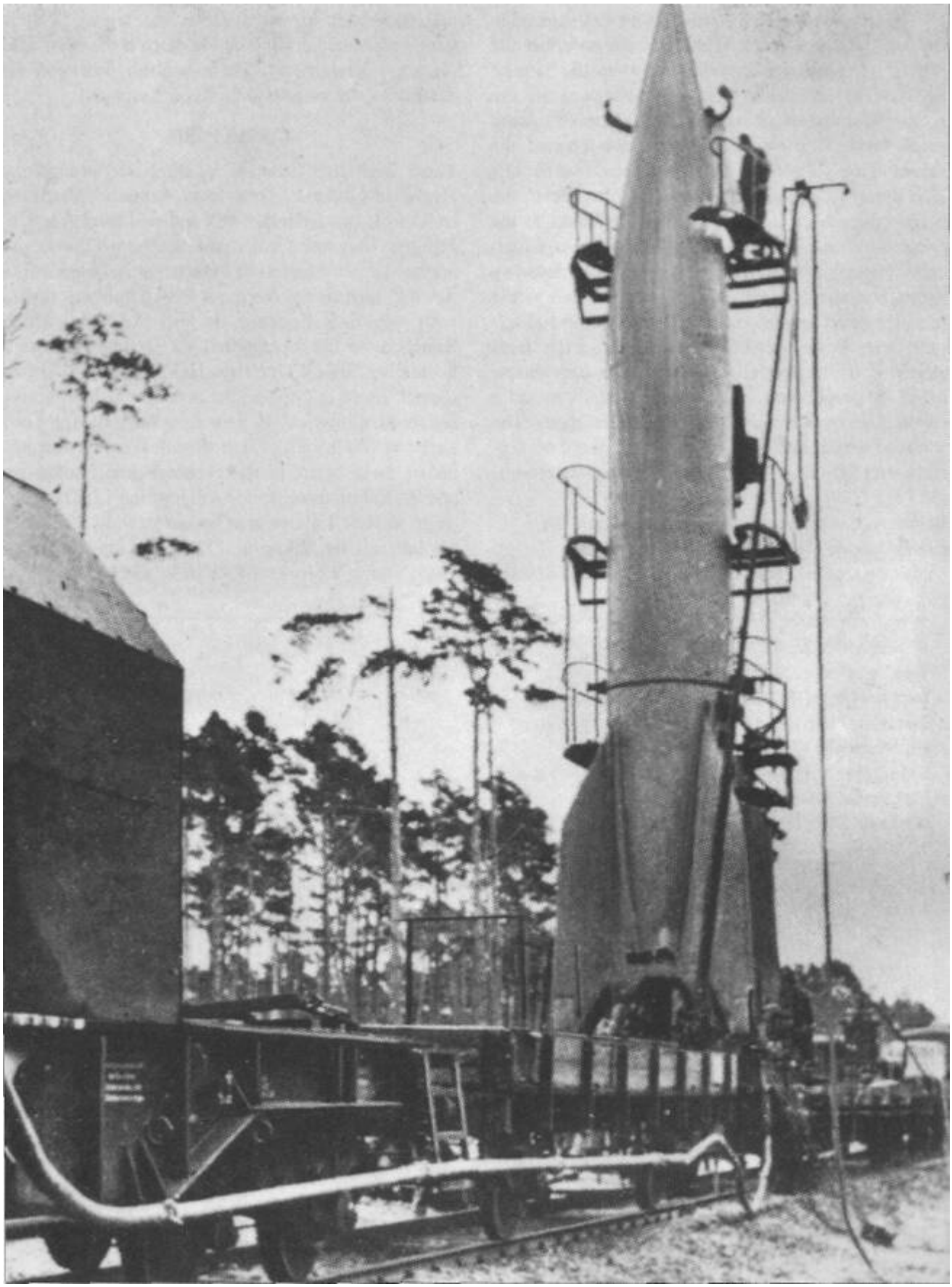
secured to it. While the power and test cables were being run out from the generator and control trucks, two of the three straps retaining the missile on its trailer bed were removed, leaving the topmost in place, and the nose fuze was then inserted. An auxiliary motor provided power for the hydraulic rams which then raised the missile to the vertical position - a process which took about 12 minutes - and when it was hanging vertically over the launch platform, the latter was jacked up to take the missile's weight and the top retaining strap was removed.

The various cables were then connected up, the transporter withdrew a short distance so that hinged platforms on its gantry could be deployed as work stations, and the testing procedure began. Once this had been successfully completed, the fuelling crews went to work, filling the main tanks with liquid oxygen and methanol and the smaller tanks with hydrogen peroxide and the permanganate catalyst. Then the launch platform was rotated on its base to align the missile with the target (the process of tipping it in flight was carried out by spinning a drum around its horizontal axis, thus causing the missile to rotate slowly in the opposite direction; the axis of the drum had, therefore, to be precisely at right-angles to the azimuth of the target). Lastly, the igniter - a small firework, set off electrically - was wedged into the tail pipe, and the set-up crews withdrew.

Right: In addition to the 'Meillerwagen' and its fleet of associated vehicles, A4 launch teams also employed special trains. They were somewhat less flexible logistically but smoother in operation.

Below: The A4 rocket - even without its 975kg (2150lb) warhead filled with amatol mix- could make a very large hole in the ground indeed... This crater was the result of a test firing at White Sands.





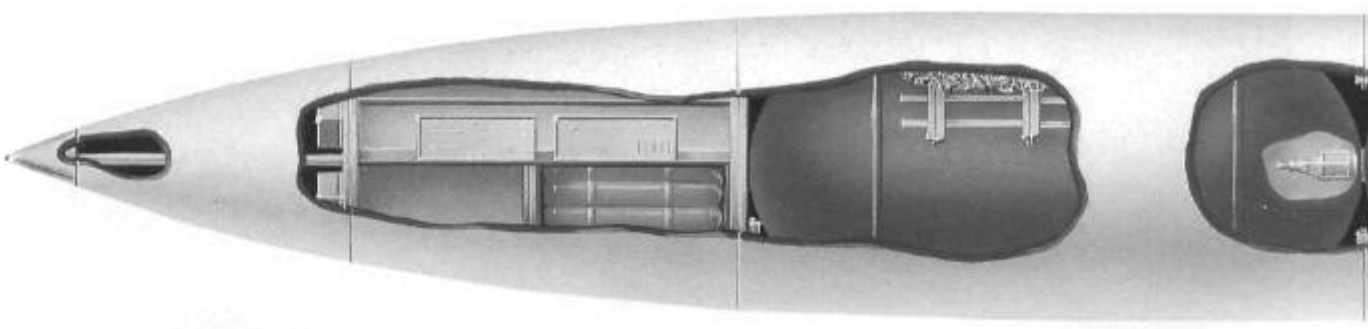
The armoured launch control booth was situated in the back of a half-track vehicle, based on either the SdKfV, 11 Leichter Zugkraftwagen or the similar SdKfz 251 Mittlerer Schützenpanzerwagen, the armoured maid-of-all-work of the German Army since 1944. Closing the firing switch opened the valves in the T-Stoff and Z-Stoff tanks and set the turbine pump in motion. Once it was up to speed, the main valves were opened, feeding propellant to the combustion chamber, and the igniter was fired. Directional control in the first few seconds was achieved by the carbon vanes in the exhaust gas flow, but as the rocket's speed increased, the external fin-tip rudders took over. As the missile rose, the spin of the drum caused it to tip over slowly, and at the appropriate point, the propellant supply was cut, initially by radio signal, later by command from an accelerometer. The warhead was armed only during flight, about 60 seconds after lift-off at the moment of propellant cut-off, and there was an interlock in the arming system which prevented arming taking place if the right conditions were not met. There was no provision for destroying the missile in flight on command.

Below: As this cutaway diagram shows, most of the internal volume of the A4 was taken up with tanks containing the liquid oxygen and methanol it used as fuel.

TARGET PARIS

There were five batteries in all, based around the Hague in Holland - one from Artillerie Abteilung (AA) 444, two from AA 485 and two from AA 836. The first and last formed the Southern Group, and operated against targets in France and Belgium, while AA 485 formed the Northern Group and was tasked with targeting England. Tt was AA 444 which launched the first operational V2, against Paris on 5 September 1944. Three days later, AA 485 fired two rockets aimed at London, the first of which hit Staveley Road, Chiswick, in west London - having been aimed at Southwark, 13km (8 miles) away - at just before 1845 hours in the evening, demolishing six houses, killing three people and injuring 17. The campaign against London was to last exactly 200 days, the last missile falling at 1920 hours on 27 March 1945, hitting a block of flats in Whitechapel, killing

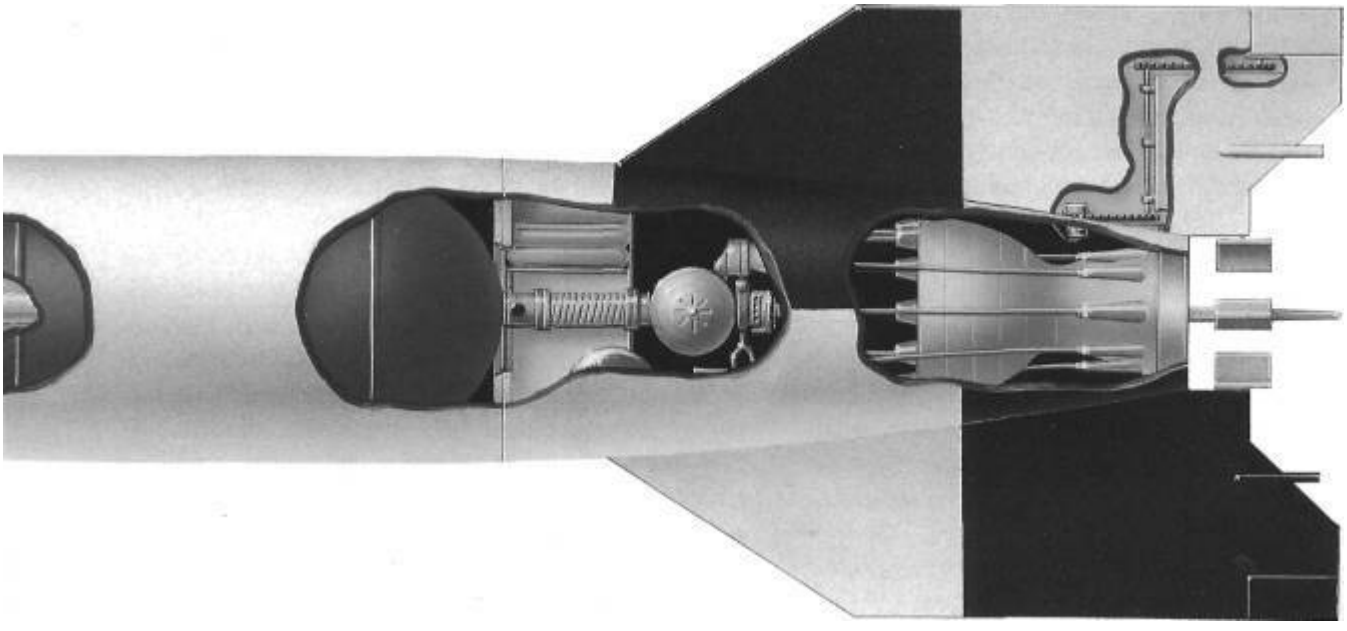
PEENEMUNDEA4 (V2)
Type: Long-range ballistic missile
Length: 14.05m (46.09ft)
Diameter: 1.68m (5.51ft)
Lift-off weight: 12,870kg (28,373lb)
Speed: 5580km/h (3465mph)
Max range: 330km (205 miles)
Warhead: 975kg (2150lb) of amatol mix



134. Other reports suggest that the last A4 launched against London actually fell in Orpington, Kent, that day. In those 200 days, out of 1120 launched, 1054 rockets landed in England, 517 of them in the Greater London area, and, according to official figures, killed 2754 people and injured 6532. The larger Southern Group fired rather more missiles in all (about 1675), most of them targeted against Antwerp (1341). It also directed its fire against Brussels, Liege, Luxembourg, Paris and the Rhine crossing at Remagen. There was, of course, no defence against the V2. Only the Allied advance across northern Europe, which drove the Mobile Artillery Battalions out of range of worthwhile targets, put a stop to the campaign. Gruppe Nord reportedly still had 60 unexpended missiles when it fell back into Germany on 29 March.

It is worth noting that a project aimed at firing an A4 from a submerged U-boat (actually, from a self-contained chamber it towed behind it, which was caused to float vertically by means of flooding its tail section) had reached a fairly advanced stage by 1945, with several containers having been completed and tested at the Vulkan shipyard in Stettin. Known as Project Test-Stand XII, and conceived apparently by Volkswagen in late 1944, this was aimed at the bombardment of New York. However, it is suggested that a more-or-less successful test firing in the Baltic made it clear that a fully fuelled missile (there was no way it could be fuelled at sea) could not be expected to stand up to the rigours of a trans-Atlantic voyage, even submerged. The project was shelved.

The A4 missile in its final form was to be made entirely of steel. At just over 14m (46ft) long, with a maximum body diameter of 1.68m (5.5ft) and a span over its fins of 3.5m (11.5ft), it weighed 12,870kg (28,3731b), of which 975kg (21501b) of amatol comprised its warhead, and 4900kg (10,7801b) of liquid oxygen and 3770kg (83001b) of methanol comprised the bulk of its propellant. It had a maximum range of 330km (205 miles), which it covered in 3 minutes 40 seconds (of which it was under power for 70 seconds), reaching a maximum velocity of 5580km/h (3465mph) and height of 96,000m (315,000ft). Its velocity at impact was 2900km/h (1800 mph). There are rather divergent figures for total A4 production, estimates ranging from 6000 to as many as 10,000.





Above: An A4 rocket, shrouded in tarpaulin, on the railway flatcar used to transport it to the vicinity of the launch site. The Allied advance across northern Europe drove the V2 battalions out of effective range of worthwhile targets.

THE LATER GUIDED BALLISTIC MISSILE PROJECTS

As soon as the A4 was viable, the project was taken out of von Braun's hands. He and his team, it is suggested, were never entirely satisfied with it, and would happily have gone on refining their design, but Heinrich Himmler, who had previously seized control of all the secret weapons programmes, would not accept that. Von Braun turned to working on ways of increasing its range. The simplest means, he concluded, was to fit it with wings, so that it would glide in the final phase of its flight, prolonging its descent and increasing its range to 435km (270 miles), but he counted without the effects of re-entering the dense air at lower atmospheric levels. The one A4b missile which was launched successfully (the first one crashed soon after take-off) failed to re-enter cleanly and was destroyed.

The A6, which never made it past the discussion stage, was to have been an A4 fueled by SV-StoiT, made up of 94 per cent nitric acid and 6 per cent nitrous oxide, and Visol (the generic name given to a group of isobutyl-vinyl esters); it was to have 20 per cent more thrust. The A7 was a winged version of the A5, air-launched as a concept vehicle for the A9. The A8 was virtually identical to the A6 but fuelled with SV-Stoff and diesel oil, although it is also suggested that it was to have been fuelled with LOX and methanol contained in pressurized tanks, rather than employing the turbine pump to deliver them to the combustion chamber. The A9 was the A4b with modified wing planform: essentially, the horizontal fins were to have been continued forward, right to the rocket's nose, in a simple ogive, to allow it to survive re-entry; it had the motor from the A6, with a projected range of 600km (370 miles).

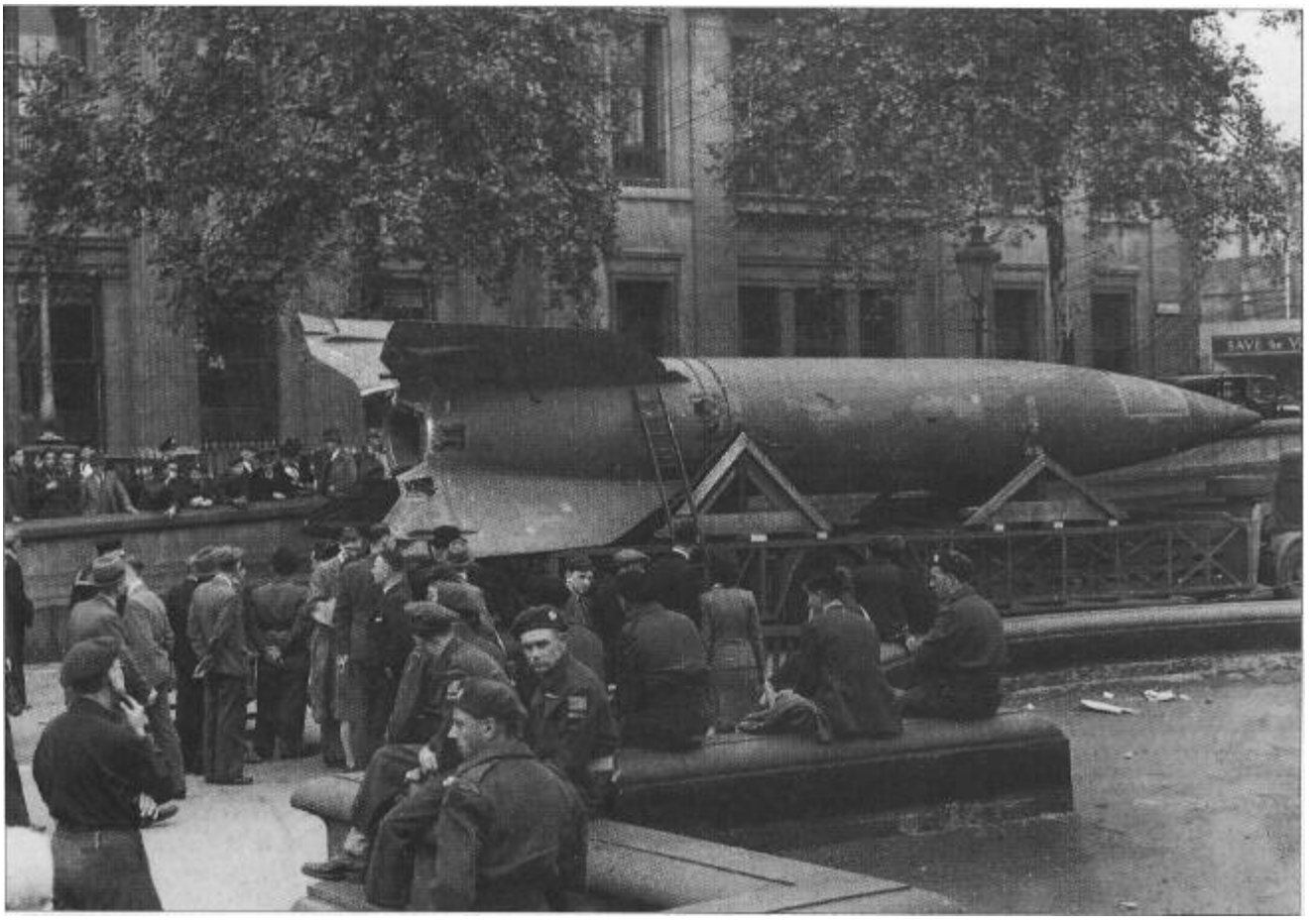
The final ballistic missile project, the A10, was much more ambitious in scale and had it ever materialised, would have been the first ever ICBM. The projected inter-continental ballistic missile was to have been a two-stage rocket, the first stage being based on six A4 motors linked into a common venturi, and designed to propel its second stage - either an A4 or an A9 - to an altitude of 24km (14.9 miles) before its own motor was fired, giving it a range of around 4800km (2800 miles) with a 1000kg (22001b) amatol warhead and a flight time of around 45 minutes. It is suggested that this project was first discussed as early as 1940, long before the United States entered the war, but there is no evidence that it got beyond the

discussion stage. There was also talk of modifying the second-stage A9 missile to carry a pilot, who would have been ejected once he had locked the missile on a course for its target (presumably he would have been recovered by a submarine), but that idea can be dismissed as a flight of fancy.

THE 'RHEINBOTE' ROCKET

The FZG 76 and the A4 were the only guided surface-to-surface missiles employed by either side during World War IT, but the A4 was by no means the only war rocket. Most of the combatant nations employed much simpler devices - unguided and with solid-fuel 'motors' - as adjuncts to their artillery or as assault weapons, but once again, only Germany went one stage further, and produced a long-range unguided ballistic missile, the Rh.Z.61/9 'Rheinbote' ('Rhine Messenger'), developed by a company better known for its artillery pieces and its share in the development of the superlative MG 42 general-purpose machine gun, Rheinmetall-Borsig. Where the A4 was complex and expensive, 'Rheinbote' was simple. It was a fin-stabilised four-stage solid-fuel rocket, each of the first three stages igniting the next as it burned out and fell away, with no guidance system, but relying on simple alignment of the launch rail with the target. The launch rail could be mounted on either a high-angle 8.8cm anti-aircraft gun mount or on a modified 'Meillerwagen', and the complete missile was almost 11.5m (37.5ft) long with a maximum body diameter (in the first stage) of 535mm (21.1in) and a maximum fin span of 1.49m (58.5in). It weighed a total of 1715kg (37751b), almost a third of which was propellant. It had a maximum range of 220km (140 miles) when fired at an elevation of 65 degrees, the final stage, with its 40kg (881b) warhead, attaining a speed of Mach 5.5 (almost 6000km/h; 3730mph) and climbing to a maximum altitude of 78km (48.5 miles). Over 200 of these missiles were fired at Antwerp in November 1944.

Below: An A4 rocket is paraded through London's Trafalgar Square in late September 1945. The rocket was reportedly captured in France, and was later set up as if for launch next to Nelson's Column. Greater London was on the receiving end of more than 500 V2s in 1944-45.

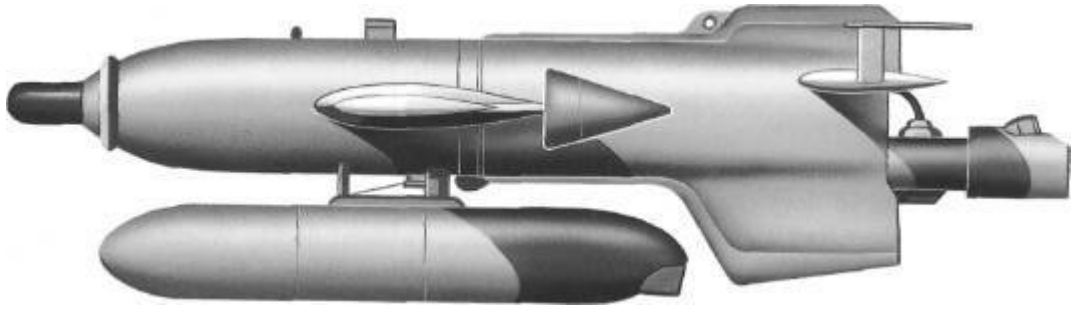



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CHAPTER SIX

Air-to-Air Weapons

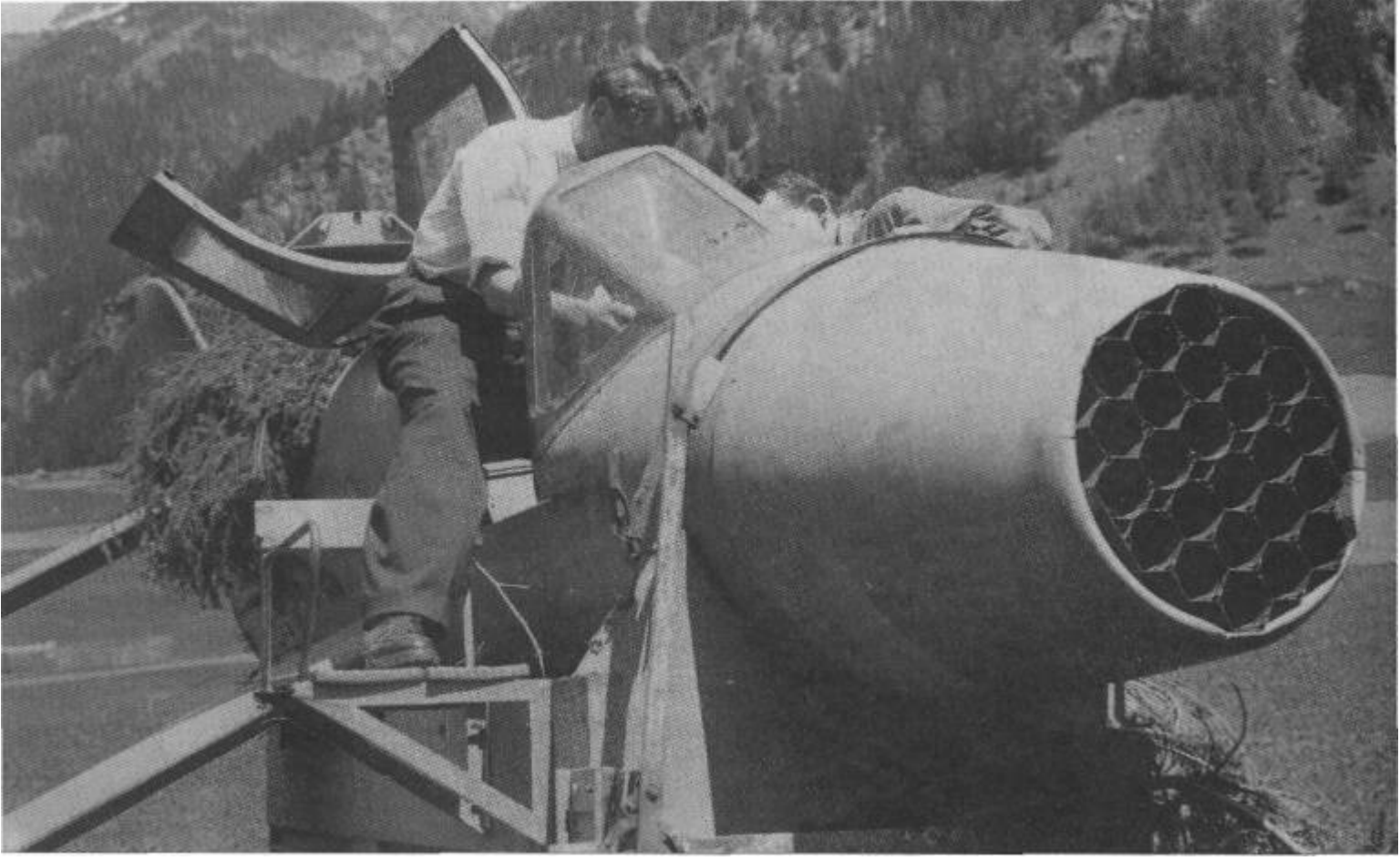
While the adoption of the machine gun made air-to-air combat feasible, by the mid-years of World War II, it had come close to causing a stand-off: machine gun- (and even cannon-) armed aircraft dared not approach each other: it was too dangerous. The alternative, it was clear to German researchers, was to develop small rocket-propelled flying bombs which could be directed to their targets via either wire-borne or radio signals from a chase plane which stayed outside the lethal area.



During his post-war interrogation, Generalleutnant Adolf Galland described the many and various weapons the Luftwaffe had used - or had contemplated using - against the tightly packed formations of Allied daylight bombers with their heavy defensive firepower. He described how attacking the formations from the rear immediately resulted in heavy casualties, and how the German interceptors then switched over to attacking them head-on, hoping to break up the formation and then go after consequently vulnerable individual aircraft. This worked up to a point, but only until the bombers began taking concerted evasive action, and from then - some time in the winter of 1942-43 - the Luftwaffe began looking at alternatives to the simple cannon and machine gun to arm their aircraft, to allow them to attack either from unexpected directions or from outside the effective range of the Fortress's and Liberator's .5 inch Brownings. Because the bombers flew so close together, much consideration was given to bombing them, and a variety of methods were tested, including dive-bombing individual aircraft; towing command-detonated 10kg (221b) fragmentation bombs on long cables (tested in combat, with two unconfirmed successes, despite the physical difficulty of actually delivering the weapon, which trailed out behind the towing aircraft); and dropping blast and fragmentation bombs on parachutes ahead of the formation to form an aerial minefield (this latter method was promising, but development of a satisfactory weapon came too late). Other methods included using forward-firing heavy cannon - essentially, light anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns - to shoot at them from a great distance, but this was to prove only marginally effective; and using

Above: Henschel developed the Hs 293 for use against shipping, but an air-to-air variant was also produced.

Left: Germany desperately needed an antidote to massed formations of Allied bombers like these B-17s.



Above: The simplest of all air-to-air missiles was the unguided rocket, fired in a salvo. This Ba 349 was armed with 24 R4M rockets with 250g (8.8oz) warheads.

obliquely firing cannon to attack them from below. This approach was to prove devastatingly effective against RAF night bombers, but less so against the USAAF, whose aircraft had belly and waist gunners.

One of the reasons that heavy forward-firing guns were ineffective was the amount of recoil they produced: it slowed the aircraft perceptibly if more than a few rounds were fired. The effect should not be underestimated. One trainee in an Me 262, who found himself committed to landing on too short a strip, let go with the four 30mm MK 108 in the aircraft's nose and brought his aircraft up short of the end of the runway, thanks to the additional braking effect. Another reason was the extra drag these usually externally mounted guns created, reducing the aircraft's performance considerably. For the Germans, the employment of relatively heavy calibre guns in aircraft seems to have had a lasting fascination. Other nations' air forces tried it too; the ultimate in that line, according to one source, seems to have been the fitting of a 32pdr (94mm) anti-tank gun into a Mosquito. For the Germans, the programme to adapt light anti-aircraft guns and anti-tank guns - notably in 3.7cm and 5cm calibres, though 7.5cm was tested, too - continued to the war's end. Some of the last German aircraft left in combat were a pair of Me 262A-la/U4s with the 5cm Mauser MK 214 mounted in the nose. One of these aircraft, nicknamed 'Wilma Jeanne' was captured intact by US forces, but was destroyed after it suffered engine failure during a flight to Cherbourg, where it was to have been loaded aboard a ship for the USA.

There was an alternative: the so-called 'recoilless rifle', invented during World War I by an American naval officer named Davis. A variety of recoilless rifles were mounted on aircraft and tested, but though the type worked well enough in principle - and one, it is reported, was used successfully in combat - this was a single-shot weapon, with all the problems thereof. In fact we may bear in mind that the only reason air-to-air combat had ever been even possible was thanks to the machine gun, with its unique ability to keep on throwing bullets into a target area until something ran into one or more of them. The weapons in question were of two basic types. The simpler type worked on the counter-shot principle and was almost two guns in one. The 'ordinary' barrel contained the projectile; a subsidiary barrel behind the breech, precisely aligned with the regular barrel, contained a counter-shot of the same weight, usually composed of wax or grease and lead shot in a paper cartridge. In between them lay the chamber containing the propellant cartridge. When the gun was fired, both projectile and counter-shot left their respective barrels with the same energy, and their recoils thus cancelled each other out. In the more refined (and more complex) version of the weapon, the cartridge case became the

counter-shot, its lesser mass being compensated for by allowing a proportion of the propellant gases to be exhausted through a series of jets in the chamber wall, the components once again cancelling each other out. Both methods worked, though the latter caused some bad moments for pilots who flew aircraft so equipped.

THE ZOSSEN DEVICE

The Luftwaffe tried to surmount the problem of the weapon being able to fire only a single round by mounting it in groups of as many as 49, to be set off in ripple salvoes. Recoilless guns were mounted to fire both forwards and upwards; pilots of single-seater aircraft found aiming the latter to be somewhat problematic, and so a trigger unit which incorporated a light source and a photoelectric cell, the so-called 'Zossen' device, was developed. Tt was tested successfully in 1944, but very few were ever fitted to aircraft. An even more complicated automatic trigger was developed for a downward-firing recoilless rifle for use against tanks, detecting the tank's magnetic field and using that to trigger the gun when the aircraft was directly overhead.

Perhaps the most ambitious plan ever involving gun armament for aircraft was put forward early in 1939. The Gerät 104 was a 35cm-calibre recoilless gun which fired a 635kg (14001b) armour-piercing shell (the cartridge case weighed the same, and thus acted as the counter-shot itself). It was intended for use against ships of the Royal Navy lying at anchor in Scapa Flow (a place of special importance to the Germans, of course, not just because it dominated the northern approaches, but also as the site of the scuttling of the High Seas Fleet in 1919), but in the event, the plan came to nothing. However, later an even bigger weapon, the 54cm 'Munchausen' cannon, was proposed, and it seems that a prototype was constructed and mounted beneath a Junkers Ju 87 Stuka dive-bomber. Not entirely unsurprisingly, the effect of firing such a weapon, recoilless or not, upon a relatively light aircraft was unpredictable to say the least and the project was cancelled.

Another, and simpler, solution to the recoil problem was to substitute rockets - which have no recoil - for guns, and almost from the outset, this proved to be successful. Initially, the weapon used was a cut-down version of the Army's 21cm Nebelwerfer 42 rocket launcher, mounted in various ways, which was eventually superseded by the 5.5cm R4M rocket. The 21cm rockets were first fitted in pairs to Fw 190s; they could be jettisoned after use, and most pilots adopted this procedure, for they robbed the aircraft of about 50km/h (30mph). They were used against bomber formations, and also as air-to-ground weapons. Twin-engine fighters such as the Bf 110 and Me 410 were fitted with larger batteries. They were not only employed as forward-firing weapons; a few Ju 88s and He 177s were modified to carry up to 24 launchers within the fuselage, angled to fire upwards, while some Fw 190s carried a single rearwards-firing tube. The rocket itself, the 21cm Wurfgranate (Spreng), was a powerful weapon, with a 10.2kg (22.41b) warhead and an intial velocity of 320m/s (1050fps). As an artillery bombardment rocket it had a range of about 8000m (8750 yards); in the air it was reckoned to be effective out to 800-1200m (875-1300 yards).

THE R4M

The R4M was more effective: with its much smaller profile it produced less drag, and more could be carried. The usual load for an Me 262 was 24, in a rack under each wing outboard of the engines, but that could be doubled when necessary by adding another pair of racks. The racks were mounted at an upwards inclination of 8 degrees, and the missiles were fired serially, at a fraction of a second's interval (a 'ripple salvo'), at a range of around 600m (660yds). The R4M was simplicity itself: a stick of diglycol solid fuel which, being nitrocellulose based, burned at a predictable rate based on the surface area exposed to the atmosphere, with a contact-fuzed warhead and spring-loaded stabilising fins, which deployed as soon as it left the launch tube (originally of metal, but later of carboard). Measuring 82cm (32.2in) long and 5.5cm (2.16in) in diameter, it was adapted for a variety of purposes but was mainly employed against aircraft and tanks. It was virtually identical to the British 3in (7.62cm) rocket which preceded it into service by some years. 'Föhn', its putative successor, was a somewhat larger but essentially similar device, originally designed as an anti-aircraft weapon. With a diameter of 7.3cm (2.8in), it had a conventional warhead containing 250g (8.8oz) of TNT/RDX (the R4M's anti-aircraft warhead, the PB-3, was a shaped-charge, with 400g (14oz) of Hexogen). Few, if any, were used operationally.

One of the advantages of the R4M was that since the rocket had the same short-range ballistics as the 30mm cannon shell, the existing cockpit gunsight could be employed, but unfortunately, that was saying very little, for it was not an easy task to take accurate

aim on a target which was taking evasive action from a fast-flying aircraft whose flight characteristics caused it to snake at high speed. The answer, of course, was to provide a guidance system to control the missile in flight.

AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES

From as early as 1939, the Henschel company - a newcomer to aviation, but with a very solid background in heavy engineering - had maintained a team whose task was to study the remote control of unmanned aircraft. In January 1940, Herbert Wagner arrived to head the team, with a brief from the RLM to concentrate on air-to-surf ace missiles (ASMs). He was successful, as we shall discover, and in 1943 the company proposed a version of the Hs 293 ASM he developed as an air-to-air missile (AAM). Like most of the ASMs, the Hs 293H was a blast weapon, to be guided into a bomber formation and exploded there, instead of being aimed at an individual aircraft, and had a 295kg (6501b) warhead. One version of it was to have had a television camera in its nose, the picture it transmitted to the controller allowing him a clear view at ranges of up to about 4km (2.5 miles), but the apparatus proved very unreliable, and the idea, also tried out on the ASM itself, was shelved. Control was line-of-sight from the launch aircraft, the operator using a joystick to initiate radio signals which in turn actuated control surfaces on the missile itself.

This system was to be used in all the German guided missiles, and will be explained more fully below, in the context of the surface-to-air missiles for which it was originally developed. The missile had both command and proximity fuzes as well as a barometric fuze to ensure that it would self-destruct before it hit the ground. It was powered by a specially designed Schmidding rocket which used M-Stoff (methanol) and A-Stoff (oxygen), the latter being, unusually, in gaseous form, to produce 610kg (13401b) of static thrust for 11 seconds. The Hs 293 was too big and clumsy for the anti-aircraft role, and it comes as no surprise to discover that after some initial enthusiasm, the RLM went cold on the idea. By then, however, Henschel had begun work on the 'Schmetterling' surface-to-air missile (SAM; see Chapter Eight), and had proposed a version for use in the AAM role.

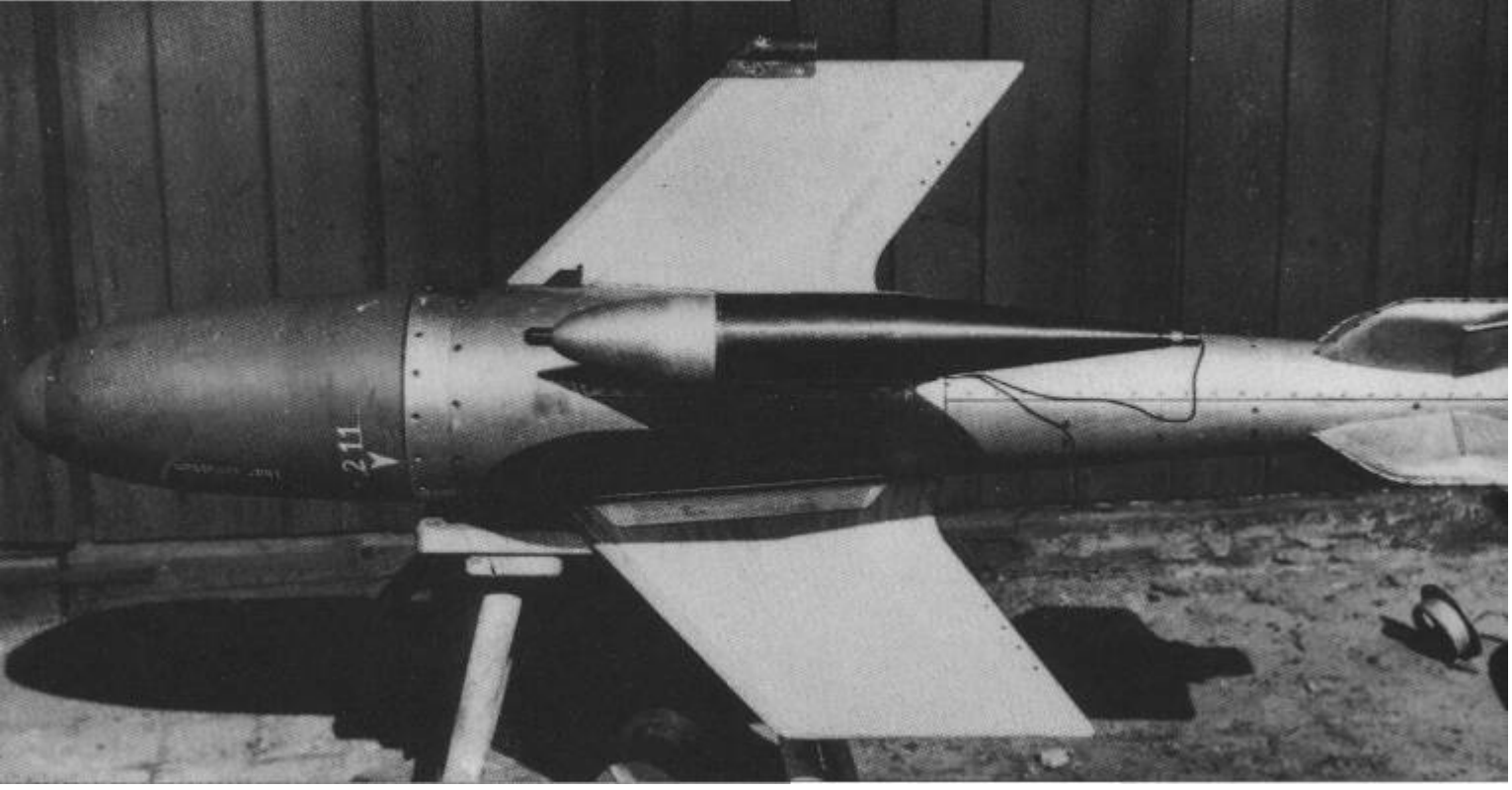
THE HENSCHEL Hs117H

The Hs 117H, as the variant was known, was very little different from the basic 'Schmetterling', save that it required no external booster rockets, but it had a significantly larger warhead, containing 100kg (2201b) of explosive. It employed the same guidance system as the Hs 293H. The intended range of the Hs 117H was 6-10km (3.7-6.2 miles), at up to 5000m (16,500ft) above the 'parent' aircraft, which was a considerable improvement over the earlier missile. It was still in development at the war's end, having survived the axe which descended on so many development projects in January 1945, it is suggested, simply because it had so much in common with the ASM from which it was descended.

Henschel also developed a missile specifically intended for use in the air-to-air role, the Hs 298, considerably smaller than either of the others and with reduced range. Like them, it had swept-back wings and a tailplane with short fins at its extremities, and control was by means of solenoid-operated 'Wagner bars' responding to radio signals. The motor was a solid-fuel two-stage Schmidding 109-543 which gave 150kg (3301b) of thrust for five-and-a-half seconds followed by 50kg (HOlb) of thrust for 20 seconds. The first experimental Hs 298 was fired in May 1944, and altogether some 300 were produced and expended in trials. With a warhead containing either 25kg (551b) or 48kg (1061b) of explosive, detonated on command or by a proximity fuze, it had a range of up to 2500m (2735 yards), travelled at either 940km/h (585mph) or 680km/h (425mph), and was designed to be deployed aboard piston-engined aircraft such as Do 217s, Fw 190s and Ju 88s. Development ceased in favour of the Ruhrstahl X-4 in January 1945.

THE RUHRSTAHL X-4

Ruhrstahl AG was, as its name suggests, a steelmaker. In 1940 it was ordered to collaborate with Dr Max Kramer of the DVL to develop a series of bombs and missiles using the spoiler control method the latter had demonstrated two years earlier. This collaboration was to result in three very interesting missiles: the so-called 'Fritz-X' guided glider bomb; the X-7 'Rottkappchen' ('Red Riding Hood') anti-tank missile; and the X-4 air-to-air missile. Development of the X-4 began in 1943 in parallel with Henschel's Hs 298. These two missiles had very similar specifications, though it appears that the X-4 was designed from the start to operate with jet aircraft, and thus flew at higher speeds. The primary difference between the X-4 and other missiles was that it was equipped not with wings and a tailplane, but with two sets of four fins, one set swept back at an acute angle, with parallel chord width roughly halfway back from

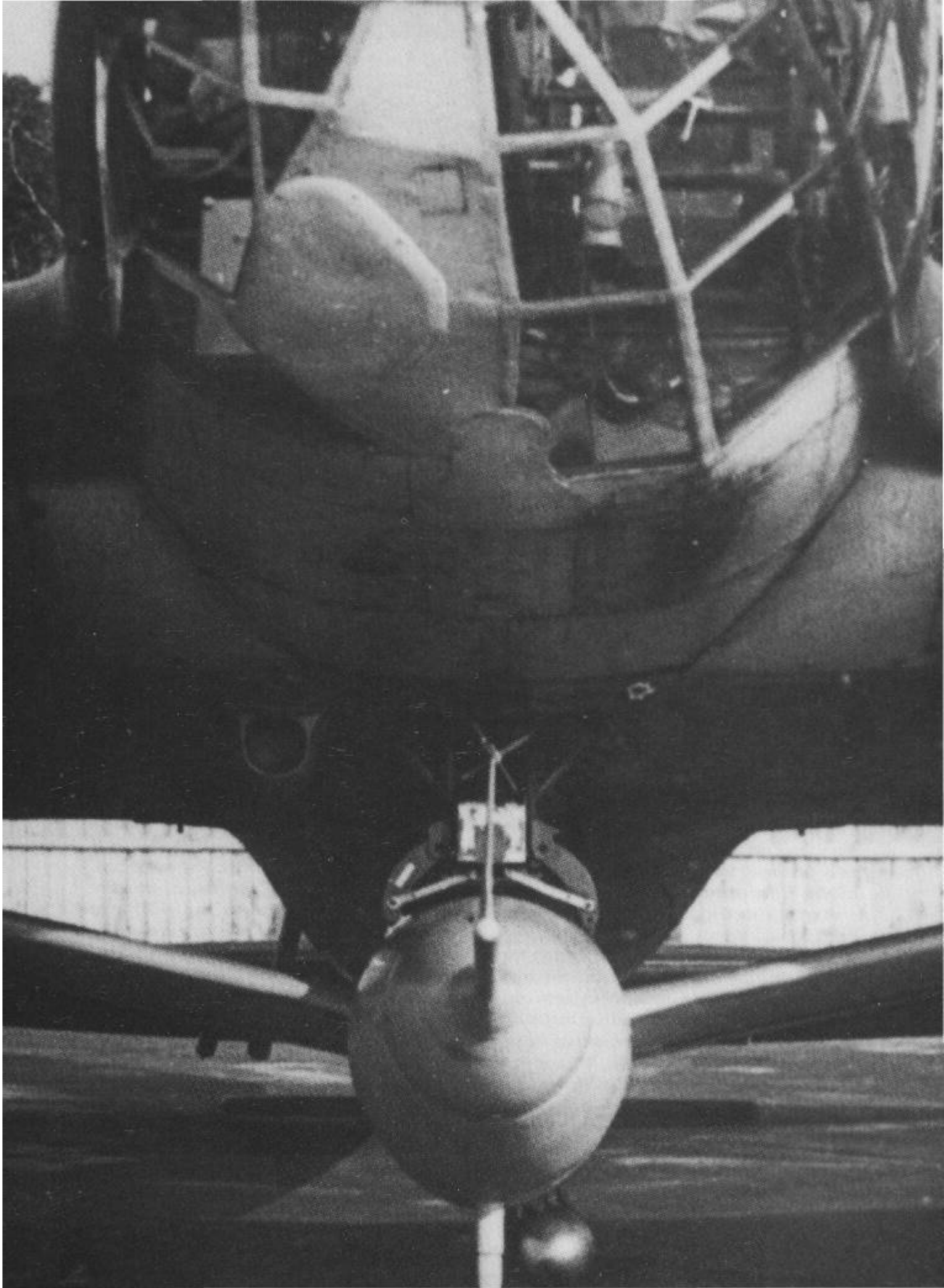


Above: The Ruhrstahl X-4 was the most sophisticated of all the air-to-air missiles produced during World War II. It had an ingenious wire-based guidance system.

the nose; the other, offset by 45 degrees and carrying the moveable spoilers, at the tail. Secondarily, it was designed from the outset to be guided by wire, rather than radio signals - as it was planned to switch over to control by wire for all missiles since radio signals were simply too easy to jam - the necessary differentiation being obtained by switching the polarity of the signal to activate the pitch controls, and by varying its strength to activate the yaw controls. This system used the Düsseldorf/Detmold (FuG 510/238) transmitter-receiver pair, which were analogous to the Kehl/Strassburg radio transmitter and receiver. It was originally developed for use with the glide bomb, as we shall see in due course.

As we noted when discussing the surface-to-surface missiles, a cylindrical body in flight has a tendency to roll. The small fin-tip vanes necessary to correct the tendency in the X-4 would have interfered with Kramer's control spoilers, so instead of trying to correct it, the X-4's designers encouraged and controlled it to a rate of about one revolution per second by fitting offset trim tabs to the main fins. This, it was believed, had the subsidiary effect of nullifying manufacturing inaccuracies causing imbalance (which would have thrown the missile off its line) just as the rifling in a gun's barrel does. Because of the spin, though, it was necessary to fit a gyroscopic unit which switched the control signals between the spoilers on the rear fins so that those which controlled pitch while they were within 45 degrees of the horizontal changed over to controlling yaw as they came within 45 degrees of the vertical, and vice-versa. The 5.5km- (3.5 mile-) long wires carrying the positive and return components of the electrical signal were paid out from bobbins in streamlined pods on the tips of two of the main fins. It mattered not at all that the control wires became twisted as the missile spun, for it made a maximum of perhaps 24 revolutions in the entire course of its flight. It was planned to use the liquid-fuelled BMW 109-548 rocket to power the missile, and in order to counteract any tendency the spin (and any violent manoeuvres in flight) had to disrupt fuel flow, the tanks which contained the R-Stoff and SV-Stoff were spirally wound concentrically within the double-tapering cylindrical form of the missile's body. They contained free-moving pistons - leather in the R-Stoff tank, aluminium in the acidic oxidizer - driven by compressed air. The motor, producing 140kg (310Ib) of thrust reducing to 30kg (661b) by the end of its 17-second burn time, was only ever used in some of the test launches, Schmidding 109-603 diglycol solid-fuel motors being substituted.

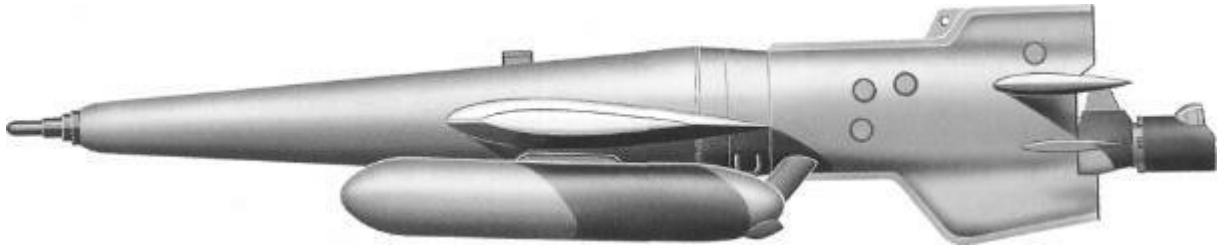
The first test firing of the missile from an aircraft (an Fw 190) took place on 11 August 1944, and by that time a total of 224 prototypes had been produced. In all, about 1000 airframes were then produced for operational use between August and December 1944, but there were delays in engine production. Then, just as the problems were ironed out, the BMW plant which was manufacturing the 109-548 was badly damaged in an air raid, and the motors which had been belatedly produced were destroyed. This was the final nail in the X-4's coffin and the missile never saw operational service as a result.



CHAPTER SEVEN

Air-to-Surface Missiles

Hitting a target on the ground with a bomb dropped from an aircraft was never easy; as soon as effective anti-aircraft artillery and fighter aircraft were added to the equation, it became very costly, too, particularly in human lives. By the end of the twentieth century, stand-off bombing using remote guidance was to become commonplace, but at the time of World War II this was pure fantasy - until German scientists took up the task.



During the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939, the Luftwaffe discovered that the only really effective way to deliver bombs on to a point target was in a near-vertical dive. This procedure they repeated in 1939 in Poland and in 1940 in the Low Countries and France. Over Britain, later in the year, the Luftwaffe came across the basic flaw in this principle: dive bombers were uncomfortably vulnerable to effective fighter aircraft and concentrated anti-aircraft artillery. As an alternative, there was always area bombing from high altitude, but it was very wasteful and of little use against isolated high-value targets. Warships at sea were particularly difficult to hit, and the Luftwaffe frequently found itself mounting costly raids on important maritime targets which achieved little or nothing. Quite early on, thoughts turned to the development of a bomb which could be guided in flight.

Above: The Henschel Hs 294 guided aerial torpedo's tail and wings were designed to break off on hitting the water.

Left: An early air-to-surface missile was the Blohm & Voss Bv 143, mounted here on a Heinkel He 111H.

THE RUHRSTAHL X-1

Ruhrstahl's X-4 air-to-air missile showed promise, but it never lived up to it. Much more useful was the guided bomb they produced as the X-1. It had a

plethora of names: the RLM called it the PC 1400X; the Luftwaffe called it the 'Fritz-X'; and it has also been referred to as the FX 1400 and simply as the FX. However, its success was shortlived, despite having been designed with cheapness and simplicity in mind.

It had as its starting point the Luftwaffe's standard 1400kg (30801b) bomb, either the cast-steel thick-cased SD (Sprengbombe Dickwandig) 1400 known as 'Fritz', or the forged-steel armour-piercing variant, the PC (Panzersprengbombe Cylindrisch) 1400. The original bomb, manufactured by Rheinmetall-Borsig, of perfectly conventional shape, was a plain cylinder with a rounded nose coming to a blunt point and a conical tail with four sheet-metal fins partially shrouded by a strengthening ring at the extremity. Ruhrstahl modified the overall form somewhat for its guided bomb, leaving the last part of the cylinder intact but introducing an oversize ogival form to the first two-thirds of its length.

In order to maximise its aerodynamic performance, they gave it four relatively large fins, located forward of the mid-point of the bomb's length, with square leading edges and a pronounced sweep to the trailing edges. These main fins were mounted asymmetrically, as if they formed the diagonals of a rectangle with sides in the ratio one-and-a-half to one. The 12-sided framework which replaced the simple fin-and-shroud empennage maintained that same basic rectangular form, but with the corners cut off. Within it were four smaller fins, set vertically and horizontally and containing the spoilers themselves, simple tabs which were actuated by electro-magnets and which caused disturbance within the airflow over the appropriate surface of the fin when they were deployed. Deployment in turn caused the whole bomb to alter course or angle of descent by swinging it around the axis formed by the straight leading edge of the main fins.

RADIO GUIDED

Guidance was by means of a radio link using the Kehl/Strassburg system (but later, the wire-link control system was adapted for use with the X-l too), while flares, or battery-powered lamps on the tail for use at night, helped the operator to keep track of the missile in flight. It was a simple, fairly ingenious system, and it worked well enough, so long as the bomb was dropped from sufficient height. Released at the minimum altitude of 4000m (13,125ft) it had a range of up to 4.5km (2.8 miles); dropped from the maximum height any of its carrying aircraft could attain of 8000m (26,250ft), the range was up to 9km (5.6 miles). It was capable of piercing 130mm (5.125 in) of armour plate when dropped from 6000m (19,700ft). Though it is often referred to as a glider bomb, that is not actually the case. Its forward speed was that imparted by the launching aircraft, and it certainly did not 'fly' in any accepted sense. Its only major vector was downwards, and all the spoilers could do was modify its path to a small degree. That was often enough to make the difference between success and failure, as we shall see later when we look at operational deployment of the ASMs. A total of 1386 X-ls were produced between April 1943 and December 1944, when manufacturing ceased, and this was far short of the planned figure of 750 per month. Less than half of them - a total of 602 - were expended, in testing, training and operations.

THE RUHRSTAHL X-1 IN ACTION

From 29 August 1943, III Gruppe/Kampfgeschwader 100 (HI/KG 100), equipped with Dornier 217K-2s and operating out of Istres near Marseilles, was the first unit to employ Ruhrstahl X-ls to attack Allied shipping in the Mediterranean. Initially they were unsuccessful, but within a fortnight they had scored heavily and it soon became clear that the X-1 was a very potent weapon indeed.

On 4 September, Italy abandoned the Axis and reached a separate peace with the Allies, but there were still no clear indications of which way the powerful but until now seriously misused Italian Navy would jump. On 9 September the Allies landed at Salerno, and at 12 noon that day, reconnaissance reported that the Italian Fleet was at sea, headed south for Malta. Within two hours, 12 Do 217s of III Gruppe, led by Major Bernhard Jope, each armed with a single X-1, were in the air. They headed east at low altitude, then, climbing as they neared the coast of Sardinia, made out the shapes of three battleships with an escort of six cruisers and eight destroyers, Jope led his formation to 6500m (7108 yards) and turned towards the ships, which were now zig-zagging wildly and firing every one of their anti-aircraft guns. The first missile, launched by Oberleutnant Heinrich Schmelz (who was to be awarded the Knight's Cross, and later go on to command the group), struck the 40,000-tonne (39,368-ton) battleship *Roma* amidships at a terminal velocity of about 330 metres (1080 feet) per second, punching straight through her bottom to explode beneath the ship. A second hit her just forward of the bridge, where her



armoured deck slowed it down fractionally, so that it exploded in the forward magazine beneath. She broke in two and sank within 40 minutes, carrying 1255 men down with her, including the commanding admiral, Bergamini. Her sister-ship the *Italia* was also hit by a missile which passed through the deck and side just forward of 'A' turret (ie, the most forward turret) before exploding in the sea. She took in 800 tonnes (787 tons) of water, but managed to make Malta, though she played no further part in the war.

More successes followed. On 11 September, the 10,000 tonne (9842-ton) American cruiser USS *Savannah* was disabled, as, two days later, was HMS *Uganda* (8500 tonnes; 8365 tons). Better still was the attack Jope himself carried out on the 33,000-tonne (32,478-ton) British battleship HMS *Warspite,* which was giving fire support off the Salerno beaches. The missile hit the *Warspite* amidships, and penetrated six decks before exploding against the bottom of the ship, blowing a large hole in her. She took in a total of 5000 tonnes (4921 tons) of water, lost steam (and thus all power, both to the ship herself and to all her systems), and had to be taken in tow. She reached Malta but was out of action for the next 12 months. The British cruiser HMS *Spartan* and the destroyer HMS *Janus* were also sunk by X-ls, and the American cruiser USS *Philadelphia* was badly damaged.

Above: The Ruhrstahl X-1, also known as the Tritz-X', was one of the least sophisticated air-to-surface weapons, but one of the most successful. On 9 September 1943, two of these guided bombs sank the Italian battleship *Roma.*

THEHENSCHELHs293

The Ruhrstahl X-1 development programme began at around the same time that Wagner's team at Henschel began work on the Hs 293. Surprisingly, development took longer, but it proved to be much simpler to train aircrew to 'fly' the bomb than the missile, and the two were eventually deployed together. Initially, the RLM had tried to persuade Henschel to produce a missile which levelled out just above the water some distance before reaching the target, and another which would actually submerge and act like a conventional torpedo, but the company refused on the grounds that such a course would be too ambitious, since there was no experience on which to draw. Instead, it put forward the concept of a straightforward guided glider bomb,

FOCKE-WULF Fw 200C-6

Type: Long-range maritime reconnaissance bomber
Length: 23.85m (76.96ft)
Span: 32.84m (107.79ft)

Max take-off weight: 22,700kg (50,044lb)
Max speed: 360km/h (224mph) at 4700m (15,420ft)
Range: 3560km (2211 miles)
Payload: 2 x Hs 293A guided missiles



Above: One of the German aircraft equipped to employ the Hs 293 rocket-propelled guided bomb was the long-range Focke-Wulf Fw 200 'Condor'. Two missiles could be carried, under the outboard engine nacelles.

unpowered but with aerodynamic properties, and the RLM agreed. The first experimental version, with no warhead, was tested in the spring of 1940, and by the end of the year a variant with a rocket motor, which allowed launch at 400m (1315ft) instead of the 1000m (3280ft) previously required, had been flown successfully, and plans for a production version of the latter were going ahead.

10 SECONDS OF THRUST

The Hs 293A-1 was built up from the nose and body sections of an SC (Sprengbombe Cylindrisch) 500 thin-walled bomb, with an elongated rear section tapering in the vertical plane, which extended above and below the body unequally to form small dorsal and larger ventral fins, carrying the guidance system. Short symmetrical wings with conventional ailerons were mounted where the bomb and tail section joined, and a tailplane with an equally conventional elevator was mounted just above their plane, where it would operate in clear air. The ailerons were actuated by electromagnets; the elevator by an electric motor and worm screw. The rocket motor - a liquid-propellant Walter 109-507B, using T-Stoff and Z-Stoff held in pressurised tanks - was underslung beneath the fuselage in a pod; it gave only 600kg (13001b) of thrust for 10 seconds, but that was enough to propel the missile well ahead of the aircraft to a point where the bomb aimer could see it. This had been a recurring problem with the X-l, and one which could only be solved by the pilot of the launch aircraft throttling back and lowering his flaps until the aircraft almost stalled, which made him very vulnerable indeed.

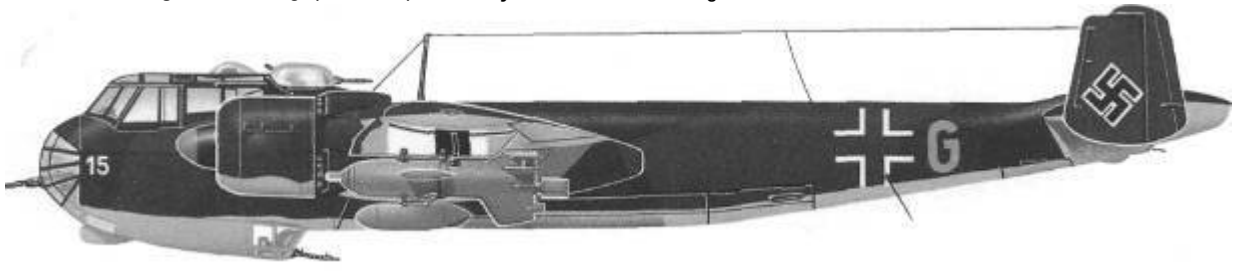
The flight profile of the Hs 293 was quite different from that of the X-l. It was normally released at between 400m (1315ft) and 2000m (6560ft), and between 3.5km (2.2 miles) and 18km (11 miles) short of the target. The terminal velocity varied between 435km/h (270mph) and 900km/h (560mph) depending on the altitude from which it had been released. Control, as always, was by joystick and radio link, on the Kehl/Strassburg system, but wire linkage was soon proposed and implemented, this time using a duplex bobbin system, with the wire being paid out from aircraft and missile simultaneously, giving a maximum range of 30km (18.7 miles). As with the X-1, flares in the tail - which were exchanged for small battery-powered lamps for night operations - allowed the bomb-aimer to keep track of the missile in flight.

A version of the basic weapon, with an extended nose to contain a television camera, was developed as the Hs 293D. The television equipment was developed by Fernseh GmbH in collaboration with the *Reichspost-Forschungsanstalt.* It was a vertical raster-scan 224-line system operating at 50Hz. Under ideal (laboratory) conditions, with its inventors to operate it, the system worked adequately enough, but under operational conditions it was much less successful and was finally abandoned. Such technology was not yet fully understood, and it was to be many years before it was perfected in weapons such as the American AGM-65 'Maverick' and the Anglo-French 'Martel'of the 1980s.

Other Hs 293 variants included the Hs 293H, which was discussed above in the context of air-to-air missiles, and the delta-winged, tailless (and stillborn) Hs 293F. It is unclear how many Hs 293s of all types

DORNIER Do 217E-5

Type: Four-seat anti-shipping bomber
Length: 18.20m (60.00ft)
Span: 19.00m (62.33ft)
Max take-off weight: 16,465kg (36,299lb)
Max speed: 515km/h (320mph) at 5200m (17,060ft)
Range: 2300km (1429 miles)
Payload: 2 x Hs 293A guided missiles



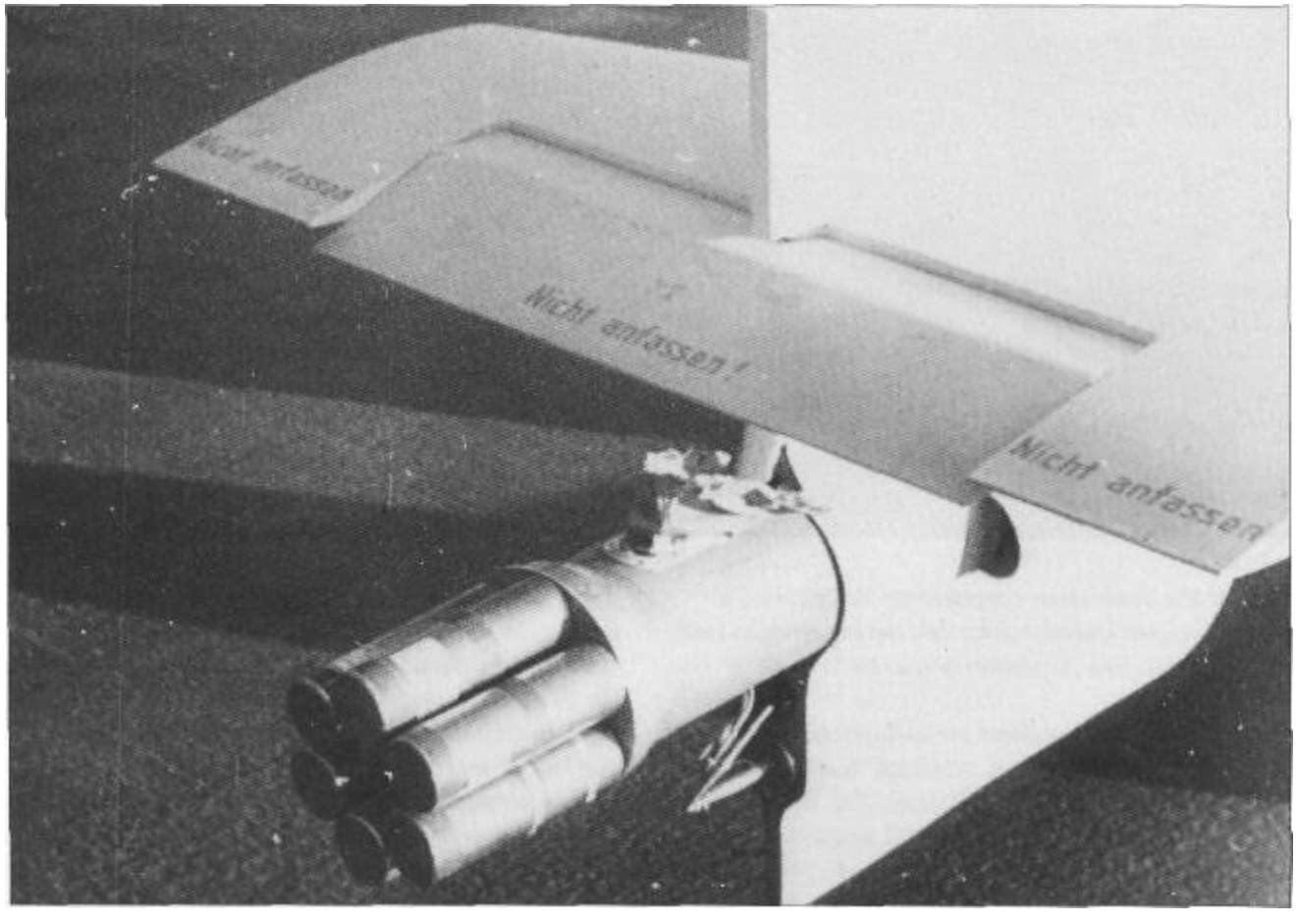
were manufactured, but educated guesses put the number at perhaps 1500, many of which were expended in the long testing and training programme.

THE HS 293 IN ACTION

II Gruppe of Kampfgeschwader 100, flying Hs 293A-equipped Do 217E-5s out of Cognac under Hauptmann Heinz Molinus, was the first unit to go into

Above: Somewhat more successful than the Fw 200 was the Dornier Do 217E-5, which also carried two Hs 293As under its wings. It was one of these aircraft, of I I/KG 100, which scored the first success with the new weapon,

Below: The bomb-aimer needed to keep the Hs 293 in sight all the way to the target, and for this purpose a multi-tube flare unit was attached to the bomb's tail.





Above: The bomb-aimer controlled the Hs 293 using a two-axis joystick which transmitted signals either by radio or over wires. This installation is in an He 111H-12.

action armed with guided air-to-surface missiles, on 25 August 1943, against warships hunting German submarines in the Bay of Biscay. The first-ever kill with a guided missile came on 27 August, when one scored a direct hit on the 1270-tonne (1250-ton) sloop (ie, corvette) HMS *Egret*, detonating the ammunition in her after magazine and blowing her to pieces with the loss of 222 lives. In fact, II/KG100 later moved to Tstres, near Marseilles, and II/KG40, equipped with He 177A-5s, replaced it on the Atlantic coast. Besides the *Egret*, Hs 293s accounted for five destroyers and a number of merchant ships before the Allies found a way to combat them using a set of defensive tactics which included jamming the radio control signals and targeting the launch aircraft during the vulnerable control phase, when they had to fly straight and level

at reduced speed. These defensive tactics made the missions very costly. On 23 November, II/KG40 lost half its entire strength while attacking a well-protected convoy off the Algerian coast. Hs 293s were last used in action, with some success, against Red Army forces crossing the River Oder in April 1945, when they went into action with 'Mistel' (qv) piggyback hybrid aircraft.

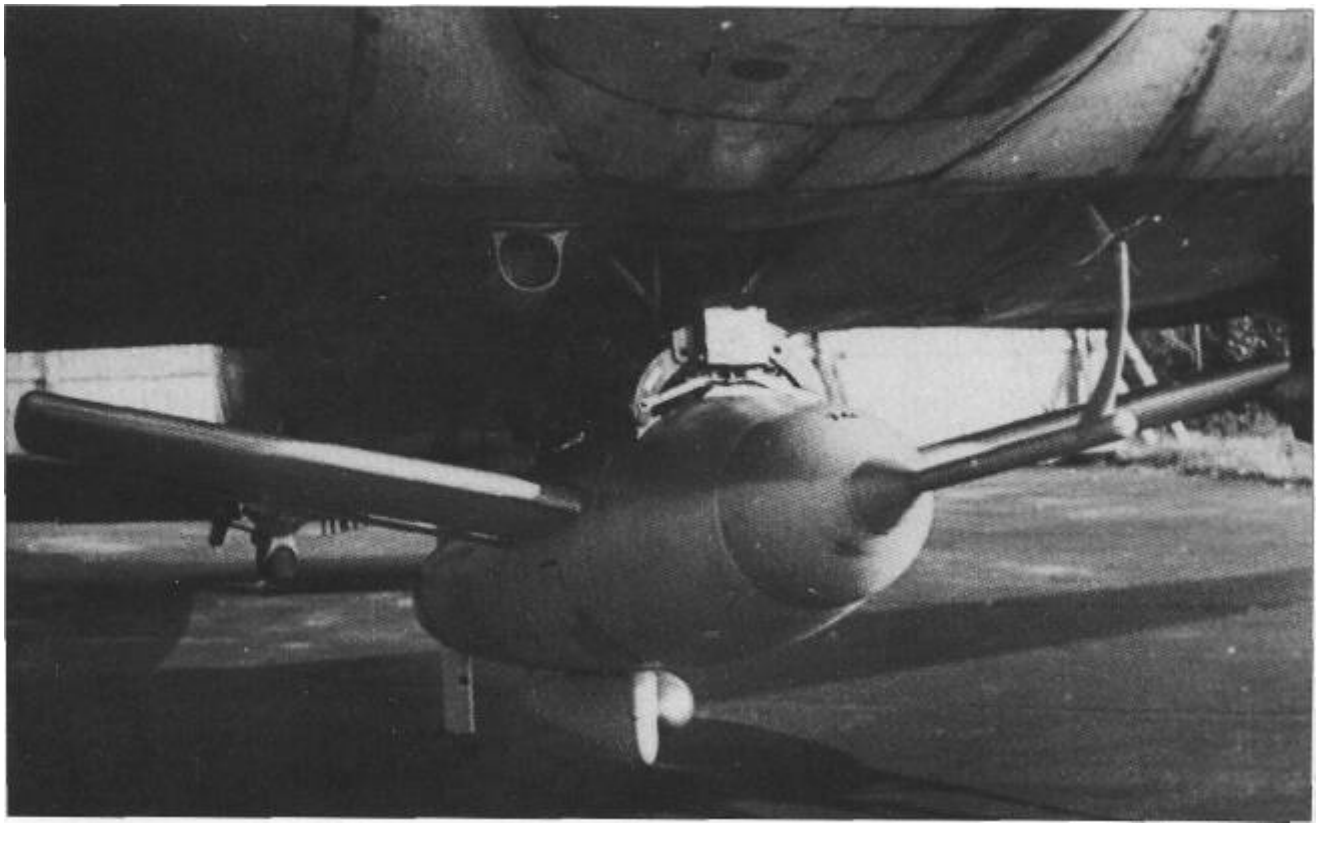
THE BLOHM & VOSS ASMS

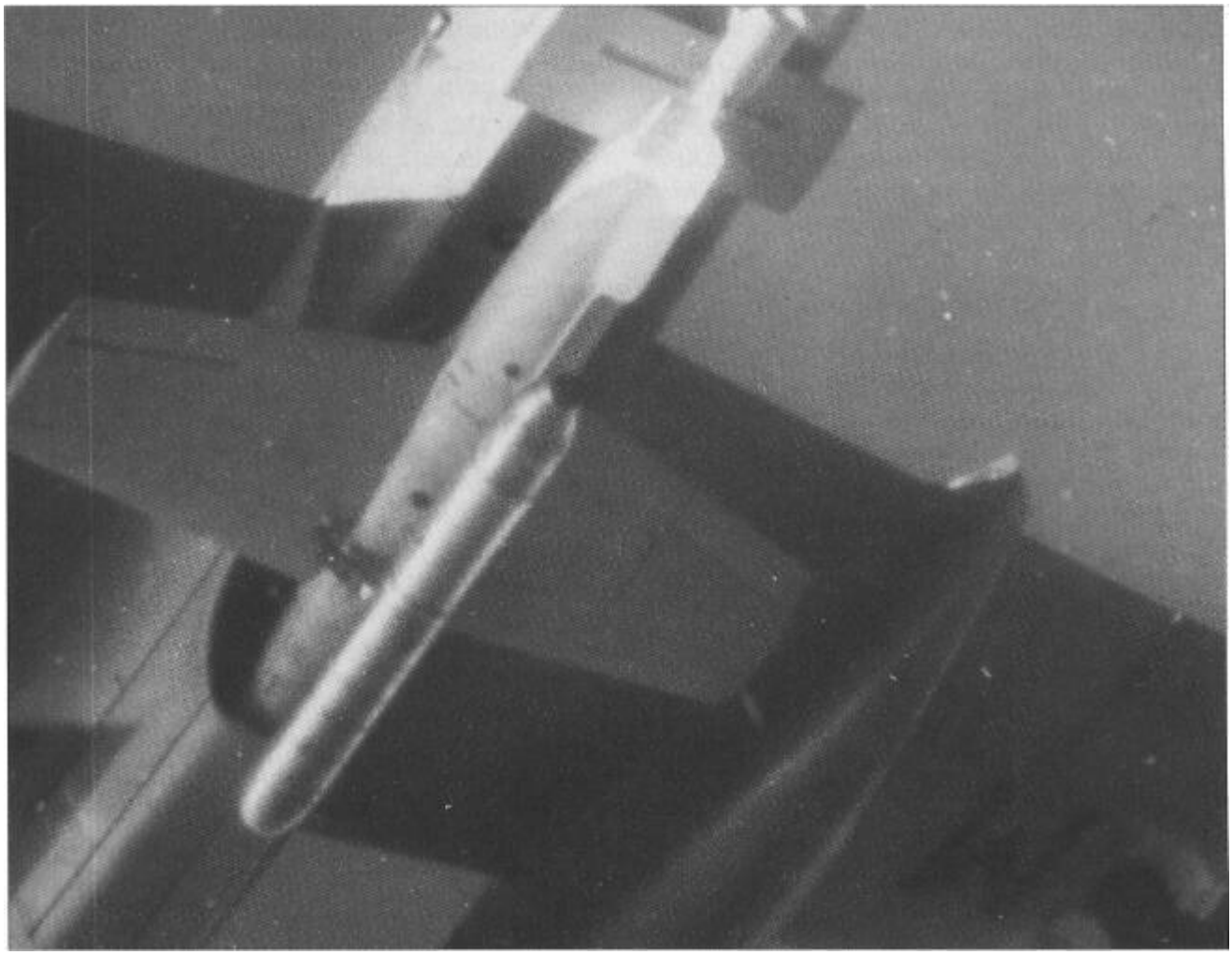
Blohm & Voss reacted to the RLM's requirement for a sea-skimming missile with a proposal for a guided glider bomb. This incorporated a rocket motor which was only ignited by tripping a 2m- (6.5ft-) long lever hanging from its underside when the bomb came to the end of its descent. It was an ingenious solution, but proved to be unworkable. The length of time available to initiate the rocket motor was just insufficient, and the prototypes simply ploughed into the sea. Rather better conceived was the Bv 246 'Hagelkorn' ('Hailstone'), which was a pure glider and was intended specifically to attack radio stations transmitting navigational signals to RAF bombers by homing in on their very signals. The Bv 246 was a simple aerodynamic shape with a cruciform empennage incorporating a vertical control surface, and high aspect-ratio wings designed to give it a shallow glide angle (1:25, or barely 4 degrees) and thus a long range after launch. Released at 10,500m (34,450ft), it had a range of 210km (130 miles). The original proposal was made in 1942, but there was little official interest despite the fact that the RAF had already begun to use radio as a navigational aid. It was December 1943 before 'Hagelkorn' was ordered into production and it was cancelled two months later in the February 1944 austerity drive, by which time hundreds had been built. These missiles were gradually expended in a protracted low-priority test programme which lasted until January 1945. With an all-up weight of 730kg (1600lb), of which 435kg (960lb) was warhead, it was light enough to be deployed by an Fw 190.

FLYING TORPEDOES

The RLM did not give up its search for an air-to-subsurface weapon, and Henschel responded eventually with a variety of designs for what we may regard as guided air-launched torpedoes. The simplest of these

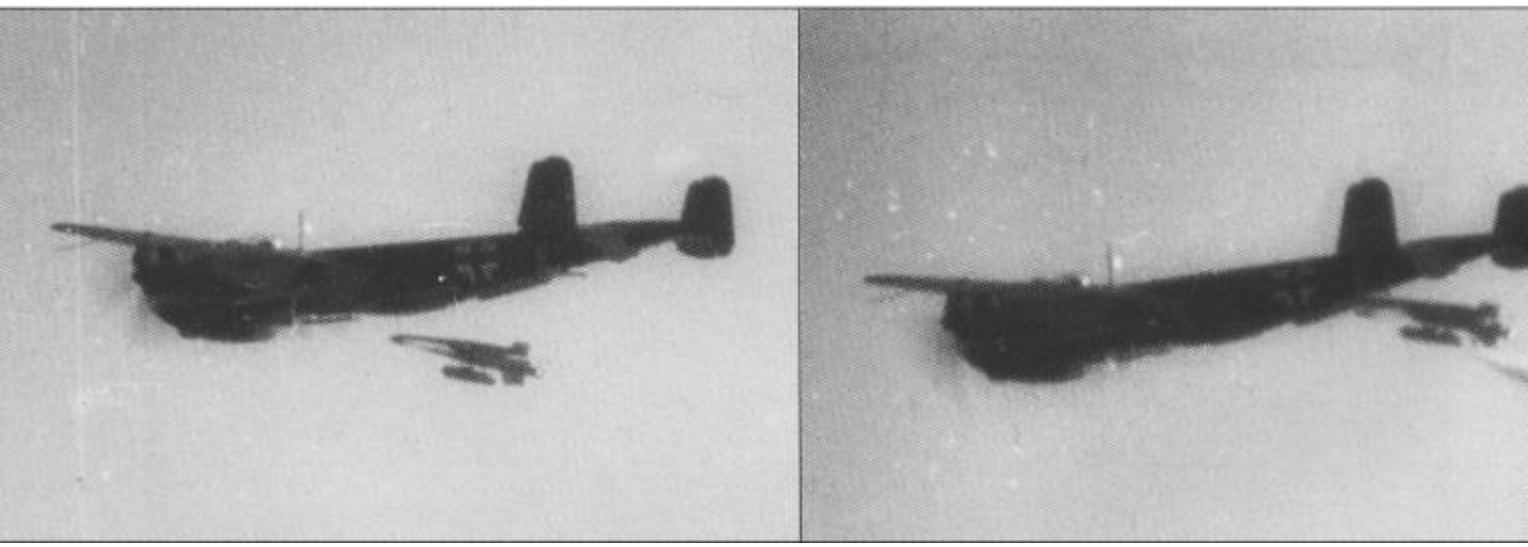
Below: The Blohm & Voss Bv 143 was a rocket-assisted glider bomb, the powerplant of which was ignited only when the projectile had come within 2m (6.5ft) of the surface of the sea.





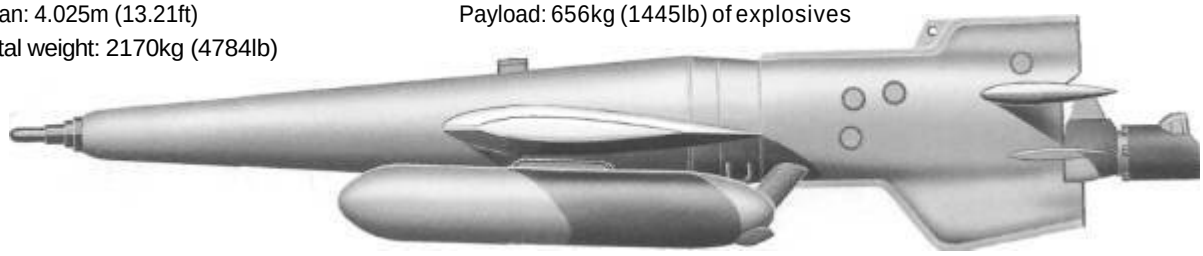
Above: The Dornier Do 217 was the aircraft of choice for the deployment of the Henschel Hs 294 anti-ship missile. Perhaps 1450 of these sophisticated guided missiles were ordered but few were completed.

Below: This sequence shows a launch of an Hs 294 which went disastrously wrong. Having disengaged from the parent Do 217 aircraft, the missile then collided with the bomber, slicing off a tail fin.



HENSCHEL Hs 294

Type: Rocket-propelled anti-ship missile
Length: 6.12m (20.08ft)
Span: 4.025m (13.21ft)
Total weight: 2170kg (4784lb)
Max speed: 860km/h (534mph)
Range: 4-14km (2.5-8.7 miles)
Payload: 656kg (1445lb) of explosives

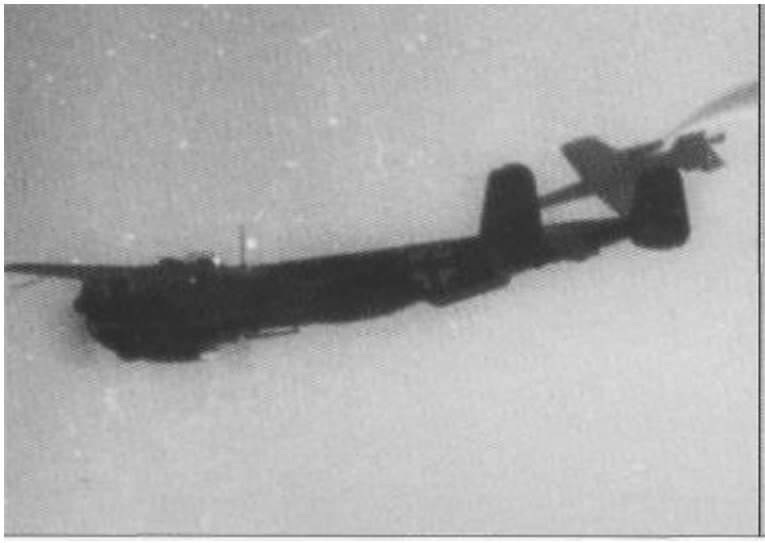


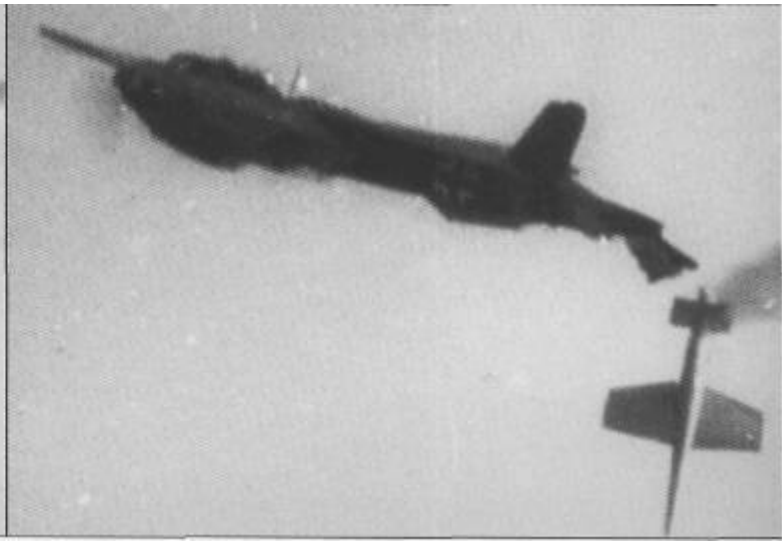
was a version of the Hs 293, and from that, in 1943, sprang the larger and more powerful Hs 294, intended to be used to attack armoured ships. Two versions were produced in prototype form, one with radio guidance, the other with a wire command link.

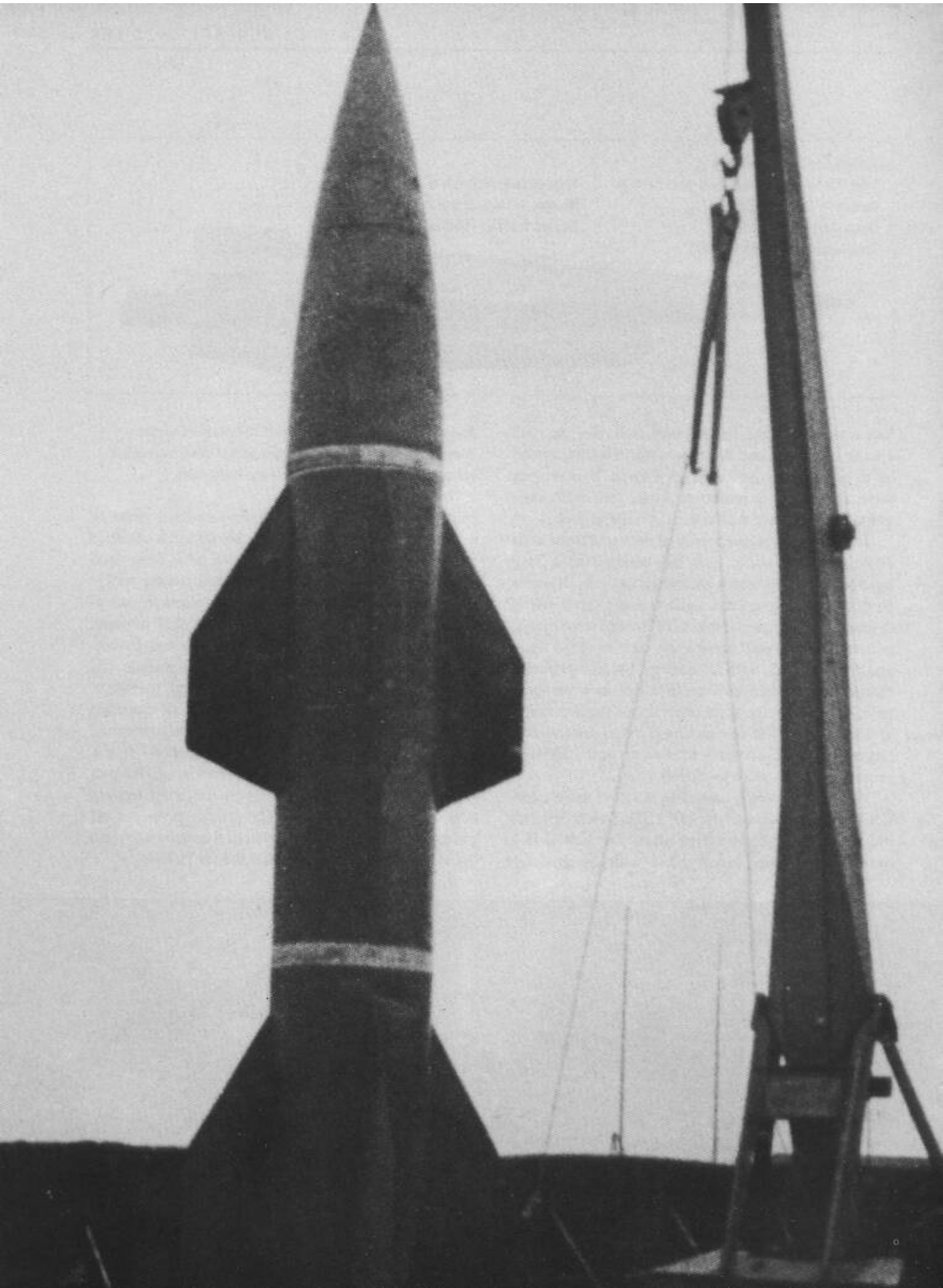
The Hs 294 was essentially of the same form as the air-to-surface missile, with the addition of a long, tapered nose cone and a second rocket unit. It was to be flown into the sea at a shallow angle (optimum 22 degrees); the wings and the rear fuselage were mounted so that they would break away on hitting the water, and the warhead, with its 656kg (14451b) explosive charge, would then be free to travel in a parabolic path, induced by the form of its upper surface, for up to 45m (150ft), self-destructing if it had not found its target. It is believed that a total of around 1450 were ordered, but few were produced.

The Hs 294 was followed by a rather more ambitious project known as the GT 1200, which certainly did not get past the prototype stage. GT 1200 was to have been an unpowered glider, with the guidance package of the Hs 293, but without a rocket motor to assist its launch. Instead, the rocket motor, a standard Schmidding solid-fuel unit, was to have been used only during the last phase of its deployment, underwater, when, shorn of its wings and 'fuselage' extension, it became an otherwise conventional torpedo, steered by small rudders on its cruciform rear-mounted fins. There is no indication of how the missile was to have been guided during its run through the water. Hensehel's last foray into the field of air-launched submarine weapons was to have been a supersonic missile known as the 'Zitterrochen' (Torpedo Fish'), its triangular planform wings incorporating 'Wagner bars' - simply spoilers moved to the wing trailing edge - instead of ailerons. The project never got off the ground, but the control system found its way into the Hs 117 'Schmetterling' and the Hs 298.

Above: The Hs 294 was intended to enter the water cleanly some way from its target and strike it below the waterline, where it was at its most vulnerable.



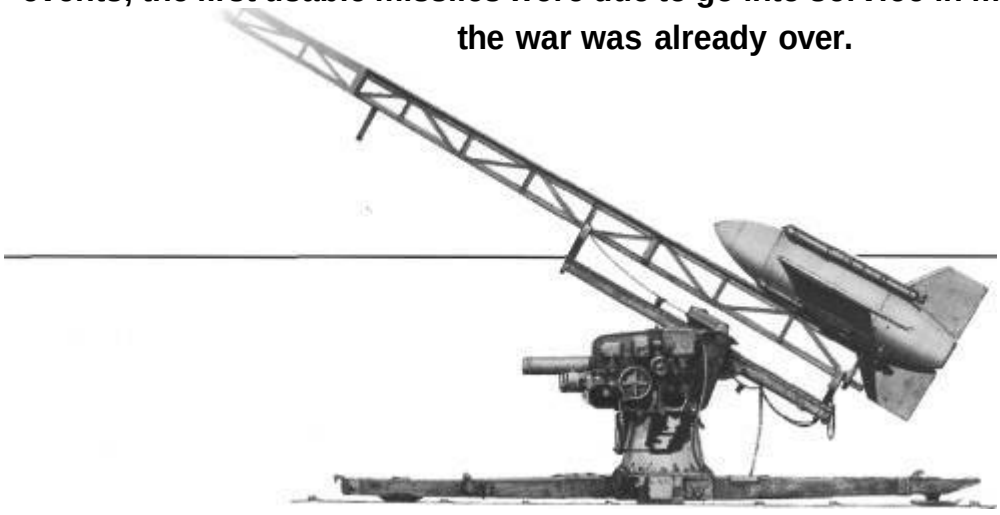




CHAPTER EIGHT

Surface-to-Air Missiles

In parallel with the programmes to develop air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles, German scientists and engineers also strove to produce guided surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). Work first began in 1941, but yet again, progress was overtaken by events; the first usable missiles were due to go into service in mid-1945, but by then the war was already over.



Finding ways to defeat the Allied bomber formations which pounded the Reich preoccupied the Luftwaffe and the RLM alike. As a result, a number of teams were at work developing new weapons. Most important amongst these were the more-or-less successful jet and rocket-powered aircraft we have already discussed. However, much energy and resources went into developing surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) too, amongst the most significant of which were the Henschel Hs 117 'Schmetterling' ('Butterfly'), the Messerschmitt 'Enzian' ('Gentian'), the Rheinmetall-Borsig 'Rheintochter' ('Rhine Maiden'), and the BMW 'Wasserfall' ('Waterfall') - all of which had a guidance system - and the BMW Taifun' (Typhoon'), which was unguided.

Above: The Messerschmitt 'Enzian' was made largely of plywood and flew at subsonic speeds.

Left: Like the 'Enzian', the 'Wasserfall' relied on blast effects; its warhead was detonated by an artillery fuze.

THE HENSCHEL Hs 117 'SCHMETTERLING'

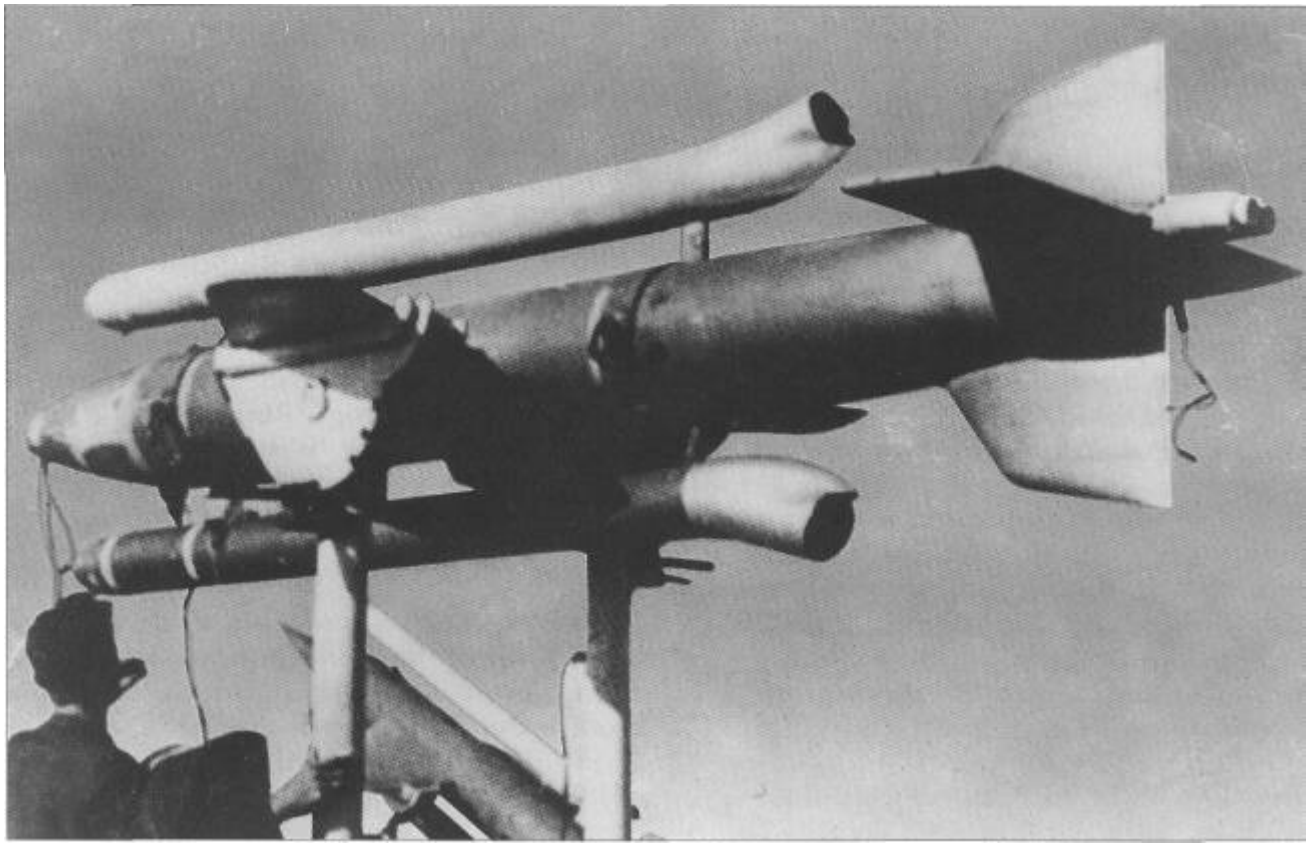
The earliest of the projects was for a subsonic short-to-medium-range missile which was radio controlled by an operator on the ground. Henschel first began work on the project in 1941, alongside a number of unguided flak rockets, and two years later was ordered to develop it as the Hs 117. With stubby swept-back wings and a cruciform tail, the Hs 117

'Schmetterling' was controlled like an aircraft, with solenoid-operated 'Wagner bars' rather than conventional ailerons on the trailing edges of the wings and tailplane. It appeared somewhat unbalanced, having a bifurcated nose, with the starboard cone elongated to form a warhead extension and the port cone finishing in a small airscrew driving a generator. Launch power was supplied by a pair of external solid-fuel motors, one above and one below the fuselage, which gave 1750kg (38501b) of boost for four seconds, accelerating the missile to 1100km/h (680mph) before falling away and igniting the sustaincr motor. The motor was to have been either a BMW 109-558 or a Walter 109-729, both of which used liquid fuel - R-Stoff or Tonka', a composite self-igniting fuel, with SV-Stoff (concentrated nitric acid) as an oxidizer in the former; SV-Stoff and Br-Stoff (low-octane petrol), with an alcohol igniter, in the latter.

LAUNCHING THE 'SCHMETTERLING'

At 4.3m (14ft) long and weighing a total of 420kg (9251b) including the solid-fuel motors, the 'Schmetterling' was launched from a modified anti-aircraft gun mounting, azimuth and elevation being approximately pre-set manually by the launch crew. Once in flight, a flare in the tail was ignited, and the controller observed its progress through a telescope, correcting by radio using the Kehl/Strassburg system codenamed Tarsival' (FuG203/230), which was also widely used for other operator-guided missiles, employing four separate radio frequencies, two for the horizontal axis and two for the vertical. Control was by a simple joystick. A fifth radio frequency was used to detonate the 25kg (551b) warhead, which relied on blast rather than fragmentation, on command, though proximitiy and time delay fuzes were also developed. The effective range was 16km (10 miles) and the ceiling was 1 1,000m (36,000ft). In blind conditions it was hoped to employ the Mannheim-Reise/'Rheingold' radar system, which worked something like the Würzburg fighter control system, one set tracking the target, the other the missile; the operator would use the joystick as before, but would now be observing dots on a cathode ray tube, and trying to keep them superimposed. Later, it was hoped, corrections would be applied automatically.

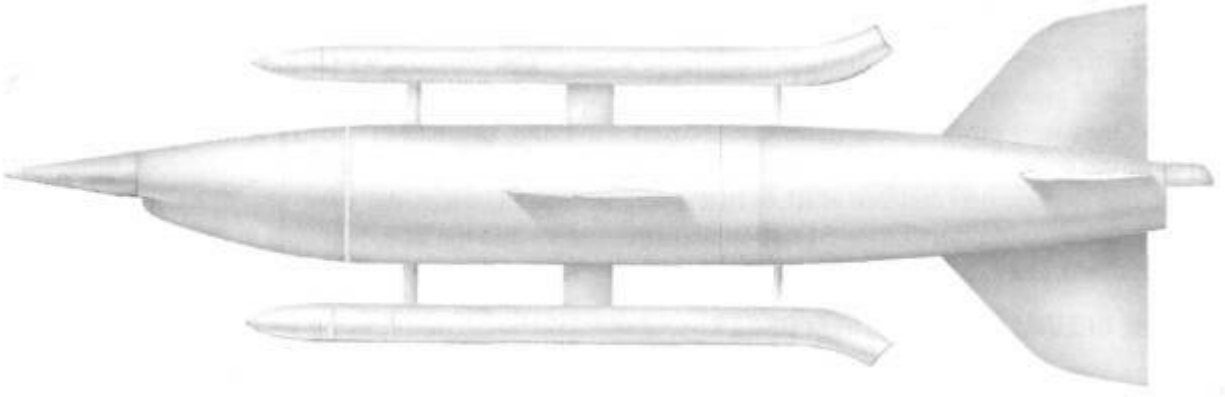
Below: The Henschel Hs 117 'Schmetterling' was the first attempt by Germany to develop a surface-to-air missile; it was for use against low- and medium-altitude intruders.



MENSCH EL Hs 117

Type: Rocket-propelled surface-to-air missile
Length: 4.29m (14ft)
Diameter: 350mm (13.77in)

Launch weight: 445kg (981 lb)
Max range: 32km (20 miles}
Warhead: 25kg (55lb) of high explosive



Above: The Henschel Hs 117 'Schmetterling' surface-to-air missile. The Hs 117 was also produced in an air-to-air version which lacked the SAM's external boosters.

Testing of the 'Schmetterling' began in May 1944, and by September, 22 launches had been made, some of them of a variant intended as an air-to-air missile, the Hs 117H (qv). The success rate was good enough that the missile was ordered into production in December, with first deliveries - 150 units per month - to take place in March 1945, rising to 3000 per month by November. This was hopelessly optimistic, of course, at a time when industrial output in Germany was failing fast, and no missile was ever produced for operational use.

THE MESSERSCHMITT 'ENZIAN'

Messerschmitt's proposal resembled an unmanned version of the Me 163 'Komet', with the same stubby body and wings and the twin ventral/dorsal tail fins. It was considerably heavier than the 'Schmetterling' at 1800kg (39701b), had a 300kg (6601b) warhead, and was designed to operate at up to 12,000m (41,000ft) or out to a range of 24.5km (15.25 miles) at lower levels. One most important feature of the 'Enzian' was the fact that its airframe was to be constructed of moulded plywood, a material Germany had in abundance, and this was almost - but not quite - enough to give it sufficient official approval points to actually see it into production, especially since it used technology which was well understood.

The 'Enzian', originally the Flak Rakete l, was designed from June 1943 by a team led by Hermann Wurster at Messerschmitt's R&D headquarters at Oberammergau, with prototypes to be produced at Augsburg and serial airframe manufacture to be carried out at Holzbau Kissing AG, in nearby Sonthofen.

Like the 'Komet', it had a circular-section fuselage, 0.9m (3ft) in maximum diameter; it also had ventral and dorsal fins and mid-mounted swept-back wings with full-width elevons, which operated in unison or independently and thus obviated the need for a rudder. Launch power was provided by four Schmidding 109-533 diglycol-fuelled rockets, the same as that employed for the 'Schmetterling', which gave a combined thrust of 7000kg (15,40015) for four seconds and were then jettisoned. The launch platform consisted of 6.8m (22.25ft) rails on a modified 8.8cm anti-aircraft gun mounting, which could of course be trained in azimuth and elevation. The sustainer rocket was to have been a Walter R1-210B, using SV-Stoff and Br-Stoff as its fuel, delivered to the combustion chamber by a pair of steam-driven turbo-pumps as employed in the A4. About 15 of these motors are thought to have been produced, and they were used to test the prototype missiles, but for the production version a simplified motor was designed by Drs Konrad and Beck of the *Deutsches Versuchsanstalt für Kraftfahrzeug- und Fahrzeugmotoren* (DVK - the German Aviation Propulsion Experimental Establishment), which used S-Stoff and Visol delivered by compressed air, and in its final form gave the slightly higher performance figures of 2500kg (55101b) of thrust falling to 1500kg (33001b) by the end of its 56-second burn time. The reducing thrust ensured that the missile did not exceed its maximum

Mach number and become unstable. Guidance was exactly the same as for the 'Schmetterling' and the same sort of proximity fuze was to have been used.

Perhaps 60 'Enzian' missiles were constructed, of which 38 were tested, beginning in April 1944. The first examples fared badly because the designers had not grasped the importance of aligning the missile's axial centre of gravity and thrust lines, but that was cured, and later tests proved successful. The 'Enzian' fell foul of the general deterioration in manufacturing capacity, and as there was concern at RLM that it was detracting from the production of Me 163s and Me 262s, in January 1945 the project was axed.

THE RHEINMETALL-BORSIG MISSILES

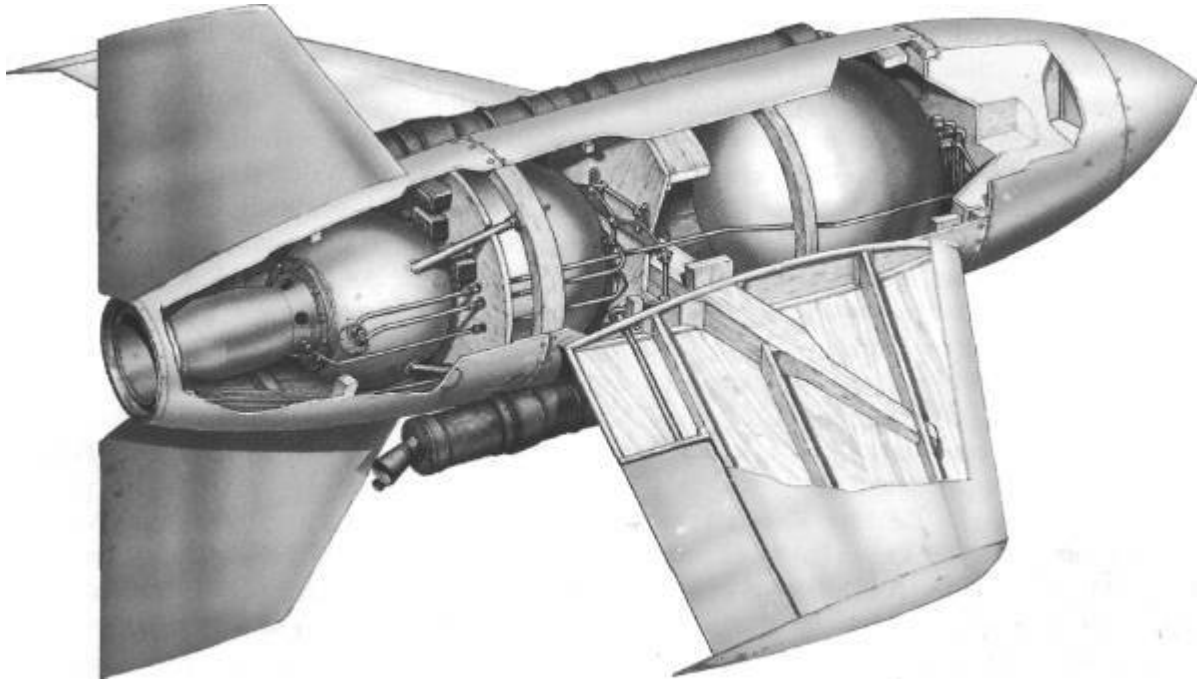
Although successful with its unguided 'Rheinbote' bombardment missiles, Rheinmetall-Borsig achieved less with its surface-to-air missiles. The company's first foray into the field was a winged missile called the 'Hecht' ('Pike'), which seems to have been no more than a design and concept-proving exercise; several are known to have been air-dropped, both in powered and unpowered forms. Work on it stopped in 1941, when the 'Feuerlilie' project was initiated; it seems that this, too, was to have been purely a research programme, but the RLM insisted that it be adaptable to use as an anti-aircraft rocket, should that prove necessary. Even though there is no evidence that that step was taken, and the missile was unguided, we may include it here in passing.

The 'Firelily' was to have a streamlined cylindrical fuselage with rear-mounted swept-back wings terminating in small symmetrical fins. It was to have been produced in a number of versions of different fuselage diameter, the most important of which were the F25 and the F55, and was to have been propelled by solid-fuel rockets which the company already had in production as take-off assistance units (RATO) for gliders and heavily-loaded transport aircraft, though there was also a plan to produce a supersonic version of the 55cm missile, with simple fins in place of the wing assembly, to be powered by a Konrad-designed liquid-fuel rocket. The 'Firelily' project continued

Below: In looks, 'Enzian' resembled the Messerschmitt Me 163 'Komet' rocket plane. Like all liquid-fuelled rockets, most of the internal space of the 'Enzian'was taken up with fuel tanks.

MESSERSCHMITT 'ENZIAN'

Type: Rocket-propelled surface-to-air missile
Length: 2.4m (7.875ft)
Diameter: 0.88m (2.9ft)
Launch weight: 1800kg (3970lb)
Max range: 24.5km (15.25 miles)
Warhead: 300kg (660lb) of explosives





Above: Rheinmetall was better known for its artillery pieces, but its 'Rheintochter' SAM was an ambitious design intended to fly at up to 1300km/h (SOOmph).

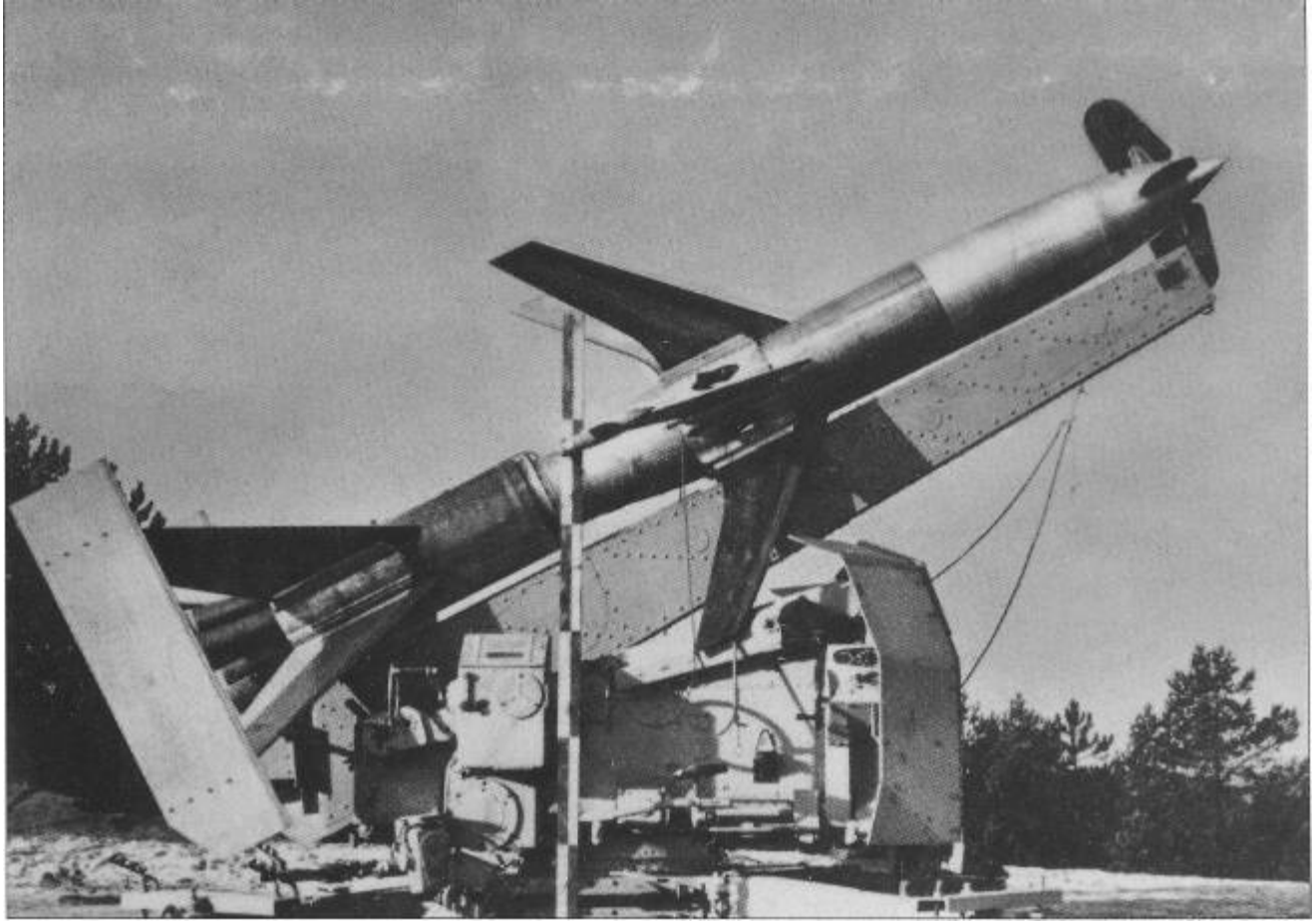
until early 1945, but it seems clear that no attempt was ever made to utilise the missiles as weapons. Several F25s were manufactured and were tested at Peenemunde-West and at the company's own proving grounds at Leba, but certainly no operational variant was ever produced. Perhaps six F55s were produced; one was tested successfully at Leba, and two were sent to Peenemünde, where the one went out of control when launched.

The 'Rhine Maiden' was an entirely different matter. It was conceived from the outset as an anti-aircraft missile. It was an ambitious design incorporating two stages: the cylindrical first stage housed nothing but solid-fuel booster rockets, and had four fixed, swept-back fins with bracing struts between them, which acted simply as stabilisers, being jettisoned on burn-out; the second stage, also cylindrical, tapered to a point at the nose and slightly at the tail, and had six fixed fins mounted about two-thirds the way back from' the nose, and four small rounded steering surfaces - canards, in effect - at the nose itself, which were actuated by servos to guide the rocket in flight. Unusually, the warhead was situated in the rear of the rocket, behind the fins and motor unit, the six venturi of which were positioned between the fins, angled out, which also worked to help stabilise the missile in flight. 'Rheintochter F was intended to reach speeds of almost 1300km/h (SOOmph), and carry a 100-150kg (220-3301b) warload to 40km (25 miles) and 6000m (19,700ft). The missile had a lengthy development period. The contract was signed in November 1942, but by late 1944 only a relatively small number - perhaps 50 - had been launched, less than half of which carried guidance equipment that was essentially similar to that incorporated in 'Schmetterling' and 'Enzian' and in the more successful guided glide bombs. At the year's end, the project was abandoned, the missile never having come close to reaching its design altitude.

It seems that the development team had known all along that the RATO units would never produce the required performance, and had planned to power the production version of the missile, known as 'Rheintochter III', with a version of the same Konrad-designed liquid-fuel rocket which was to go into the supersonic 'Feuerlilie', though a version with a much-enlarged solid-fuel rocket was also proposed. This was, in fact, the only version of the 'Rheintochter IIP ever tested.

THE EMW'WASSERFALL

Although Wernher von Braun worked for the German Army, and anti-aircraft defences were the responsibility of the Luftwaffe, EMW was ordered to produce an anti-aircraft guided missile. Most of the necessary work had already been done in developing the A4,



Above: The 'Rheintochter' 1 on its launch ramp. Guidance was provided by the small vanes at the nose, which were controlled from the ground via radio signals.

and the chief difference between 'Wasserfall' - as the surface-to-air missile was known - and the A4 was to be in its propulsion plant. From the outset it was clear that the operational requirements for the two rockets were quite different. Whereas A4 could be fuelled as and when required, in a more or less leisurely fashion, and fired when it was ready, the SAM would be required to be held at instant readiness, perhaps for months, and this was simply not practical if a cryogenic propellant like liquid oxygen was employed. Instead, it would be fuelled by Salbei (90 per cent nitric acid, 10 per cent sulphuric acid to inhibit corrosion) and a type of Visol, the fuel - which ignited spontaneously on being combined - being delivered to the combustion chamber by pressurising the propellant tanks with inert nitrogen, rather than by using cumbersome high-pressure steam turbines. Because the two components of the fuel reacted so violently, pre-launch and launch-time safety procedures very important, and there was an elaborate system of interlocks involving metal membranes which would rupture only in predetermined circumstances.

'WasserfaU' was about half the length of the A4, at 7.84m (25.7ft), and weighed 3500kg (77201b) all-up, as opposed to 12,900kg (28,4401b), but it was still by far the biggest of all the German surface-to-air weapons, even though its warhead was smaller, at 235kg (5201b), than that of the 'Enzian'. It was very similar in shape to the bigger missile, but unlike the A4 it had four stabilising fins located about one third the way back from the nose.

35 TEST LAUNCHES

'Wasserfair was designed to operate at greater range and altitude than the other SAMs. Its 8000kg-(17,6301b-) thrust engine burned for 40 seconds and gave it a range of up to 50km (30 miles) and an altitude of 20,000m (65,000ft), even though the latter was far higher than any aircraft attained. Its guidance system was manual and ground-based, with course corrections transmitted to the rocket by radio signals, but since it was launched vertically, it also carried the A4's basic inertial guidance system, to point it in the approximate direction of the target. It is difficult to imagine visual tracking and control being at all effective at anything like extreme range and altitude, and given its high launch speed, guiding it manually at all, whether through a sighting telescope or by superimposing dots on an oscilloscope, generated by tracking radars, must have presented problems. The first successful launch occurred at Peenemiinde on 29 February 1944, and it is believed that about 35 test launches were made in total. Series production was to have been at the biggest underground factory of them all, Bleichrode, but in the event even the factory itself had not been built when the war ended in May 1945.

THE UNGUIDED 'TAIFUN'

By mid-1944, there were many in Germany who advocated cancelling the offensive weapons development programme completely in order to concentrate on developing more effective defensive measures, but of course Adolf Hitler was not one of them, and what he said still went. The 'Aggregat' programme certainly got priority at Peenemünde, and since the same team was working on 'Wasserfall', that inevitably meant that the latter lost out because resources were not available. The A4 got into production, while 'Wasserfall' did not. Tn fact, there was not even a clear consensus in favour of 'Wasserfall', or even general acceptance of its desirability. Some at BMW even advocated scrapping 'Wasserfall' (on the grounds that it would never work successfully without an automatic guidance system) and concentrating on a simpler, unguided flak rocket.

A design for just such a missile was put forward by the Range Officer at Peenemünde, an engineer named Scheufein, and was - perhaps somewhat surprisingly, considering all the other demands being put on that establishment - ordered into development in September 1944 as the Taifun' ('Typhoon'). The first examples used solid-fuel motors, but it soon became apparent that they would not reach the desired height (the 'Rheintochter' development team was having the same problem, we may recall), and liquid propellants Salbei and Visol were used instead. They were stored in concentric cylindrical tanks, which made up the body of the missile, and forced into the combustion chamber by nitrogen under pressure, a cunningly designed valve ensuring that initially there was a fuel-rich mixture in the chamber which allowed pressure there to build up slowly and evenly (relatively speaking since the delay between triggering and firing was one tenth of a second). This was to prove most effective, and was to make 'Taifun' surprisingly accurate even at high altitude, which meant that the warhead could be fitted with a contact or graze fuze, and needed to be no bigger than a conventional anti-aircraft artillery shell of 0.5kg (1.lib).

Overall, the missile was 1.93m (6.3ft) long and 100mm (4in) in diameter. Tt weighed 21kg (461b) before launch, and reached a height of 15,000m (49,210ft) before falling back to earth, with a maximum velocity of 3600km/h (2235mph). It went into limited production at Peenemünde in January 1945, and an estimated 600 were completed, along with a small number of launchers (which were based, once again, on the mounting of the 8.8cm FlaK 37). Unit cost would have been very low and, at RM25, less than a third of the price of a rifle. There is no clear indication whether it was ever used operationally, and no evidence to suggest that it ever brought down an aircraft, though that is certainly possible, since to the target's crew, it would have appeared that the aircraft had been hit by conventional anti-aircraft fire.

Below: The 'Wasserfall' was essentially a scaled-down A4 (V2) rocket; it weighed 3.5 tonnes (3.4 tons) and reached an altitude of 20km (12.5 miles}.

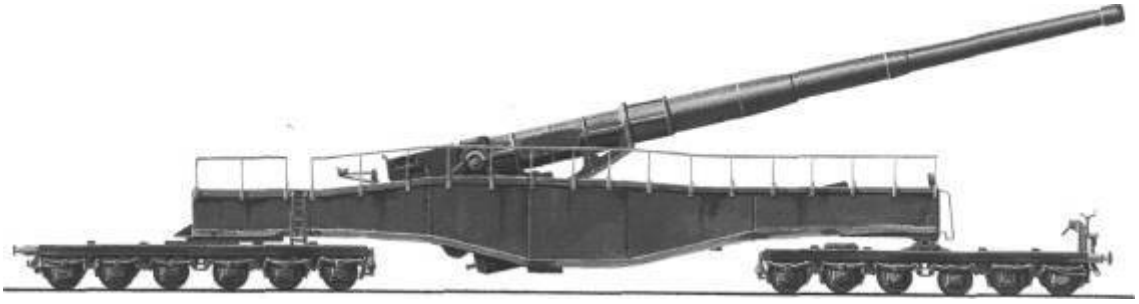




CHAPTER NINE

Artillery

By the end of the nineteenth century, artillery pieces had already reached a very high standard of sophistication, being able to hit small targets at ranges of 25km (15.5 miles) and more. There was really very little left for gunmakers to do save to make them bigger and yet bigger still, and that is just what the likes of Krupp, long recognised as masters in the field, did.



Germany had some success with ultra-long-range artillery during World War I, notably with the so-called 'Paris Gun'. The Imperial German Navy, which constructed and manned them, called them the 'Kaiser Wilhelm Geschütz', and they were used sporadically from March to July 1918 during the massive and so nearly effective German counter-attack in Picardy to bombard the French capital from the region north of Soissons over 100km (60 miles) away. They were 38cm (15in) naval guns, as mounted aboard the battleships of the day, sleeved down to 21cm (8.25in) with liners whose rifling consisted of deep grooves within which lugs on the shell located, a method first adopted in the early days of the development of the rifled gun in the 1840s. This same method was to be employed in the very long-range artillery pieces developed in Germany for use in World War II - the K5 battlefield weapons and the 'strategic' K12, built to fire on England from the French coast - though the shells of these guns were rather more sophisticated. Heavily over-charged, they projected their shell into the stratosphere where, meeting little air resistance, it could extend its trajectory considerably. The use of a far heavier charge than the gun had ever been designed to employ soon caused the barrel to wear out - it seems that 25cm (lOin) of rifling was destroyed with every round fired, and that a barrel's life was just 50 rounds in consequence - and it then had to be rebored or relined. The Paris Guns, with three mountings and seven barrels,

Above: The K5 (E), a 28cm gun mounted on a railway car, was perhaps the most successful of the 'superguns'.

Left: This 38cm gun, its barrel 45 calibres long, was derived from a weapon designed for battleships.

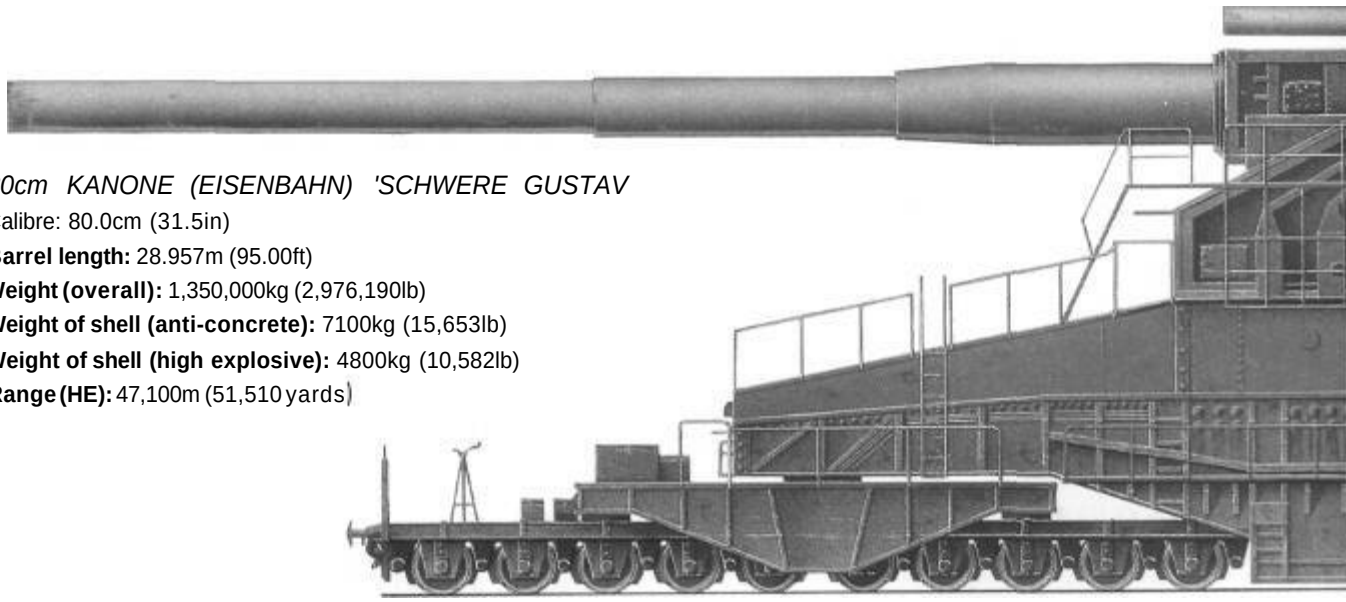
which were employed serially, fired just 303 rounds towards Paris, slightly more than half of which (183) actually landed within its boundaries, killing 256 and wounding 620. These results made the entire project highly cost-ineffective, except in propaganda terms.

Though these first-generation ultra-long-range guns were to enjoy only limited success, they did, albeit imperfectly, solve the problem of how to bombard high-value area targets with relative impunity from outside the range of counter-battery fire. In more modern times they would be sickeningly vulnerable to air attack, since they presented big targets, were hard to conceal, and impossible to move at very short notice, but in 1918, despite a huge campaign to locate them, they were never found. By the time the Allies overran the Forest of Crepy, where they were located, there was no sign of them left save their concrete emplacements. Another problem - and many said a more pressing one - remained: how to subdue organised defensive positions like the modern fortresses of the Maginot Line, which ran down the French-German border, in the shortest possible time. For this, a task which was to be undertaken at shorter range, an approach which can almost be characterised as 'brute force and ignorance' was all that was necessary, and the guns in question were no more than straightforward developments of the siege guns which were some of the first weapons deployed in 1914.

Below: Krupp made two massive 80cm guns, 'Gustav' and 'Dora'; they fired a 7.1 -tonne (7-ton) anti-concrete shell 32km (20 miles} but required a crew of 2000.

'BIG BERTHA'

In August of that year, the German Army advanced through Belgium in order to execute the Schlicffen Plan, sweeping through northern France to take Paris from the northwest and thus avoid the hardened defensive positions which dominated the approach routes from Germany. For the most part, and exactly as expected, they met little resistance, except from the forts surrounding the vital city of Liege, and to subdue these, they called up the big guns, the 42cm (16.5in) siege howitzers. The operation took longer than envisaged, but in the end 'Big Bertha' and her sisters, as the British came to call the guns, prevailed. They were not always to be so successful, however; they were later taken to Verdun and used against the fortress complex there to much less effect. These guns were enormous, by any definition - after all, they fired a shell which stood almost as high as a man, and weighed in excess of a ton - and moving them was no



80cm KANONE (EISENBAHN) 'SCHWERE GUSTAV

Calibre: 80.0cm (31.5in)
Barrel length: 28.957m (95.00ft)
Weight (overall): 1,350,000kg (2,976,190lb)
Weight of shell (anti-concrete): 7100kg (15,653lb)
Weight of shell (high explosive): 4800kg (10,582lb)
Range (HE): 47,100m (51,510 yards)

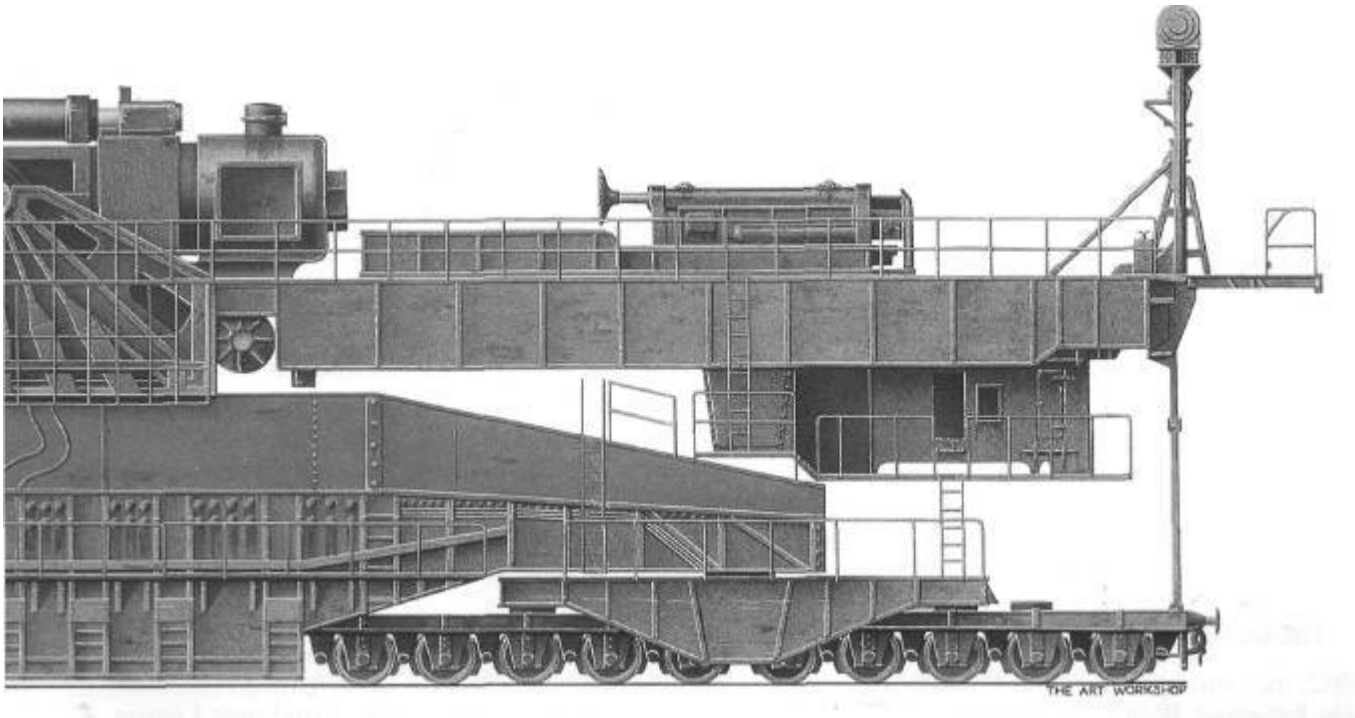
simple matter. In around 20 hours, they broke down into 172 pieces, and could then be transported on 12 railway wagons. Not surprisingly (especially since it was often necessary to construct railway lines first) moving such monsters in and out of position was a major operation, but there was no alternative, and the sheer size of the guns was one of the most important motives for the German Army's interest in much more mobile rocketry. It had been a limiting factor in World War I, and was to remain one in World War II.

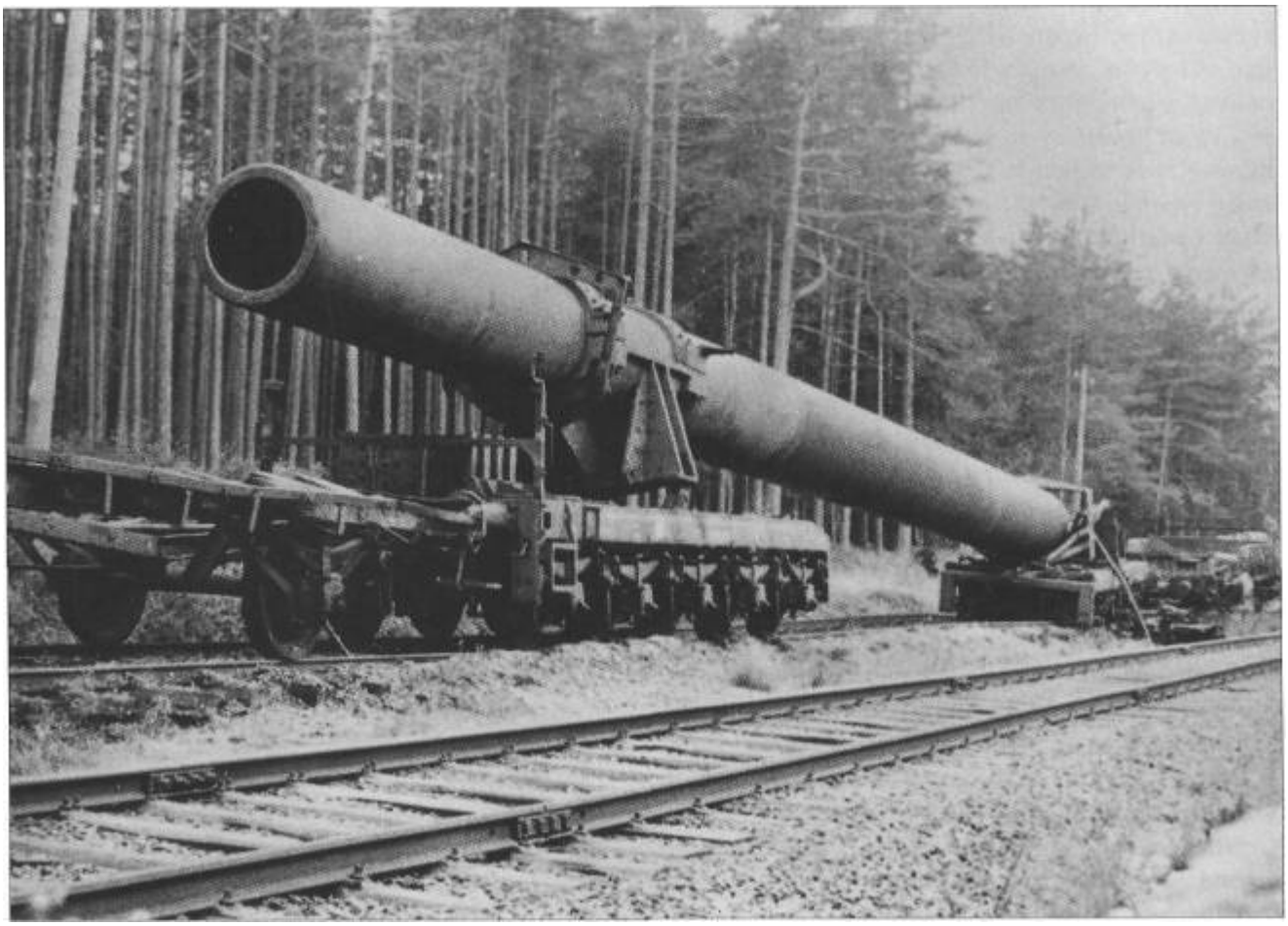
Bertha was the daughter of Friedrich Alfred Krupp, son of the founder of the company, and the wife of Gustav von Bohlen und Halbach. 'Big Bertha' had been manufactured by Krupp, and it was to the Essen-based company that the *Heereswaffenamt* (HWA - the German Army's weapons development and procurement office) turned in the mid-1930s when it realised that while the 'new' strategy of war, the Blitzkrieg, once more placed the emphasis on movement, there would still inevitably be fortresses to subdue. In response to the HWA's request, Krupp's engineers produced outline proposals for three guns, of 70, 80 and 100cm calibre. The most realistic of those was the 80cm gun, which would fire a projectile weighing up to 7.11 tonnes (7 tons) to a range of around 32km (20 miles). It would weigh around 1370 tonnes (1350 tons) and require a crew approaching 2000 strong. It would be mobile, but only in the loosest possible sense, for it would take around three weeks to dismantle it and the same to put it together again, and would need twin railway tracks for the whole of its journey, with an additional pair of tracks for the cranes required for assembly and disassembly.

'GUSTAV AND'DORA'

Nothing more on the subject was heard from the HWA, and Krupp's technicians went back to the more realistic task of developing the K5 and K12. There the matter may have rested, but in 1936, Hitler visited the establishment and began asking about the possibility of developing guns to defeat the Maginot Line. Gustav Krupp told him of the 80cm gun project, and as soon as the visit was concluded, well knowing Hitler's weakness for the gargantuan, Krupp had his staff draw up detailed plans. These were submitted to the HWA early in 1937, and the response was an order to construct three guns, work to start immediately and to be completed by 1940.

In the event, the barrels proved very difficult to manufacture, and Krupp missed the deadline by a considerable margin. By the time they were ready to proceed, the German Army had simply bypassed the





Above: The barrels of very large-calibre guns were transported dismounted. This barrel was captured by Allied forces at the war's end.

Maginot Line. With no suitable target immediately to hand, work slowed down, and it was the end of the year before the first barrel was completed, and 1941 before it was proofed. Only then was it worth setting to work on building the very complicated carriage, and that took the rest of the year. It was 1942 before the first complete gun was transported to the firing ranges at Rügenwald on the Baltic coast, assembled and tested, in the presence of Hitler himself. All went well and 'Gustav', as the gun had been christened, in honour of the company's Chairman, was presented to the nation with the company's compliments, to be followed almost immediately by 'Dora', named after the wife of the chief designer, Erich Muller.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF SEBASTOPOL

By 1942, the course of World War II had taken a drastic turn following Hitler's declaration of war on the Soviet Union. There may have been no worthwhile targets for 'Gustav' in Western Europe, but there were now plenty to the east. The gun was broken down into its components, they were loaded aboard their specially constructed railway flatcars, with the carriage base trundling along independently, occupying twin tracks, and the whole ensemble got underway for the Crimea. 'Gustav' was set up some 16km (10 miles) to the northeast of Sebastopol, which was still holding out, where it fired 48 rounds in all (including one which, most spectacularly, blew up an underground magazine) and played a significant part in the fall of the city, whereupon it was shipped back to Essen in order for the barrel to be relined. 'Dora' took its place, but it is doubtful whether it actually saw action, since the Red Army soon counter-attacked and surrounded the Germans, and by that time it had been safely evacuated. There are no substantiated reports of either gun having been used in anger again, though there are reports of 'Gustav' having seen action at Leningrad and 'Dora' having been sent to Warsaw to take part in the bombardment after the uprising in 1944. At the war's end, parts of 'Dora' were found near Leipzig, parts of 'Gustav' in Bavaria, and components of the

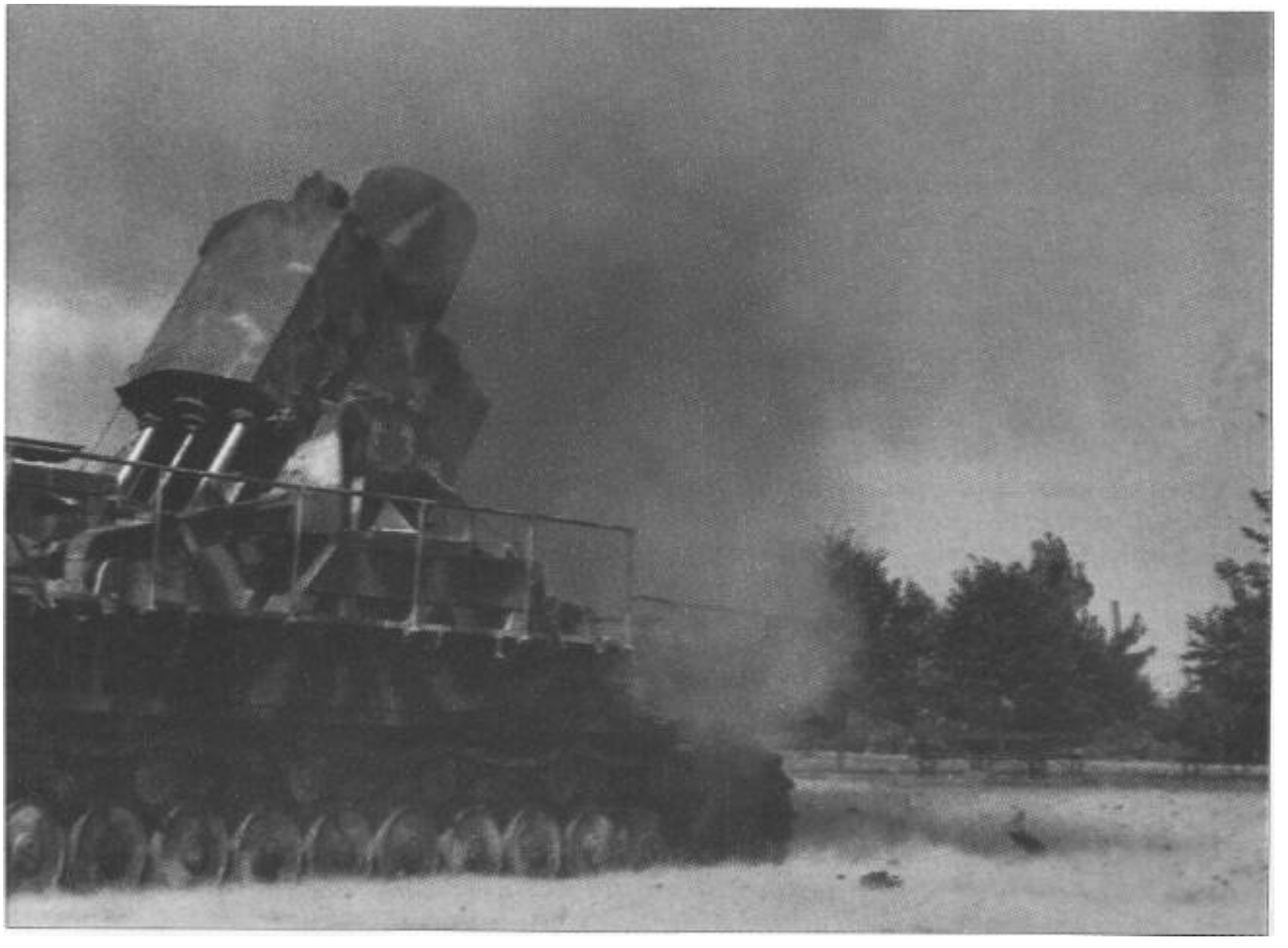
third gun, which was never completed, in Essen. The project proved to be a very expensive exercise in futility: seven million Reichsmarks per gun, without the cost of the special trains needed to transport them and the manpower required both to manufacture and to operate them. There were various schemes put forward for improved versions on the original carriages. These included one in 52cm calibre to fire a 1.42-tonne (1.4-ton) shell to a range of about 113km (70 miles); one to fire a 38cm sabotted sub-calibre shell to over 145km (90 miles) and even to fire rocket-assisted projectiles to something like 193km (120 miles); and a smooth-bore version to fire a version of the fin-stabilised, dart-like projectile called the Teenemunde arrow shell' *(Peenemünde Pfeilgeschoss* developed for the K5 gun (see below). None came to anything.

THE GERAT 041

The 'Gustav Gerät' guns were not the only fortress-smashers constructed for the German Army. Rather more satisfactory, and more practical, were the self-propelled 60cm howitzers developed by Rheinmetall as the Gerät 041, known unofficially as 'Karl', after General Karl Becker, whose brainchild they were. These were short-barrelled weapons, more like mortars than howitzers, with a maximum range of 4.5km (2.8 miles); they fired a 2.23-tonne (2.2-ton) shell specially designed to destroy reinforced-concrete structures such as blockhouses by burrowing into them for 2.5m (8.2ft) before exploding their 240kg (5291b) charge.

The complete ensemble weighed 124 tonnes (122 tons), and if the howitzers themselves were massive, the carriages upon which they rode were hardly less so at 11.3m (37ft) long, with full-length tracks with eight, and later 11, small roadwheels, each one independently sprung on a torsion bar. The vehicle could be jacked down to allow its hull to rest on the ground, thus avoiding the effects of recoil on the suspension. The recoil system itself was duplex: the gun recoiled

Below: Rheinmetall constructed six 60cm self-propelled mortars for the Wehrmacht. These 'fortress smashers' - this is 'Thor' - were used all along the Eastern Front.





within a cradle, which in turn recoiled along the chassis, controlled by hydro-pneumatic compensators. The vehicles were powered by 44.5-litre motors, although they were only expected to travel for short distances under their own power. For longer journeys they were loaded aboard specially built transporters or on railway cars. Six were manufactured, together with tracked, armoured ammunition carrier/loaders, and were issued to 628 Heavy Artillery Battalion (Motorised), which promptly named them 'Adam', 'Eve', 'Odin', 'Thor', 'Loki' and 'Ziu'. They first went into action at the Siege of Brest-Litovsk in June 1941, and were also present at Lvov and Sebastopol as well as elsewhere. In 1942, the Army asked for proposals to increase their range, and Rheinmetall's answer was to produce new barrels in 54cm calibre which fired 1250kg (27551b) shells to a maximum range of about 10km (6.2 miles). From then on, the barrels seem to have been swapped to suit whatever ordnance there was available. Two were seized by American forces in Bavaria in 1945.

Above: The 60cm mortars fired a shell weighing 2.23 tonnes (2.2 tons), which was specially designed to drive deep into a fortification before exploding.

THE K5 GUNS

Also considerably more practical than 'Gustav' and 'Dora' were the K5 guns in 28cm calibre, which fired 255kg (5651b) shells out to a range of close to 64km (40 miles). A total of 28 of these were constructed between 1936 and 1945, and all were used most effectively in combat, the most famous probably being 'Anzio Annie', which was used to bombard the Anzio beachhead, and is now on display at the US Army's artillery proving grounds at Aberdeen, Maryland. Like the Paris Guns, the K5 employed deeply incised rifling - the 12 grooves were 7mm (0.25in) deep - and each shell had very precisely machined curved slots into which were inserted soft iron rails to form splines, matching the pattern in the barrel exactly, instead of the simple lugs or studs of the original. These guns too were mounted on railway cars, though

unlike the 'Gustav Gerät', they were transportable largely intact, and could thus be put into and out of action much more quickly and easily. They were fully practical weapons, and the smaller 24cm K3, built by Rheinmetall, was perhaps better still, especially in its improved form, the Krupp-developed K4.

However, that did not prevent the development of projects to improve on these weapons. One of those was to produce a rocket-assisted projectile (RAP), which grew out of an attempt to develop a 15cm RAP for an existing gun. This proved to be much more practicable in the extra volume available. The shell was in two parts, the head containing the solid propellant, with a blast tube leading down to the base, surrounded by a conventional high-explosive filling. The propellant was ignited by a time fuze which detonated 19 seconds into the projectile's flight when it was approaching the apogee of its trajectory and boosted its velocity. The maximum range achieved on test was 86.5km (53.7 miles), and it was calculated that half the shells would land in an elongated target area around 3500m (11,482ft) long and 200m (656ft) wide, which was entirely acceptable given the nature of the likely targets.

The RAP, an accepted part of the artilleryman's arsenal only by the 1980s, was not the only new projectile developed for the K5 gun. Scientists at Pennemünde also became involved in the attempts to increase the K5's range, and came up with the *Pfeilgeschoss,* in this case a projectile 120mm (4.7in) in diameter, 1.8m (6ft) long, with four fins and a form of rudimentary sabot, which was little more than a three-part flange, 31cm (7.9in) in diameter, which was to be fired from a version of the gun with a smooth-bore barrel bored out to that same calibre. The sabot flange was discarded as soon as the projectile was in free flight. With a suitable propellant charge to take its trajectory well into the stratosphere, this projectile, which had a 25kg (551b) explosive payload, reached a maximum range of almost 155km (95 miles). Development began as early as 1940, but with a low-grade priority it did not culminate until 1944. *Pfeilgeschossen* were issued, and seem to have been used in combat, albeit in small numbers, in

Below: Rheinmetall also built railway guns in 24cm calibre; this one is seen in northern France, firing at targets in Kent, across the English Channel.



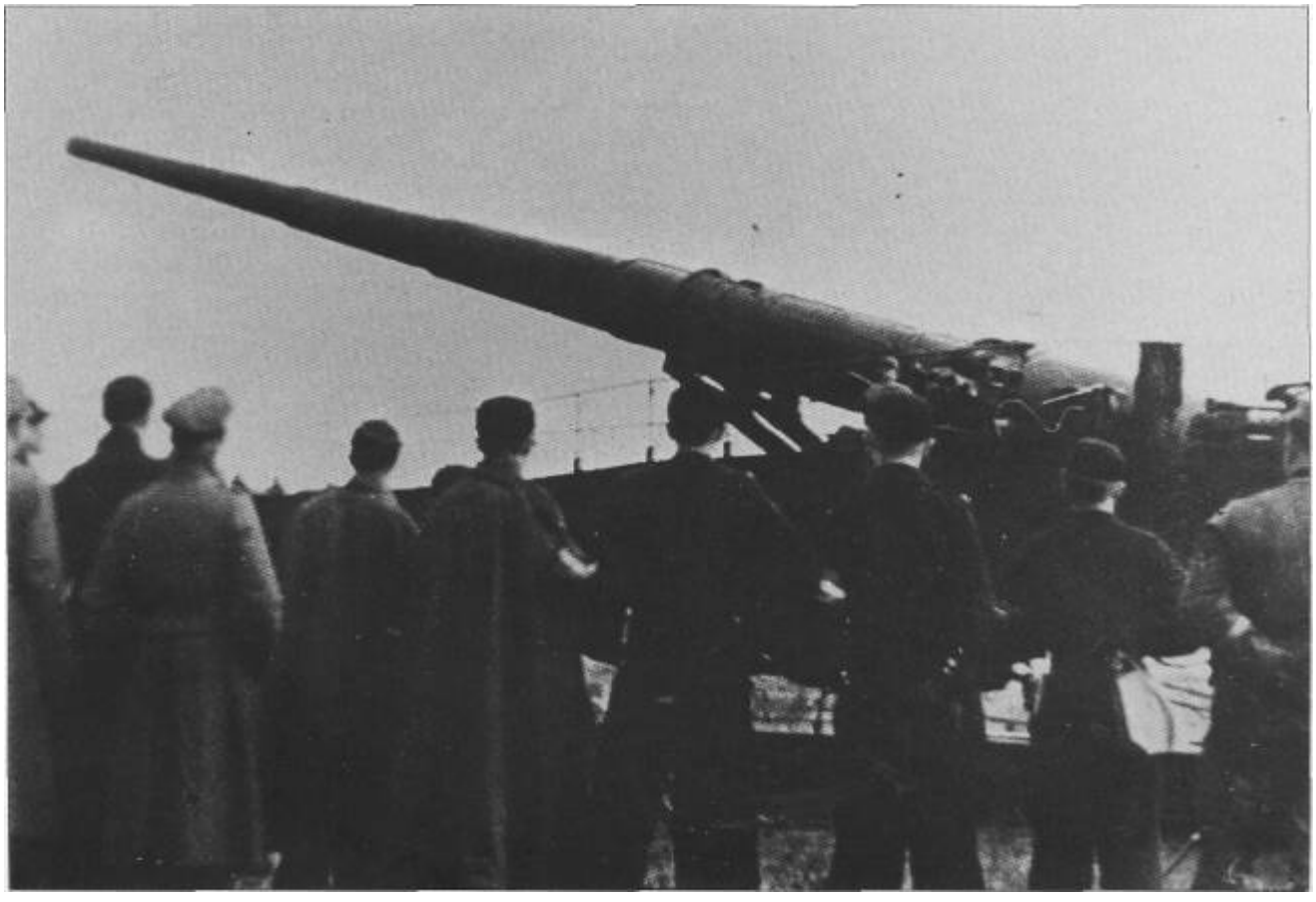
1945. The projectile was the forerunner of the FSDS (fin-stabilised, discarding sabot) round, now in common use. The credit for the original idea is usually accorded to a French gun designer, Edgar Brandt, better known for the infantry mortars he developed; in the 1930s he produced a very effective 105mm/75mm projectile, which had very superior performance when fired from a 105mm gun with a standard charge.

THE'CROSS-CHANNEL GUN

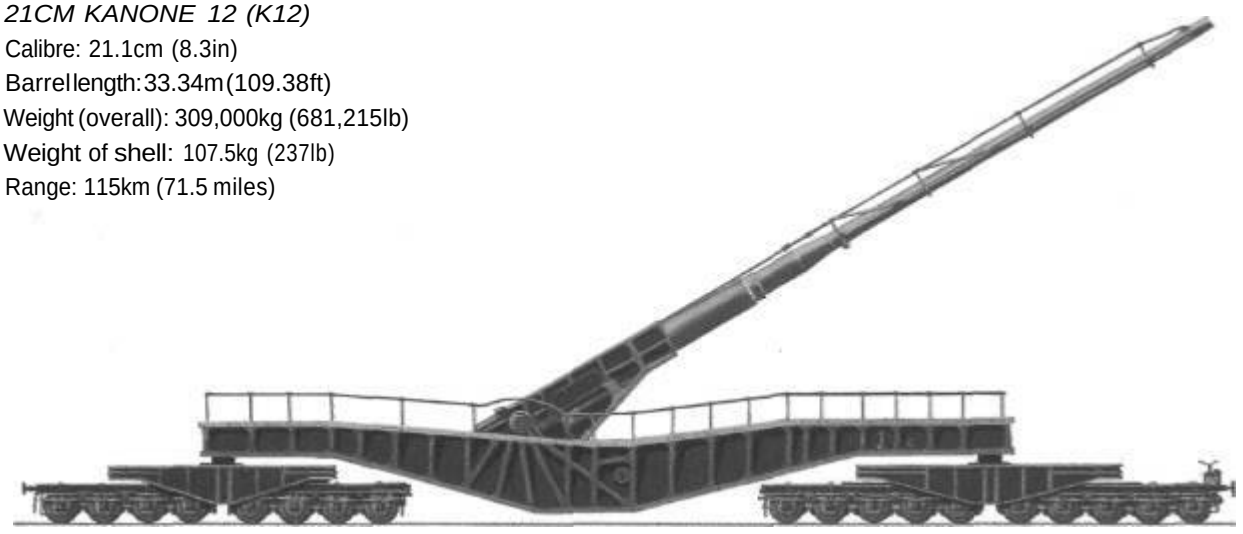
Meanwhile, Krupp's engineers were also working on a 'brute force' solution to firing a projectile out to 8()km (50 miles) or more by a simple process of refining the original design of the Paris Gun. The result was the K12, in 21cm calibre, which used the same rifling and shell-seating method as the K5, with the addition of a composite copper/asbestos/graphite band to improve its sealing within the tube and maximise the effect of the propeliant charge. It was hoped that the use of soft iron splines rather than simple lugs would both cause them, and not the hardened molybnedum-steel of the barrel, to wear, and also spread the load of rotational acceleration, thus prolonging barrel life even in the presence of an abnormally large propeliant charge. The first barrel was proofed in 1937 and the first complete gun, the K12(V), was tested in 1938 and declared serviceable in 1939. It fired a 107.5kg (2371b) shell out to a maximum range of 115km (71.5 miles) and the Army declared itself satisfied, for it was a greater distance than the Navy had achieved with the Paris Gun. Beating that record seems to have been a major incentive. However, it was less than perfect in operation. It had to be jacked up by Im (3.3ft) into its firing position, so as to allow extra space for recoil, and then returned to the lower position for loading. Krupp was asked to devise an alternative mounting sub-frame and so produced a modified gun with strengthened hydraulic buffers as the K12 (N) in the summer of 1940. No more were ever constructed.

Mounting the gun presented problems of its own. To begin with, its barrel was 157 calibres long, well over three times the length of comparable naval guns, more than 33m (108ft) from breech to muzzle. This

Below: Two K5s were in action against Allied forces contained on the beachhead at Anzio for four months in 1944. One was captured and shipped back to the USA.



21CM KANONE 12 (K12)
Calibre: 21.1cm (8.3in)
Barrel length: 33.34m (109.38ft)
Weight (overall): 309,000kg (681,215lb)
Weight of shell: 107.5kg (237lb)
Range: 115km (71.5 miles)



Above: The 21cm K12 railway gun had the longest range of alf the 'superguns'- around 115km (71.5 miles), depending on weather conditions.

meant that it distorted under its own weight and had to be very carefully braced. It also needed its trunnions to be very accurately located at the centre of balance, otherwise elevation would have been very difficult. The mount was in the form of an over-size railway car (more accurately, two railways cars); the main structure, with the trunnipn supports and elevating machinery, was mounted on two sub-frames each of which, in turn, was mounted on a pair of bogies, two eight-wheeled units to the fore and two ten-wheeled units behind. For operational purposes it ran on a track section laid in an arc, and it was trained by running it backwards and forwards. The whole ensemble weighed 304.8 tonnes (300 tons) and was over 41m (135ft) long. It appears that the two guns were operational, with Eisenbahn Batterie 701, only for brief periods in late 1940 until early 1941, and they were directed at targets in Kent, particularly around Dover, from emplacements in the Pas de Calais. The greatest range attained seems to have been of the order of 90km (56 miles). One example was captured by Allied forces in Holland in 1945.

THE HIGH-PRESSURE PUMP

The K12 guns were not the only weapon developed with an eye to bombarding southern England with artillery fire, but the other project, the so-called 'High-pressure Pump', was much less conventional, and relied on a principle first demonstrated, albeit imperfectly, in the United States of America around 1885. It was the work of Lyman and Haskell, who reasoned that subsidiary propellant charges, spaced at intervals up the barrel of a gun in side-chambers and ignited a micro-instant after a shell had travelled past on its way up the barrel, would provide a subsidiary propellant force and thus increase the muzzle velocity of the projectile. The result, when they built it on the instructions of the US Army's Chief of Ordnance, didn't much resemble an artillery piece as we know it. Firstly, the barrel had to be so long that it could not be supported save on the ground and had to be laid on an inclined ramp; and secondly, it had pairs of chambers, angled back at 45 degrees, let into it for much of its length. In the event, it didn't work: obturation was faulty, the flash from the original propellant charge bypassed the shell and ignited the subsidiary charges ahead of it, defeating the whole object of the exercise. Lyman and Haskell gave up, and the idea was consigned to the history books. It was apparently raised again in Britian, during World War I, but was turned down once more.

In 1943, a German engineer named Cönders, who worked for Röchling Eisen- und Stahlwerke (which was not just a producer of iron and steel, but had also been active in the field of munitions) proposed an identical weapon. Thanks to the success of one of Cönders' other projects, the so-called 'Röchling Shell' (a bunker-buster par excellence), those who had the all-important ear of the Führer, particularly Albert Speer, the Minister of Munitions, took note. Even though he would only proceed on the understanding that no one, not even the HWA, 'interfered' with his

work, Cönders was told to produce a prototype of the *Hochdruckpumpe* ('High-pressure Pump'). He made one in 20mm calibre and obtained satisfactory results, and at that point, Hitler, who had been following progress with interest, decided to take a hand. Cönders would, he decided, build not just one or two guns, but a battery of 50, which would be located in a suitable position behind Calais, aligned towards London some 160km (100 miles) away. A suitable site for what was already being referred to as V3 was found at Marquise-Mimoyecques behind Cap Gris Nez, very close to the southern end of the modern-day Channel Tunnel. This cannot have been altogether easy, when we consider that the VI and V2 launch sites were already under construction in that same area. There must have been, to say the least, a lively discussion as to which weapon got which piece of real estate. Despite this, work began on two excavations, each of which was to hold an array of 25 guns in 15cm calibre, which would fire long, dart-like projectiles fitted with stabilising fins, which Cönders was even then perfecting. Or, more accurately, which Cönders was not perfecting.

THE HWA TAKES CONTROL

Cönders had built a full-calibre gun at the Hillersleben proving ground, near Magdeburg, and by late 1943 had run into severe problems, both in putting the principle into practice and in producing a workable design for the shell. And even when everything went according to plan - which was seldom - the results were not promising, for muzzle velocity, at just over 1000m (3280ft) per second, was nowhere near high enough. Nonetheless, plans to build a single full-size gun with a barrel 150m (492ft) long at Misdroy near Peenemiinde went ahead, while preparation of the site in the Pas de Calais (now reduced to just one following a series of successful bombing raids by the RAF and the USAAF, which had by this time started to pay very close attention to any large engineering work in the area) had reached an advanced stage, and a special artillery battalion was being formed. Still working in isolation, there was little Cönders could do but press on and hope for the best. By mid-March, with no good news coming out of Misdroy, the HWA had had quite enough of this unconventional working arrangement. Senior staff travelled to Misdroy for a demonstration and were less than pleased with what they saw. Generals von Leeb and Schneider of the HWA took control. Matters took a distinct turn for the better as a result. Cönders became but one of the engineers working on the three main problems: projectile design, obturation, and ignition of the subsidiary charges. In all, six different specialist firms including Skoda and Krupp produced satisfactory designs for shells. Obturation problems were solved by placing a sealing piston between the projectile and the initial charge, and that in itself solved the problems of precisely controlling the serial detonation of the subsidiary charges, for now the flash from the original charge couldn't get ahead of the projectile and there was no need to attempt to develop an electrical firing sequence.

By late May, the Misdroy gun was producing more satisfactory results, and ranges of up to about 80km (50 miles) were being reached, when it burst on firing, destroying two sections. New parts were ordered, and a further trial set for early July, but meanwhile the RAF was still at work. After the western site at Marquise had been abandoned, the Todt Organisation, responsible for construction, took great pains to hide the accesses to the eastern site, and for some time it succeeded. However, by late June, the photographic interpreters had decided that there was enough evidence to suggest that something was going on in the area to justify sending Bomber Command's elite 617 Squadron to pay it a visit with I2,0001b (5443kg) 'Tallboy' deep-penetration 'earthquake' bombs. The effect of the raid on 6 July was devastating: one bomb hit the target square-on, and four more scored very near misses which were actually reckoned to be even more effective. The site was put out of commission and no further work was undertaken before it was overrun by Allied troops.

Meanwhile, on 4 July the trials gun had been fired again. This time it got off eight rounds - one of which reached a range of 93km (58 miles) - before it burst, and that effectively put an end to the project to bombard London. There is evidence that further development took place. When Allied troops captured Hillersleben, they found two guns in damaged condition, one with 10 pairs of subsidiary chambers (set at right-angles to the axis of the bore), and the other with five pairs set at a 45-degree angle. Both were 75m (246ft) long. There are unsubstantiated reports that two short-barrelled versions were built and used in combat against US forces during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944, but experts discount them.

Right: The so-called 'High Pressure Pump' - an innovative approach to the solution of applying greater propulsive force to a projectile. It was never effective.

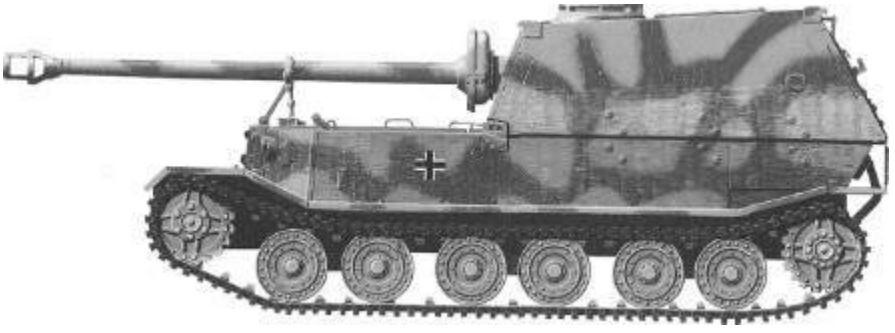




CHAPTER TEN

Tanks and Anti-Tank Weapons

While the British pioneered the use of armoured fighting vehicles in 1916, by 1939 the baton had passed to Germany, where men such as Guderian showed that they could win a war of movement, as British theorists had always promised. Then Hitler took a personal hand in the German tank programme, and his insistence that size mattered above all things was to send the entire effort off on a wild goose chase from which it never fully recovered, even though saner counsel did eventually prevail.



Properly speaking, the tank ceased to be a secret weapon on the morning of 15 September 1916, when the British Tank Mark 1, or 'Mother', went into action on the Somme battlefield. Its appearance came as a complete surprise to the German infantry, secrecy having been maintained throughout. Even the name 'tank' was deliberately misleading, though it stuck. More of a secret than the existence of tanks in the German Army was the way in which they would be employed. In any event, their use came as a complete surprise to the Poles in 1939 and to the French the following year. However, that was not to say that new models would be developed in full view.

Above: The Panzerjäger Tiger was based on the vehicle Ferdinand Porsche put forward for the Tiger project.

Left: The 'Panzerschreck' fired a rocket-propelled grenade with a hollow-charge warhead.

THE TIGER TANK

When the 58-tonne (57-ton) Sonderkraftfahrzeug (SdKfz) 181 Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger first went into action on the Leningrad front, 26 years ancf 1 day

PzKpfw VI TIGER Ausf E
Length (overall): 8.24m (27.00ft)
Width: 3.73m (12.25ft)



Weight: 58,000kg (127,867lb)
Max road speed: 38km/h (24mph)
Max road range: 100km (60 miles)
Crew: 5
Armament: 8.8cm KwK 36 gun;
2 x 7.92mm MG 34 machine guns

Above: The Tiger was the first of the German 'supertanks', and was effective if properly handled. Its underpowered engine was the cause of many breakdowns, though.

after the armoured fighting vehicle made its original debut, it was something the like of which had never been seen. With frontal armour 100mm (3.93in) thick, it was unstoppable at anything but suicidally short range, and its 8.8cm/L56 gun could, quite literally, shoot straight through any vehicle it might happen to meet, the Soviet T-34 which it was specially built to combat being no exception.

In fact, the Tiger's first outing was indecisive, and its second, a week later, much less than successful when one of them bogged down in no-man's-land and had to be blown up to prevent it from falling into enemy hands. It was January of the following year before Tigers went into battle again, and it soon became clear that they were not the omnipotent force they had been thought to be, even though at best, and in the best hands, they were very effective indeed. In the long run, the Tiger would prove to be deeply flawed: its fuel consumption was shocking, and its powerplant and transmission insufficiently robust. By 1944, the Allies had weapons capable of dealing with it, but it seems to have had a place second to none in Adolf Hitler's affections. Certainly it fulfilled all his 'biggest ... strongest... best' requirements, at least in the short term. It was eventually to be superseded by the 71.1-tonne (70-ton) SdKfz 182 Tiger II, which was more of everything, and which, despite being even less effective in all but very narrowly defined circumstances, still did not prove to the Führer that the law of diminishing returns was at work.

THE GIANT MOUSE

Hitler is usually held responsible for the decision to build the monster tanks, and he certainly gave them his very active personal approval, but he had a willing assistant in the person of one Dr Ing. Ferdinand Porsche, who, conveniently, was both the country's leading tank designer (at least, in his own eyes) and head of the Tank Commission. As early as 1942, even before the Tigers had gone into action, Porsche brought forward a plan for a tank he called, presumably with studied irony, the 'Maus' ('Mouse'). This was to be a 152.4-tonne (150-ton) vehicle, with frontal armour a massive 350mm (13.75in) thick, and mounting either a 12.8cm or a 15cm gun with a 7.5cm gun mounted co-axially (as well as a 2cm cannon and two 7.92mm machine guns). Like Porsche's proposed design for the Tiger (which became the Panzerjäger Tiger), the 'Maus' was to have petrol/electric drive, its 1200bhp engine driving a generator, which in turn drove electric motors in the hubs of the driving wheels. This was an elegant enough solution to the many problems of power transmission, but one which would ultimately prove to be flawed, at least on this smaller scale. Submarines and even battleships used it successfully, but in tanks, the motors were not powerful enough and drivers often burned them out trying to extricate their vehicles from difficult situations.

Orders were placed for six prototypes, the first of which was mobile under its own power in December 1943. It proved surprisingly successful, attaining a speed of 20km/h (12.5mph) with an under-spec lOOOhp engine; particularly successful was its suspension system, which was a modified version of Porsche's Tiger's, with longitudinal torsion bars and four interleaved roadwheels per stub-axle. At a total

PzKpfw VI TIGER H Ausf B
Length (overall): 10.26m (33.66ft)
Width: 3.75m (12.29ft)



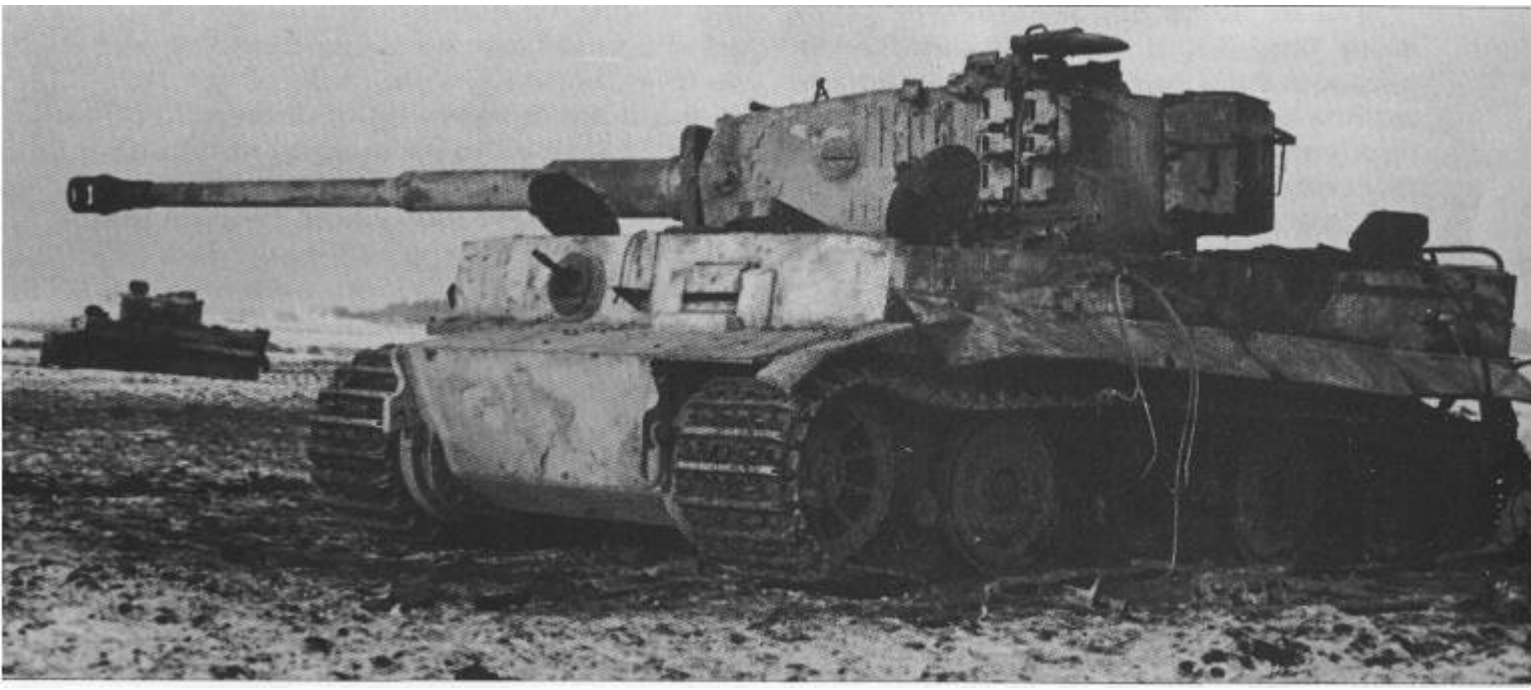
Weight: 71,100kg (156,747lb)
Max road speed: 38km/h (24mph)
Max road range: 110km (68 miles)
Crew:5
Armament: 8.8cm KwK 43 gun; 2 x 7.92mm MG 34 machine guns

weight of almost 193 tonnes (190 tons) including its six-man crew, fuel and ordnance, there was hardly a road bridge in the country which would have taken its weight, and thus it was designed from the outset to be able to submerge to a depth of 8m (26.25ft), air for occupants and powerplant being supplied via a schnorkel tube which extended from the turret roof. The 'Maus' project didn't get much further than the initial stage; in all, nine prototypes had been wholly or partially completed by the war's end, though that small result does not reflect the amount of energy, money and scarce resources which had been lavished on it. And worse was to come, because the HWA - having protested that it did not want such a vehicle and could formulate no sensible tactical plan for its use, and having been overruled by the Führer - then decided to commission something very similar itself!

Above: The King Tiger was heavier than the Tiger and had a more powerful 8.8cm gun. It was, however, also prone to breakdowns, having the same powerplant as the Tiger.

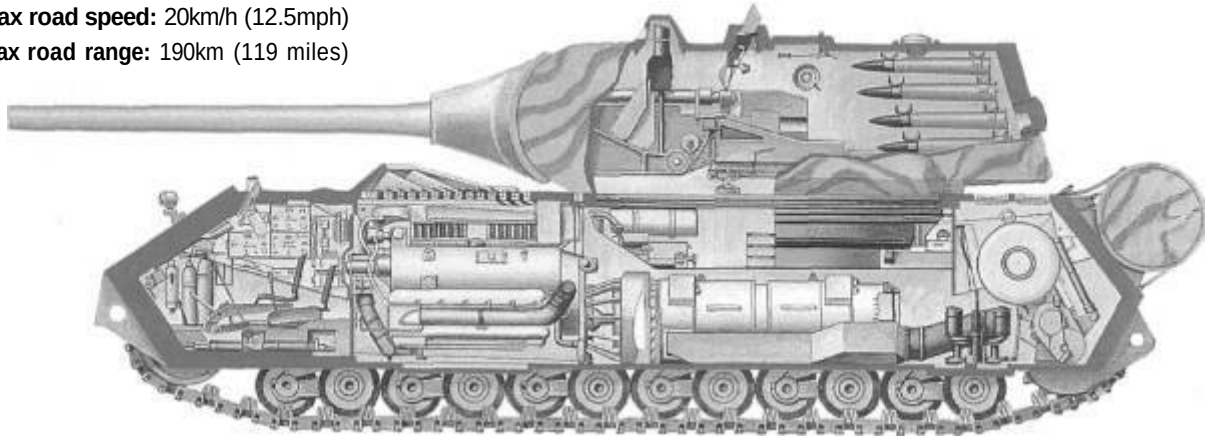
It comes as no surpise to find that it was to Henschel, the producer of both versions of the Tiger (and of the much more successful PzKpfw V Panther), that

Below: A pair of knocked-out Tigers in the Soviet Union in 1944. By that time the Allies had got the measure of these 58-tonne (57-ton) monsters.



PANZER 'MAUS'
Length (overall): 10.08m (33.08ft)
Width: 3.67m (12.00ft)
Weight: 193,000kg (425,488lb)
Max road speed: 20km/h (12.5mph)
Max road range: 190km (119 miles)

Crew: 6
Armament: 15cm KwK 44 gun, 7.5cm KwK 44 gun; 2 x 7.92mm MG 34 machine guns



Above: Even the King Tiger would have been dwarfed beside the 'Maus'. Its secondary armament was to have been the 7.5cm gun, the Panther tank's main armament.

the HWA turned, and even less of one to learn that the E100, as the project was known, displayed more than a passing resemblance to them, though it was certainly on a grander scale. Its all-up weight was estimated at 142.2 tonnes (140 tons) which would probably have meant it going into battle at least 10.16 tonnes (10 tons) heavier, and it, too, was to have had the KwK 44 15cm gun and a co-axially mounted 7.5cm. In all, it appears to have been a more realistic (though the phrase is used loosely) proposition than the Maus. One prototype was under construction at the war's end, but had never run.

In all, the German tank development programme during World War II was deeply flawed by the assumption that a single vehicle, heavily armoured and with a powerful gun, would be able to out-fight (or at least out-range) any number of enemy tanks. By the time the Allies landed in Normandy in 1944, this was certainly not true. American Sherman tanks, which appeared on the battlefield around the same time as the Tiger, had by then acquired very much more powerful guns - the 76mm in American-manned tanks, the 17pdr in British service - and had a fighting chance which their numerical superiority turned into a certainty. The same was true in the east with the up-gunned T-34. It would have been very much more sensible to have abandoned the Tiger (or better still, never to have begun it) and to have concentrated instead on the PzKpfw V Panther, which many experts rate as the best tank of the entire war. Certainly, Panthers were quicker (and much cheaper) to produce, and were formidable opponents, with a KwK 42 7.5cm cannon, 70 calibres long, developed by Rheinmetall-Borsig, which was capable of perforating any Allied tank at virtually all ranges.

ANTI-TANK WEAPONS

If the German tank development programme was fatally flawed, the same could not be said of the anti-tank (AT) weapons development programme. At the start of World War II, anti-tank weapons were simply not up to the task, save in a few particulars. One was the heavy German 8.8cm gun, which had started life as an anti-aircraft weapon but which showed itself during the Spanish Civil War as a very successful AT weapon, once appropriate armour-piercing projectiles had been developed. It soon acquired a practical and practicable mobile mounting, and was issued as the Panzerabwehrkanone (PaK) 36; it was also adopted as the KwK 36 for the Tiger tank. It was very capable, but entirely conventional; other German developments in high-velocity guns intended for use against armoured vehicles were not.

THE TAPERED-BORE GUNS

The earliest suggestion for a gun with a uniformly tapering barrel seems to have originated in Germany in about 1903 with a man named Karl Puff. He suggested using a projectile with a sleeve, which was compressed by the taper of the bore until it filled a

series of grooves in the body of the bullet. By that means, the velocity of the projectile was much increased, since its cross-sectional area had been diminished considerably while the pressure in the barrel remained constant (the velocity being a product of the two). Unfortunately for Puff, the complexities of manufacturing a rifled tapered bore were beyond the capability of German gunmakers, and nothing came of the idea, at least, not then.

In the 1930s, another German, a gunmaker named Hermann Gerlich, experimented with Puff's scheme, and was able to manufacture hunting rifles according to the principle. They proved to be excellent, with the all-important flat trajectory, but when he tried to interest the armed services of a number of countries in such a rifle, he was less successful, entirely, it seems, thanks to the projected cost of the weapon. However, the Springfield Arsenal, for one, certainly validated the concept, producing a version of the M1917 rifle with a muzzle velocity of over 2135m/s (7000ft/s) instead of the standard 855m/s (28QOft/s). Gerlich gave up trying to market the concept himself in 1933, and contacted Rheinmetall, who saw the possibility of incorporating the system into an anti-tank rifle, using a projectile with a tungsten carbide core and soft steel skirt. Eventually, it produced what became known as the Panzerbüchse (anti-tank rifle) 41, which fired a 20mm (it had started out at 28mm nominal diameter) round at a muzzle velocity of around 1400m/s (4600ft/s), and which could perforate (ie, pass completely through) 66mm (2.6in) of nickel-steel armour at a range of 500m (1640ft). Soon, Rheinmetall produced a more powerful version in 4.2cm nominal calibre, which squeezed its projectiles down to 29.4mm, and which could perforate that same thickness of armour plate at twice the distance. It entered service in 1941 as the 4.2cm Panzerabwehrkanone (anti-tank gun) 41, and proved to be very successful.

THE SQUEEZE-BORE GUN

Two years earlier, Krupp had also begun to examine the possibilities of reducing the cross-sectional area of a projectile while it was in the barrel, and settled on a slightly simpler, but no less effective, method of carrying out the procedure. Instead of manufacturing a barrel with a uniformly tapered bore, Krupp added a smooth-bore, step-tapered section to the muzzle of a conventional gun. The (flanged) round entered the supplementary section at nominal diameter of 7.5cm and passed through two tapered sections which reduced it to 5.5cm. The advantage of this was chiefly



Above: The 8.8cm Raketenwerfer 43, usually called the 'Püppchen', was not a gun but a rocket launcher. It was superseded by the shoulder-held tube rocket launchers,

logistical; only the unrifled, tapered section became badly worn (that, of course, was the system's great drawback), and was attached to the main section of the barrel by a simple screw collar, which meant it could be replaced in the field without the need for special tools. The 7.5cm PaK 41, as the gun was known, fired a tungsten-cored shot weighing 2.6kg (5.71b) at a muzzle velocity of 1125m/s (3700ft/s) and could perforate 125mm (4.9in) of armour, more than any tank had, at a range of 2000m (6560ft). This gun was the weapon originally specified for the Tiger tank. The taper-bore and squeeze-bore guns were without question excellent battlefield weapons, but they needed tungsten for their bullet cores if they were to be effective, and that was a material in short supply in Germany at that time, being much in demand in the engineering industry as cutter bits for machine tools. Eventually, a choice had to be made, and the manufacturing industry won. The taper-bore and squeeze-bore guns were taken out of service and scrapped and few survived the war. Rheinmetall and Krupp offered conventional anti-tank guns in larger calibres instead, culminating in the 12.8cm PaK 44.

SHAPED AND HOLLOW CHARGES

The kinetic energy of a very hard object travelling at high speed (brute force, in other words) was one way to perforate armour, but there was another; the shaped



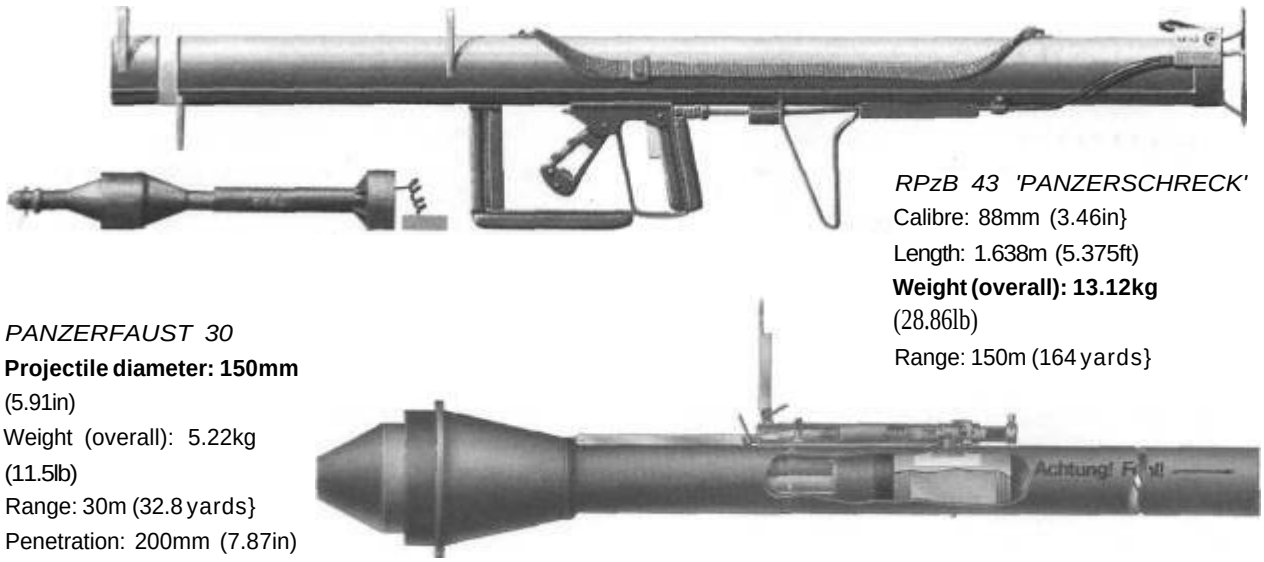
Above: The Panzerfaust 30 was the simplest of all German rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Its designation referred to its optimum range - 30m (32.8 yards).

Below: Appearances are not deceptive. The 'Panzerschreck' was developed from the US Bazooka, and was just as effective. Two versions were produced.

or hollow explosive charge, which incorporated a hollow cone or hemisphere of metal translated by the heat of the explosion behind it into a high-speed (around 7500m/s; 24,600ft/s) jet of molten material and gas. This was first produced, in Germany in 1939, as a demolition charge, and is reputed to have been first used in combat at the storming of the fortress of Eben-Emael in May 1940. By that time, however, its developers had moved on, and were on the verge of producing an artillery shell on the same principle.

The British and Americans had also made considerable progress independently, while the Soviets had achieved the same ends by the rather simpler means of copying captured or stolen German munitions. However, in this principle, there was a problem: the act of spinning the shell to maintain its accuracy in flight dispersed the molten jet and made it much less effective. One answer was to stabilise the round with fins instead, but that took some working out. Another answer was to emulate the pyrotechnic 'sky rocket' and fit the projectile with a long shaft for a tail. In the successful German development of this simple principle, the rod was surrounded by a tube upon which fins were mounted. The rod went down the barrel of a 3.7cm PaK 36 anti-tank gun, and the tube fitted around it, with the shaped-charge warhead, with its copper hemisphere and 2.4kg (5.31b) of TNT and hexogen sitting in front of the mu/zle. It was propelled by





RPzB 43 'PANZERSCHRECK'
Calibre: 88mm (3.46in}
Length: 1.638m (5.375ft)
Weight (overall): 13.12kg
(28.86lb)
Range: 150m (164 yards}

PANZERFAUST 30
Projectile diameter: 150mm
(5.91in)
Weight (overall): 5.22kg
(11.5lb)
Range: 30m (32.8 yards}
Penetration: 200mm (7.87in)

Above: The Raketenpanzerbüchse 43 'Panzerschreck' and the simpler Panzerfaust gave even individual infantrymen the means to kill tanks.

a special cartridge, loaded conventionally at the breech, and was reasonably accurate up to about 300m (985ft). Being independent of the kinetic energy of the round in flight (which diminished with distance, of course) the warhead was equally effective at all ranges, and could pierce 180mm (7.08in) of armour. The shaped-charge warhead was also to be mated with simple solid-fuel rocket 'motors' to produce early RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades), the Panzerfaust and the Raketenpanzerbüchse (also known as the 'Panzerschreck' - 'panzer terror'), which was a direct copy of the American Rocket Launcher M1, the celebrated Bazooka, using German 8.8cm rockets.

THE RUHRSTAHL X-7 'ROTTKÄPPCHEN'

An altogether more elegant solution to the problem of killing tanks on the battlefield at something greater than suicidally close quarters (the main problem with the Panzerfaust and 'Panzerschreck') was put forward by Ruhrstahl. We have already encountered this company as the producers of the 'Fritz-X' guided bomb and the X-4 air-to-air guided missile, in response to HWA's request in 1944. The X-7 'Rottkäppchen' ('Red Riding Hood') was essentially similar in nature to the X-4 AAM, with its conventional HE warhead exchanged for a 2.5kg (5.51b) shaped charge, and with its control system cunningly simplified. Like the X-4, the X-7 was winged (two wings only, in this case, with parabolic leading and trailing edges, with spools from which the control wire paid out located at their tips) and revolved slowly in flight, both pitch and yaw being controlled by a single spade-like vane or fin mounted at the end of a curved arm which, when the missile was launched, hung down and behind the body. As the missile rotated (once again, at a rate of about one complete turn per second), this was able to exercise control over both pitch and yaw, a gyroscopic switch transferring the signals to actuate the simple spoiler as it turned from the vertical to the horizontal plane and so on, an elegant solution indeed.

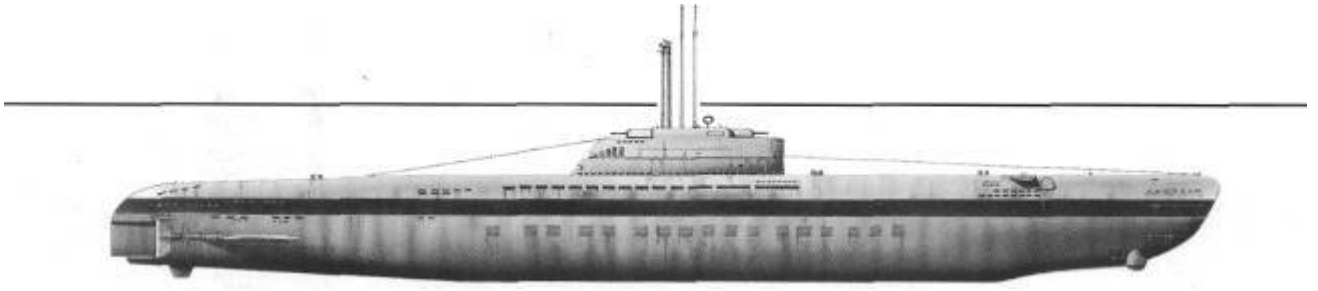
The X-7 was powered by two WASAG solid-fuel rockets whose diglycol propellant was in the form of two concentric tubes. The first charge gave a thrust of 68kg (1501b) for two and a half seconds to launch the missile into flight and get it up to its 360km/h (224 mph) operating speed; the second gave 5.5kg (121b) of thrust for eight seconds (which was actually longer by a considerable margin than the flight was likely to last) to sustain it. Maximum range was to have been around 1200m (1310 yards). It is thought that a total of a few hundred Ruhrstahl X-7s were manufactured, and that most were consumed in testing, but there is some evidence to suggest that some made it into the field, and were expended in combat on the Eastern Front during 1945. There are unconfirmed reports that the X-7 performed satisfactorily, and was able to deal even with the JS-1 'Stalin' heavy tank, which was impervious to virtually everything else at anything over short range.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

Submarines and their Weapons

By the time World War II was halfway through, Germany (and in particular the Führer himself) had largely given up on its surface navy, but the submarine arm was another matter entirely. U-boat veterans knew, however, that much still remained to be developed in the boats themselves, and a well-funded programme was put into effect. Yet again it proved to be just too late, however, for by the time the new-generation boats were coming off the ways, the war was already lost.



If the Luftwaffe was the Nazi Party favourite in pre-war and wartime Germany, the *Kriegsmarine* (Navy) was, for a variety of reasons, very definitely not. Some of the reasons were historical and political, and went back to the dark days of near civil war in the 1920s, but others were more recently rooted, and had to do exclusively with the poor performance of German capital ships. At one point, an enraged Hitler actually ordered all the surface fleet to be scrapped. The exception was the submarine service which, under the talented leadership of Karl Dönitz, had actually come close to cutting Britain's vital lifeline to the United States and to its colonies. Most of the few funds for development that did find their way to the *Kriegsmarine* were destined for the U-boat arm.

Above: The Type XXI U-boat was one of the most influential naval developments of the twentieth century.

Left: Germany also developed midget submarines, like this 'Biber' putting to sea from Rotterdam at Christmas 1944.

HOMING TORPEDOES AND MAGNETIC MINES

By the end of World War I, the submarine torpedo, the first really successful model of which had been produced by the Anglo-Italian Whitehead in 1868, had been developed to the point where it was a reliable, practical weapon. During that war it had been used to sink thousands of ships (German submarines alone accounted for 5556), and we can hazard a guess that the individual success rate (expressed as hits per torpedo) probably made it one of the most effective offensive weapons of the whole conflict. However, it was a relatively simple, unsophisticated weapon, and

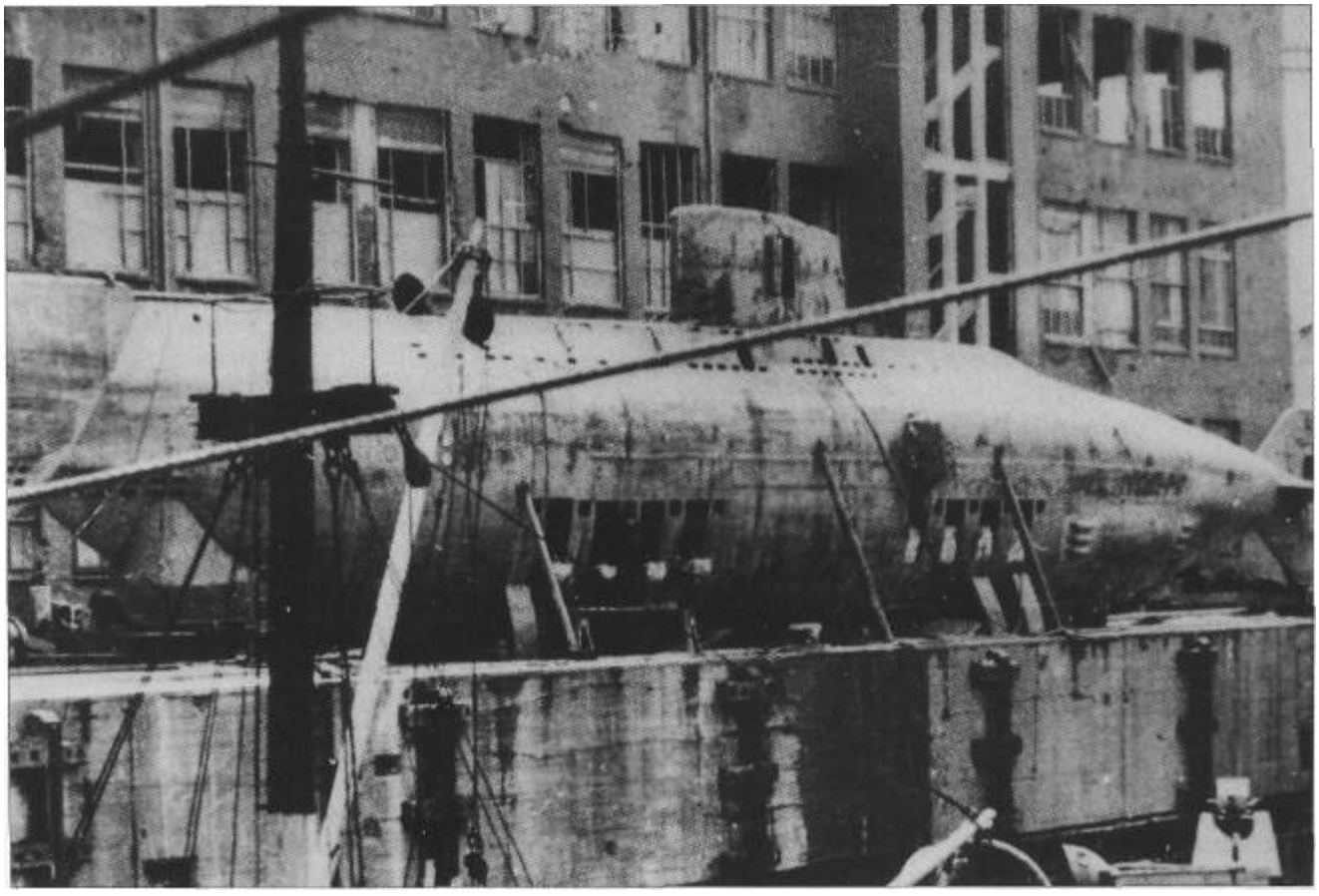
that, combined with its effectiveness, surely meant that it could be improved. There was certainly the possibility of giving it much greater endurance and straight-line performance, but increasing the range always resulted in a lowering of the strike rate, since the torpedoes had no self-directive capability. There is reason to believe that scientists in Germany had actually perfected a passive acoustic homing device to steer a torpedo towards a submarine sound source by 1936, and that the new weapon had been kept back from production to preserve its secrecy.

FOXING THE 'FOXER'

The relatively simple first-generation devices, which were restricted to fairly low speeds, proved effective against slow-moving targets such as merchant ships, but less so against warships, which often simply outpaced them. Towed noise-makers (known as 'Foxers'; originally no more than two lengths of iron pipe, chained loosely together so that they constantly crashed into each other) could also dupe these devices, and it was September 1943 before German scientists perfected a means of outwitting them.

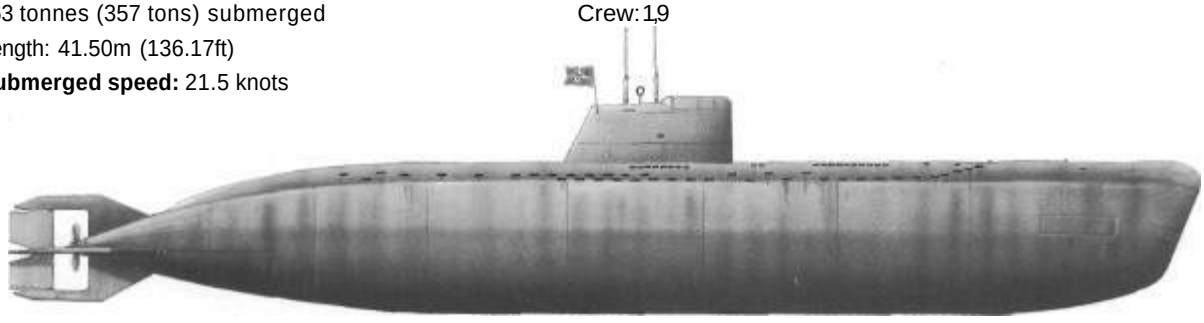
When a torpedo fitted with the second-generation T5 or 'Zaunkönig' ('Wren') passive acoustic seeker detected a sound source in a small arc ahead of it, a subsidiary circuit operated a simple solenoid switch to actuate the small rudder vane. This caused the torpedo to turn sharply to starboard and run in a circular path for a predetermined period (long enough, in fact, for it to describe a semi-circle) before turning sharply to starboard once more and setting off on its original track again. In this way, the torpedo skirted the noise-maker and homed in on the propeller noise of the ship towing it instead. Then, on encountering the noise of the ship dead ahead, the torpedo turned to perform the circling manoeuvre once more. The diameter of the semi-circular track the torpedo described being less than the length of the ship plus the distance the latter covered in the intervening period, it would strike the target from the beam. It has been estimated that 700 T5s were fired in anger, and that 77 (11 per cent) scored hits. The US Navy introduced the similarly

Below: *U14Q6,* one of the few operational Type XVII Walter-engined boats to be completed. She was scuttled in May 1945 but was salvaged and taken to the United States. A sister-boat, *U1407,* went to the UK.



TYPE XVIIB

Type: Coastal submarine
Displacement: 317 tonnes (312 tons) surfaced; 363 tonnes (357 tons) submerged
Length: 41.50m (136.17ft)
Submerged speed: 21.5 knots
Submerged range: 210km (130 miles)
Armament: 2 x 533mm (21 in) torpedo tubes
Crew: 19



Above: The Type XVII boats had both conventional diesel engines and a single Walter closed-cycle engine. They were designed for coastal operations.

equipped Mark 27 torpedo in 1944, and in the last years of the war, 106 were fired in combat, scoring 33 hits (31 per cent).

Another approach was to fit a form of automatic pilot, which caused the torpedo to make a series of pre-programmed turns after it had run a preset distance, in the hope that a torpedo fired in the general direction of a convoy would turn and hit a ship purely by chance. Neither the success rate of the Federapparat-Torpedo, nor that of its more sophisticated successor, the Lagcnunabhangiger-Torpedo (which could be fired from depths of up to 50m; 164ft), seems to have been recorded. Later U-boats had their six forward-facing torpedo tubes organised into an array which covered 10 degrees of arc; firing all six in a salvo gave a much-improved chance of hitting the target. It is obvious that the same guidance system which was applied to the glider bombs and the guided missiles could also have been applied to torpedoes, even though keeping a precise track of the missile's course would naturally have been more difficult. It is inconceivable that an experimental programme, at least, was not initiated. Certainly, one of the *Kriegsmarine's* original submarine warfare instructors, Werner Fürbringer, suggested it.

A viable alternative to the torpedo was to lay mines in the path of the oncoming enemy (particularly if this was a slow-moving convoy), and a variety of submarine-launched mines were developed. The Torpedo-Ankertaumine (TMA) had a 215kg (4751b) explosive charge, and was attached to an anchor which allowed it to float at a predetermined height, while the Torpedo-Grundminen lay on the seabed in shallower water. They came in two sizes: the 500kg (llOOlb) TMB and the 1000kg (22001b) TMC. All three mines were dimensioned to allow them to be deployed through a standard 533mm (21in) torpedo tube and could be fitted with a variety of remotely actuated detonators, magnetic or acoustic.

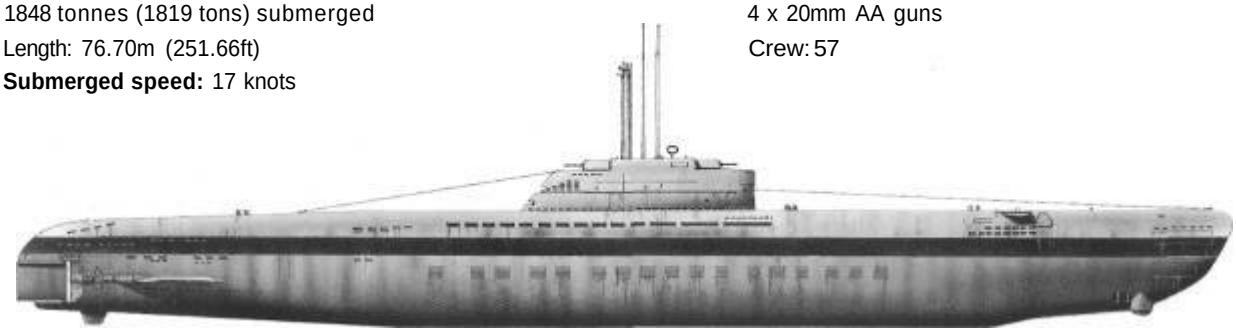
THE NEW GENERATION OF SUBMARINES

There was little development of the basic submarine in the inter-war period, except that the once-popular saddle-tank design, in which the buoyancy chambers were located outside the pressure hull, gave way more and more to the double hull, in which they enclosed it almost completely and were themselves contained within a light enclosure which could be shaped to improve sea-keeping and performance. In Germany, developments in the late 1930s were aimed only at increasing the size and endurance of existing types, not making any radical changes to their design. However, by 1941, experimental boats with a new type of powerplant which did not need atmospheric oxygen had been produced, and were proving to be quite remarkable. The powerplant in question was, once again, the creation of the prolific Professor Hellmuth Walter, whom we have already met.

Walter had constructed a small experimental boat, the *V30,* launched on 19 January 1940, which displaced just 73.8 tonnes (75 tons) submerged. He equipped it with a steam turbine, fed by a variant of the liquid-fuel motors which were to power the VI flying bomb's launch catapult, producing their steam by the chemical reaction of hydrogen peroxide with a catalyst. Walter soon discovered that his submarine could make almost 30 knots submerged - around three times the submerged speed of any conventional

TYPE XXIA

Type: Ocean-going submarine
Displacement: 1620 tonnes (1595 tons) surfaced
1848 tonnes (1819 tons) submerged
Length: 76.70m (251.66ft)
Submerged speed: 17 knots
Submerged range: 525km (325 miles) at 6 knots
Armament: 6 x 533mm (21 in) torpedo tubes;
4 x 20mm AA guns
Crew: 57



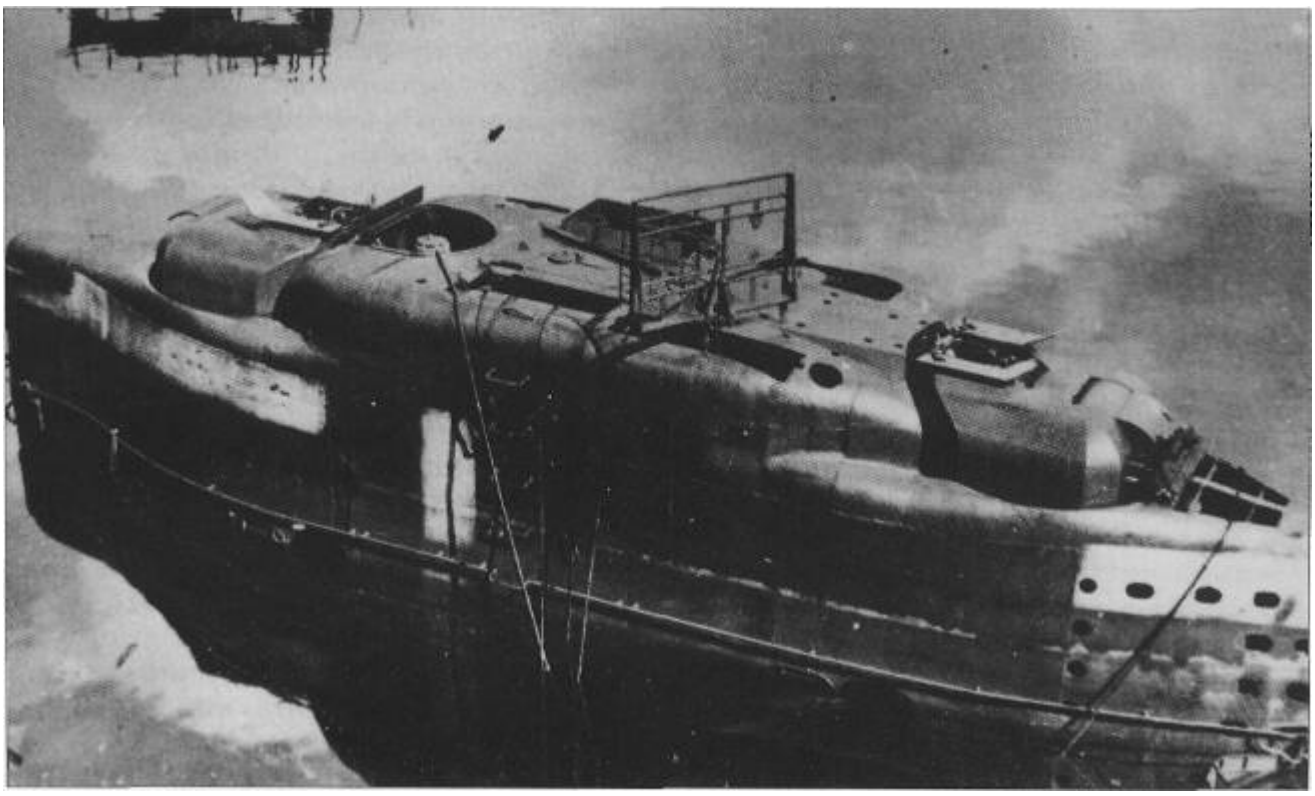
Above: The Type XXIs were ocean-going submarines of over 1600 tonnes (1575 tons), the size of a small destroyer of the period. They could make 17 knots submerged.

submarine running on battery power - and that led him to suggest to the *Kriegsmarine* the construction of a fleet of similarly powered submarine warships. When asked where he proposed to store the large quantities of reagent and fuel that would be required, he produced a design for a two-decker submarine, in itself virtually two existing double hulls joined into a tigure '8', the bottom portion of which would serve exclusively as 'bunkerage'. Someone at this proposal meeting noted that it would be just as easy to fill that lower section with batteries.

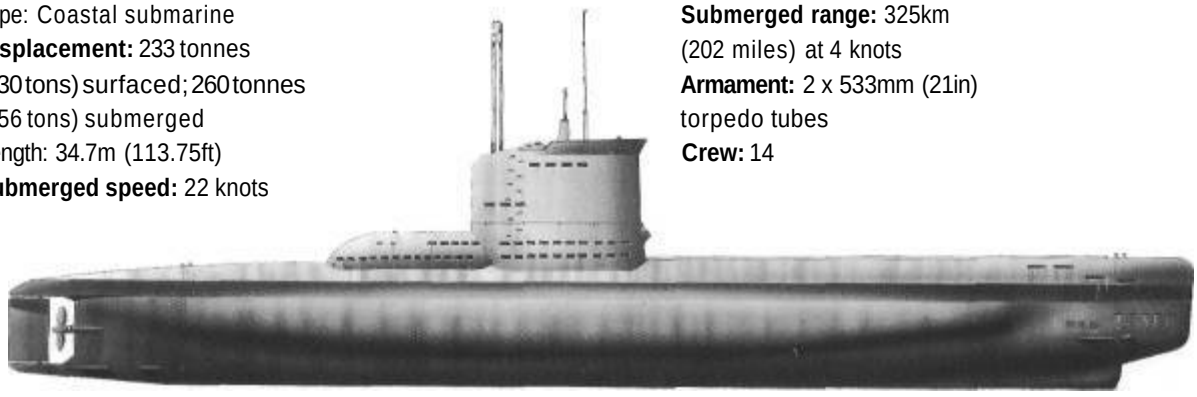
THE'ELECTRO-BOATS'

Whatever the method adopted, as the war wore on, it was to become harder and harder for U-boat commanders to remain on the surface, even at night,

Below: The conning tower top of a (scuttled) Type XXI. Note the retractable radio antenna and the faired-in machine gun emplacements.



TYPE XXIII
Type: Coastal submarine
Displacement: 233 tonnes (230 tons) surfaced; 260 tonnes (256 tons) submerged
Length: 34.7m (113.75ft)
Submerged speed: 22 knots
Submerged range: 325km (202 miles) at 4 knots
Armament: 2 x 533mm (21in) torpedo tubes
Crew: 14



Above: The other 'Electro-boats' were the much smaller Type XXIIIs, intended for coastal operations. Even with a complement of just 14, they were cramped, much of the interior being given over to batteries.

thanks to the increasingly effective airborne anti-submarine patrols mounted by the RAF and the USAAF. If they were to continue to wage war effectively, they would have to be provided with boats which could stay submerged for extended periods and perform more effectively under water, and it was along these lines that the bulk of research was carried out. More 'Walter' boats were built or at least were in the course of construction when the war ended. The two Type XVIIB boats which were successfully salvaged after having been scuttled in Hamburg harbour were later transferred to the US Navy and the Royal Navy, who operated them experimentally, but the powerplant required massive quantities of fairly exotic fuel and was most temperamental. It would perhaps become a valid solution in the fullness of time, but that was something the *Kriegsmarine* did not have, and it was essential to look at other suggestions.

THE TYPE XXI AND TYPE XXIII

The off-the-cuff remark to Walter about using the lower-deck space of his two-deck submarine for batteries was to have far-reaching consequences, and to lead to the construction of two classes of submarines which were actually faster submerged than they were on the surface: the ocean-going Type XXI; and the smaller, coastal Type XXIII. They were not the first to so perform; right at the end of World War I, the British constructed a class of 'hunter-killer' submarines, the 'R' class, with the 220-volt batteries taken from the much bigger T class, combined with a spindle-form hull from an earlier era, with a speed on the surface of 9.5 knots and 15 knots submerged. They proved to be difficult to control, and were stricken prematurely, though *R4* stayed in service until the early 1930s.

The two types of German combat submarines were quite different in character. The Type XXI11 was strictly for local deployment in coastal waters, if only by virtue of its size. It displaced 233 tonnes (230 tons) on the surface, was 34.7m (113.8ft) long and 3m (9.8ft) abeam, and had a crew of just 14. Its biggest weakness as a warship was that it carried just two 533mm (21 in) torpedoes, pre-loaded into two bow tubes, and no re-loads. Almost 500 were scheduled to be built at yards in Germany (Kiel and Hamburg), France (Toulon), Italy (Genoa and Montefalcone), and Russia (Nikolaev), but only the German yards of Deutsche Werft and Germaniawerft actually launched any boats, the German Army having been driven back out of occupied territory before any could be completed. The first boat, *U2321,* was launched at Hamburg on 17 April 1944 and a total of 63 had been completed by the time the war ended. However, problems of commissioning meant that only 10 operational patrols were made from March to May 1945; six merchant ships were sunk, two of them, by *U2336,* off Scotland on 7 May, being amongst the last sinkings of the war.

As its powerplant, the Type XXIII had a single 580bhp MWM diesel engine which drove two electric motors either directly or via the extensive batteries. The principal electric motor produced 580shp and could produce a submerged top speed of 22 knots; the secondary, 'creeping', motor produced just 35shp for a speed of 5 knots, but in almost complete silence. Using the secondary motor alone, the submarine could stay submerged, making a speed of 4 knots, for

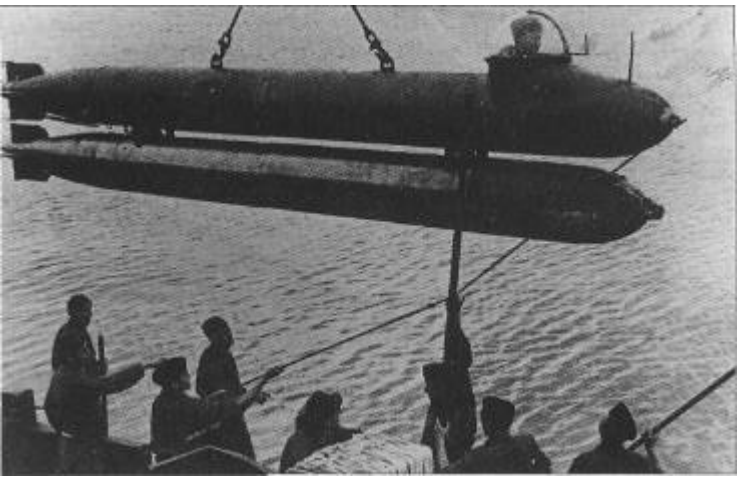


40 hours. Like the bigger, Type XXI boats, they were streamlined in appearance, with all external fittings either faired-in or removed.

The Type XXI was a more sophisticated boat than the Type XXIII; it was 76.7m (251.6ft) long and 6.6m (21.6ft) abeam, displacing 1620 tonnes (1595 tons) on the surface. Type XXIs were equipped with six torpedo tubes, all of them situated in the bow, and a total of 23 torpedoes (they were also to have carried four 30mm anti-aircraft cannon, but never did, a pair of 20mm cannon being substituted). Like the coastal boats, they were double-decked, the frames being fitted outside the pressure hulls, which suited the modular, prefabricated building method by then in use in Germany. Their powerplants were considerably more powerful, of course: they had two MAN diesels of lOOObhp each driving two propeller shafts via two 125()shp electric motors or two 57shp 'creeping[1] motors; on the surface they could make 15.5 knots and submerged, on main engines, over 17 knots, with 5 knots available from the auxiliary motors.

Almost 700 Type XXIs were scheduled to have been built by Blohm & Voss in Hamburg, Deschimag in Bremen, and Schichau in Danzig (Gdansk), but only 121 were actually commissioned. Many more were bombed on the slip prior to launching and a substantial number remained incomplete at the end of the war. Some of them - and some of the boats already in commission - were taken to the Soviet Union and completed there and formed the backbone of the Red Navy's submarine arm for many years. Indeed, so greedy were the Soviets for German submarines that they loaded the hangar decks of the incomplete hull of the aircraft carrier *Graf Zeppelin* with U-boat hull sections and proceeded to tow it the length of the Baltic to Leningrad, but it hit a mine in the Gulf of Finland and sank. Only two Type XXI boats ever left port on operational patrols and neither fired a shot in anger. The advance in submarine operations which the Type XXI and Type XXIII represented cannot be overstated. They altered the world's navies' perceptions of what could be expected of a submarine, and every design later produced, up to the modern 'teardrops', reflected that.

Left: The head of an extensible induction mast, or schnorkel tube. It took considerable ingenuity to produce a self-regulating valve system which was fast-enough acting to prevent large quantities of water being sucked into the submarine. The Dutch were the first to find a solution to the problem in about 1936.

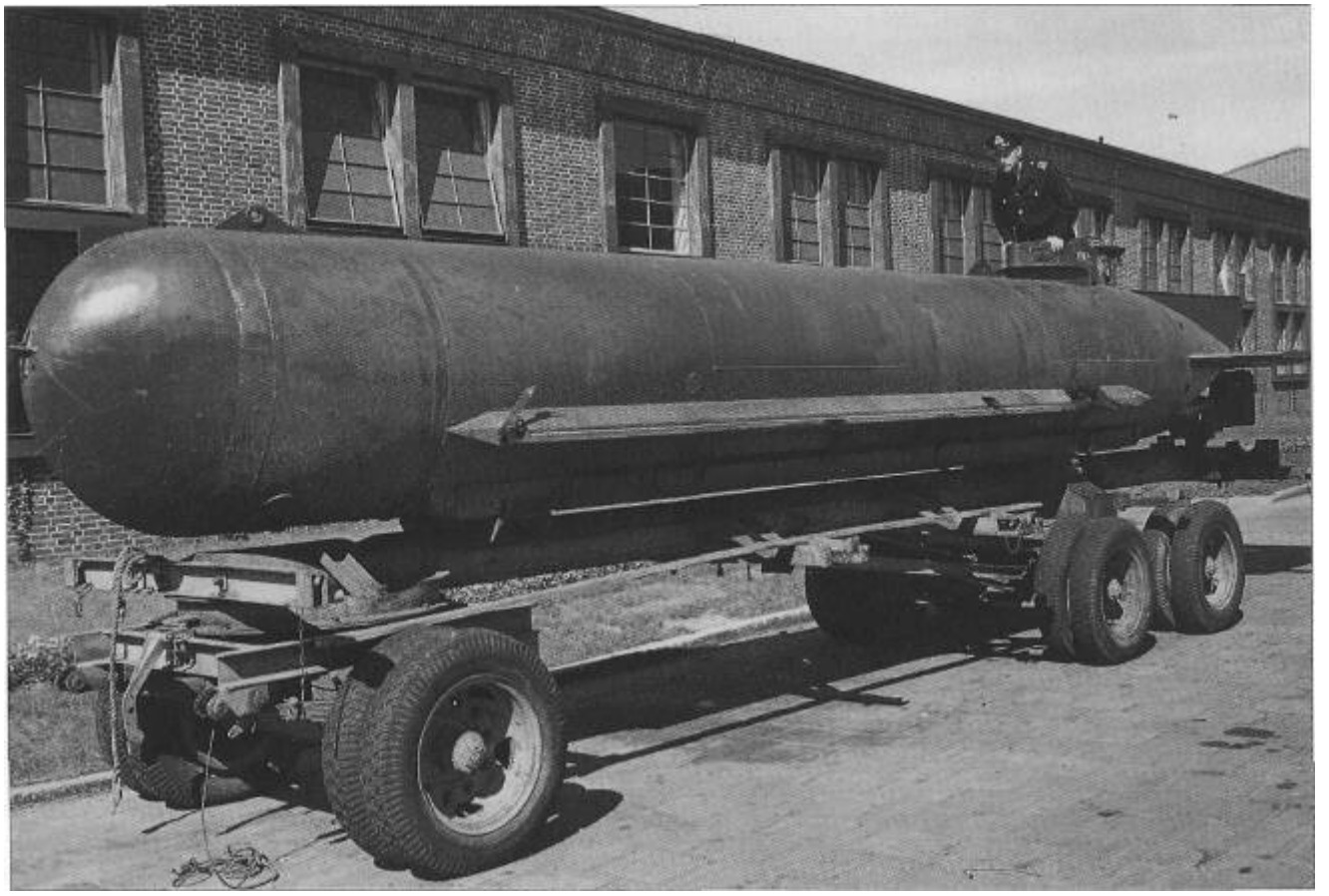


Above: A 'Marder' ('Marten') midget submarine being launched by crane. The nature of the craft-it was no more than a torpedo with a small crew compartment replacing the warhead - is obvious.

Below: The 'Molch' ('Salamander') was slightly more sophisticated than the 'Marder'. It carried two underslung torpedoes and around 400 were built The 'Molch' was used against Allied shipping in the Scheldt.

THE SCHNORKEL

There was one more way to keep the boat submerged with its engines running, of course: let it breathe through a tube. This may seem an obvious solution, and indeed, the very earliest submariners had adopted it, but in a large boat travelling even at only 5 or so knots, a breathing tube was very difficult indeed to maintain in operation in anything but a flat-calm sea. The practical problems were largely solved, however, by about 1936, and in a somewhat unlikely quarter: the Netherlands. When the German Army invaded in May 1940, examples of submarines with functional extensible induction masts (as the breathing tubes are properly known) were captured intact, but were never copied, and those fitted to Dutch submarines which the *Kriegsmarine* put into operation were removed. German submarine commanders[1] policy was to remain on the surface as much as possible, and only submerge to avoid escape or to make a particularly risky attack. As a result, U-boat commanders had no use for the snorting mast, at least, not until the dark days of 1943, when they were regularly being forced to dive by anti-submarine patrols, and when a research programme was put in hand to replicate the



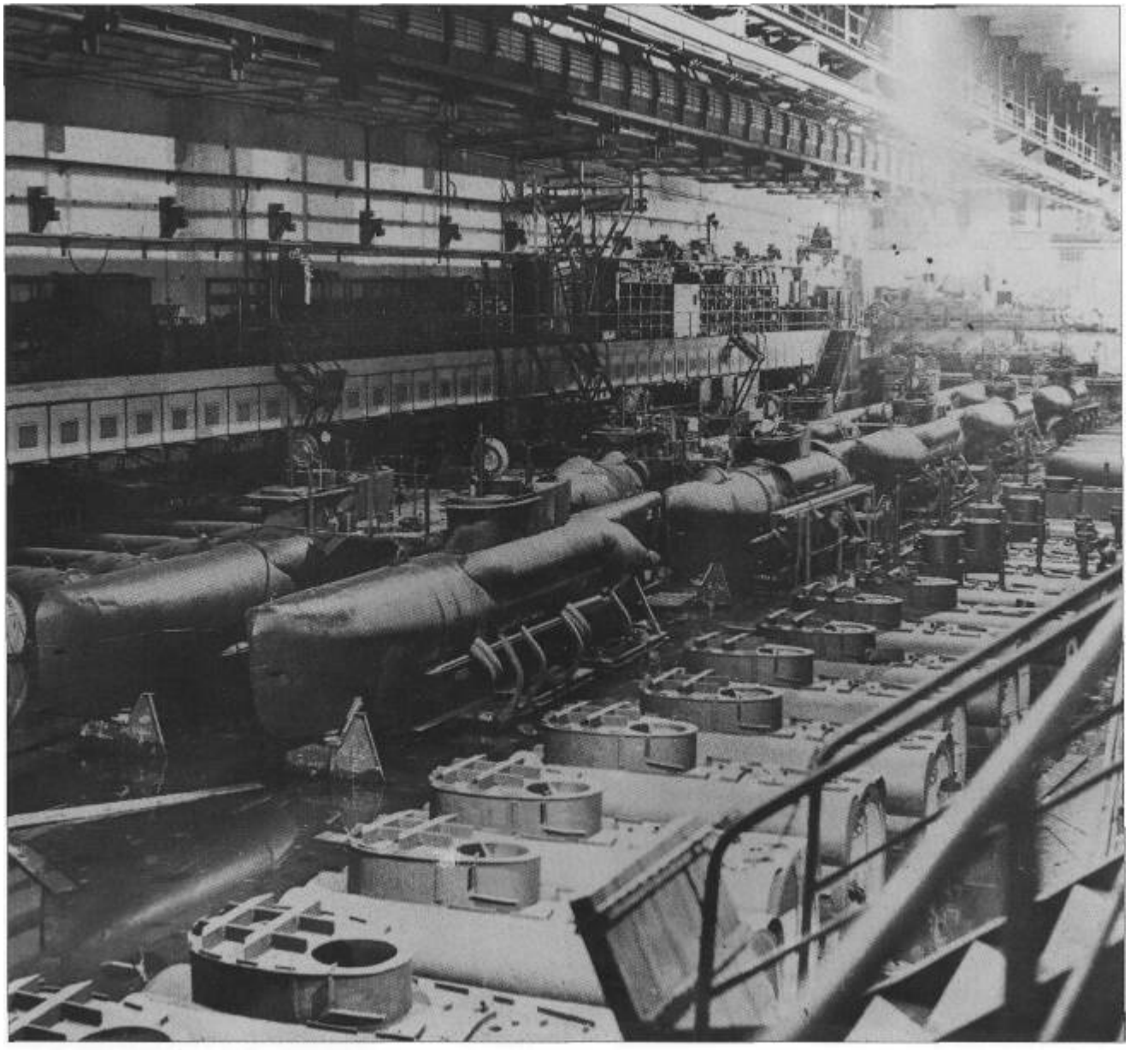
results the Dutch had achieved. The first German submarine to have been fitted with a schnorkel seems to have been *U264*, and she was lost in February 1944 during her initial attempt to use it. Some experts maintain that the first-generation schnorkels caused as many problems as they solved, but they achieved their major objective of allowing the submarine to run submerged on its diesel engines, even if was a tricky business, and unpopular with the crew, who had been accustomed to a short watch on deck every now and then. Tt could also be very dangerous, as the loss of *U264* indicates, as it was all too easy to run the head-valve (a simple ball valve at the end of the U-shaped top section of the induction tube) under water, whereupon the diesels would begin to suck the air out of the boat's interior and would create a very considerable under-pressure before they stopped.

MIDGET SUBMARINES

Given their almost complete lack of success, it comes as something of a surprise to discover the extent of the German Navy's midget submarine programme. At least six different types of craft were produced in considerable numbers - certainly over 1500 in total - from 1943 (the programme was behind those of Britain, Italy, and especially Japan). The first types would more accurately be called semi-submersibles, for they all ran with their upper surfaces barely awash, the solitary crewman being able to see out through ports in the vestigial conning tower which enclosed his head. The first constructed was known as the 'Hecht' (Tike'); it was battery-powered and really little more than a manned torpedo with a detachable warhead. An improved model, the 'Neger' ('Negro') had a petrol engine, and carried an underslung torpedo. Tt worked well enough, but its solitary crewman had to breathe oxygen, and was thus restricted in what he could do. Two larger one-man types, the 'Molch' ('Salamander') and the 'Marder' ('Marten'), were slightly more practical, with recirculating air supplies. The former carried two underslung torpedoes, and was used with some success against Allied shipping in the Scheldt in late 1944 and 1945. The 'Marder' carried just one torpedo but could submerge completely in order to attack.

Below: The 'Biber' ('Beaver') was the third one-man midget submarine type. It could be transported by road or by specially equipped 'mother' submarines and proved to be quite successful in 1944-45.





Above: The best of all the German World War II midget submarines was the two-man 15.2-tonne (15-ton) 'Seehund' ('Seal'), the only type which was truly capable of operating independently.

The next step was to produce a true submersible, a proper submarine in miniature. The first attempt resulted in a single-seater experimental vehicle called the 'Hai' ('Shark'), powered by a petrol engine and batteries, which could make 20 knots for two hours on its electric motor. The 'Hai' was developed into the one-man 'Biber' ('Beaver'), which displaced 3.04 tonnes (3 tons) and carried two torpedoes slung beneath the hull; a later version of the 'Biber' was capable of carrying a second crewmember. Over 300 were built and used with a measure of success in the Scheldt Estuary and off Murmansk in the convoy assembly area. The 'Biber' could be transported by road or by air as well as by specially modified conventional submarines.

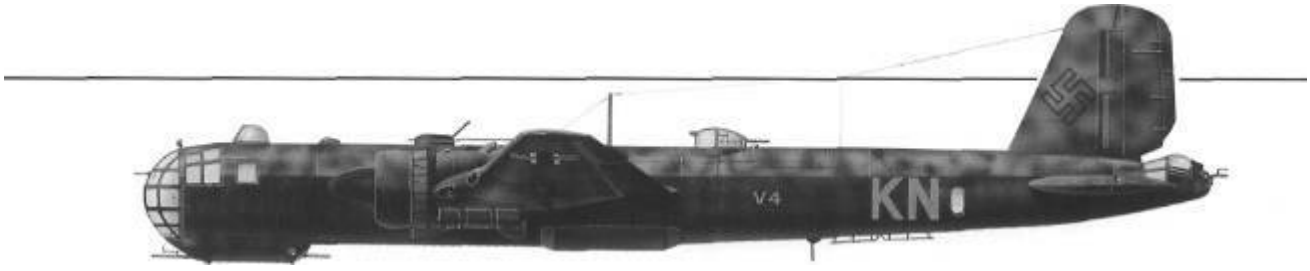
The most successful of the German midget submarines was the two-man 'Seehund' ('Seal'). This was much bigger at 15.2 tonnes (15 tons) displacement, and had jettisonable auxiliary fuel tanks, which gave it a range of around 800km (500 miles). It could make 8 knots on the surface and 6 knots submerged. The 'Seehund' also gained some success in the mouth of the Scheldt. Unconfirmed reports from German sources claim that it also operated against merchant shipping in the Thames estuary and off Margate.



CHAPTER TWELVE

Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons

When war broke out in 1939, it was feared that poison gas would be used even more widely than it had been in World War I. To that fear was added the threat of biological agents, while physicists were struggling with the possibility of harnessing nuclear fission to produce a bomb the likes of which had never been seen.



In December 1938, German physicists Otto Hahn and Frit/ Strassman demonstrated the fission (splitting) of the uranium atom. This caused a stir in the scientific community, and ripples spread outside it, even as far as the HWA, to which several scientists wrote, suggesting that the phenomenon might conceivably be used in a bomb. The notion made slow progress, but by late 1939 a steering committee had been formed. It had just one item on its agenda: could a nuclear reactor to produce fissionable material be built? As a rider, subsidiary questions were posed about costs and timescale. A research programme was drawn up, and six university-based projects were established. By 1941, it had become clear that the notion was feasible, and the steering committee reported to HWA that a reactor could and should be built, and that it should use as its moderator, deutrium, also known as 'heavy water'. The entire project went downhill from there, but it would be a long while before that was to become obvious. By 1942, five different laboratories were experimenting with atomic piles, each one with a different theory of how

Above: The Heinkel He 177A-5; an He 177 was modified to carry the never-completed German atom bomb.

Left: A US serviceman is confronted by massed ranks of German mustard gas shells afterthe war.

it should be constructed, and each one in ignorance of what the others were (or were not) doing. At least one team - that led by Werner Heiscnberg, Nobel laureate and dean of the Gentian physics community, who had recently been appointed Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute at Dahlem - is reported to have deliberately exploited the confusion which resulted to drag its feet. Convinced that a bomb could be contructed, Heisenberg set out to slow the process down, and make as little actual progress as possible towards its conclusion. Eventually, Albert Speer, Hitler's Minister for Munitions, lost patience, and demanded from Heisenberg a prediction of the length of time which would be required to actually manufacture a bomb. Heisenberg prevaricated still, but eventually said that he believed it might be possible by 1945.

Speer decided to set up a single research project charged with constructing a reactor. He assembled some of the best brains in the field and asked them to submit a budget. They requested 40,000 Rcichsmarks, less than the cost of a single PzKpfw IV tank, and this, more than anything, seems to have convinced him that the project had a very low likelihood of success. From then on, it seems, the nuclear research programme concentrated on producing a reactor suitable for power generation, rather than one to produce fissionable material for a bomb. Naturally, such a power station would inevitably produce small quantities of fissionable material as a by-product, but it would be a very long time before it would be possible to build a bomb, even if the reactor worked perfectly.



Two atomic piles were eventually built, one near Hechingen, the other near Erfurt, both using deutrium as their moderator. Neither actually achieved a chain reaction, largely because they were too small. By that time - late 1944 - the infrastructure of German industry was becoming increasingly chaotic. Such small supplies of uranium ore as were available - from a small field in Belgium and another in Bohemia - were running low, and thanks to a successful bombing raid by the RAE on the deutrium production plant in Norway, that was in short supply too. The programme was already dead in its infancy, and one might even say that it was stillborn.

There was perhaps a subsidiary use of uranium as a weapon of war under consideration. In 1943, HWA commissioned a report from a biological laboratory on the toxicity of radioactive material. From this it has been widely concluded that uranium dust was to have been employed as cargo in a conventional high-explosive bomb or rocket warhead, but there is no firm evidence to support this speculation and certainly no evidence to suggest that even the most basic experimentation ever took place outside the laboratory. One could just as well conclude that the project was aimed at improving worker safety.

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

Outside very special limits, suicidal attacks make little tactical sense, and a suicidal strategy makes none at all. Those truisms have always done more than pure ethics or morality to control the use of one of the most dreadful potential weapons known to man: disease. Indeed, in limited 'experiments', where the vectors of the disease in question could be completely controlled, man has shown himself willing to use biological agents of death. The US Army used it in the form of smallpox-infected blankets distributed to native Americans, and the Japanese did too in Manchuria in the 1930s. But as an everyday weapon of war, it had one enormous disadvantage: it was as likely to kill you, in the long run, as it was to kill your enemy. That is not to say that every country did not have its biological warfare research establishments, but more to suggest that much of the research carried out in them was aimed more at providing a defence against the agents of disease. There are persistent reports that tests of biological agents were carried out on unwill-

Left: Like all armies, the Wehrmacht took chemical weapons very seriously, as the protective clothing and warning signs on this locker indicate.

ing participants in concentration and extermination camps in Germany, and in the light of other undeniable findings from the people investigating the events in those places, we have to leave the question open.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

More than half a century on, there is no lessening of the revulsion felt against the obscenities committed in the Nazi death camps or against the men and women who actually committed the acts, and that is as it should be. But besides the ethical and moral aspects, there is also the purely practical to be considered, for the destruction of six million or more people could only proceed on an industrial scale. The mass murders had to carried out under factory conditions. Very soon it became obvious that the only acceptable method would be by mass poisoning, the toxin to be delivered in the form of a gas. In the event, this murder of millions of helpless people was to be the only widespread use of chemical warfare during World War II. This is apart from Italian forces using phosgene in Abyssinia in 1938, the Japanese use of it in China from the mid-1930s to the end of 1941 in some 840 separate incidents, and reports that something described as 'toxic smoke' was used during the siege of Sebastopol.

German troops initiated the use of gas as a weapon of war in February 1915, when they fired shells filled with xylyl bromide (a lachrymogen, or tear gas) against Russian forces. The operation failed, for the gas was frozen solid in the shells, and dispersed only very slowly. Two months later, they used chlorine gas against British and Empire troops at Ypres with greater success, and from then on it became a recognised part of both sides' armouries. But it was not that effective; gas was responsible for only just over one per cent of battlefield deaths during the entire war. It was slightly more effective as a wounding agent - 5.69 per cent of all injuries were caused by gas - and from a military point of view, wounding is actually more desirable, since caring for wounded both on and off the battlefield eats into precious resources.

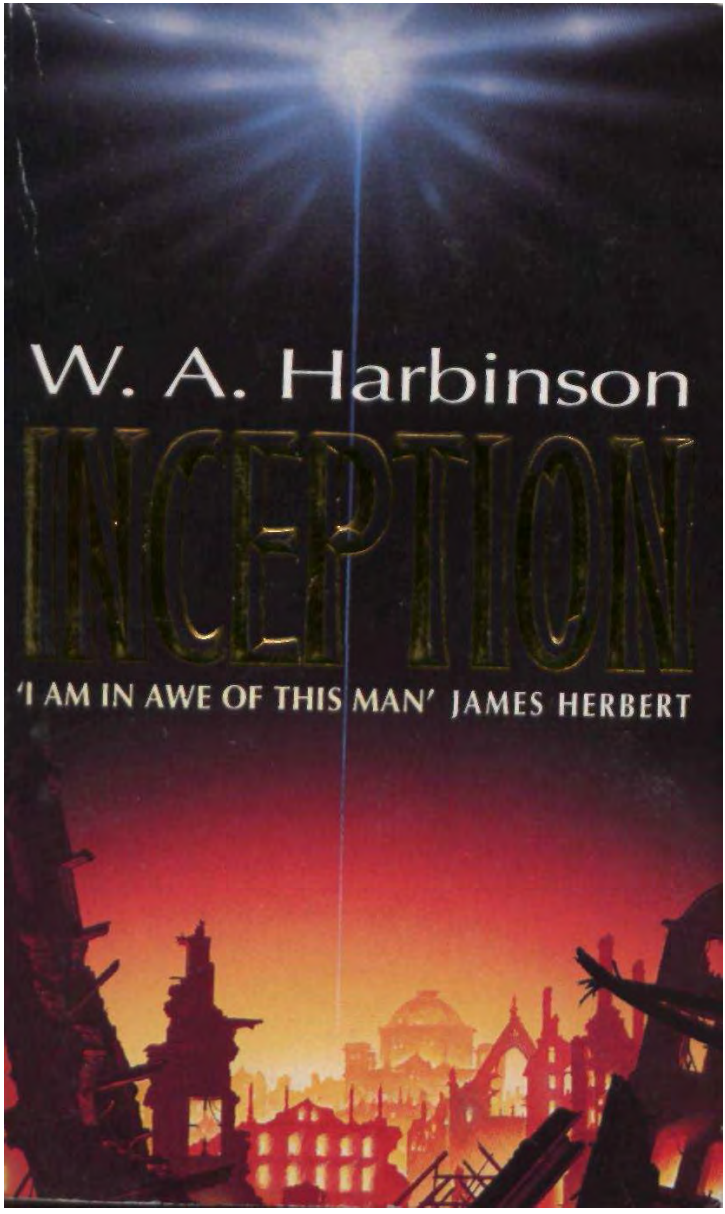
By 1919, there was a limited repertoire of gases available; chlorine, mustard gas, phosgene and a few others. By the time two decades had passed, there was a whole menu of more effective agents available, including some very exotic compounds which had been produced during research into insecticides and herbicides. These compounds were organo-phosphates, and were to become the basis for what we now call nerve gases. The original nerve gas, known as Tabun, was first synthesised in 1936 into a substance



Above: The sinister facade of a German mustard gas storage building, in which the agent was kept in huge concrete vats.

called ethyl-dimethyl-amido-phosphor-cyanidate. By 1942, a factory to produce it to the tune of 1016 tonnes f 1000 tons) per month had been established at Dyhernfurth in Silesia (now Brzeg Dolny in Poland). In 1938, a second and even more effective organo-phosphate, isopropyl methyl-phosphoro-fluoridate, was synthesised. Known as Sarin, it proved to be very much harder to manufacture on an industrial scale than Tabun, and even by 1945, only a small pilot plant had been set up. By that time, a still more dangerous derivative, pinacolyl methyl-phosphoro-fluoridate had been produced, under the name Soman, though little progress had been made with this by 1945.

It appears that until the factory producing Tabun was overrun by the Red Army in early 1945, the Allies knew nothing of these 'weapons', making their existence one of the best-kept German secrets of World War II. The first the British and Americans knew came from examining shells and bombs recovered from ammunition dumps (about half a million shells and 100,000 bombs, in all), and as the reality of the situation sank in, the researchers were horrified to discover that they were confronted by a lethal agent, and that there was no known cure or antidote from exposure to it. That last factor, it is argued by many, was the real reason that Germany did not employ nerve gas, even in the final days. The Wehrmacht and the SS could not be sure that the enemy did not also possess these simple and cheap weapons of mass destruction, and that the destruction which would result from their use would not be mutually assured.


W. A. Harbinson
INCEPTION
'I AM IN AWE OF THIS MAN' JAMES HERBERT

THE MOST TERRIFYING, AWESOME CONSPIRACY IN HUMAN HISTORY STARTS HERE...

The first wave of modern UFO sightings occurred nearly a hundred years ago. Fact. In 1908 a mysterious, nuclear-like explosion devastated a vast area of Siberia. Fact. Allied airmen flying over Germany in World War II were chased by eerie fireballs. Fact. During that same global conflict, the Nazis experimented desperately to try and create the world's first flying saucer. Fact.

These facts hold the key to the nightmarish secret of UFOs.

Based on previously concealed but carefully documented evidence, INCEPTION begins the epic Projekt Saucer series - a sequence of chilling revelations in the form of gripping fiction. Here is a unique, controversial and provocative work exposing cover-ups, conspiracies and terrible truths that have been hidden far, far too long . . .

'Harbinson's novels are never less than stupendous. I am in awe of this man'
JAMES HERBERT

Harbinson is a combination of H. G. Wells and Frederick Forsyth - audacious imagination combined with a precise and convincing realism'
COLIN WILSON

THE ULTIMATE CONSPIRACY

W. A. Harbinson started to uncover the nightmarish truth about Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) in the research for his international bestseller Genesis. Now he has taken that groundbreaking work and expanded it, going back decades to create another astounding epic. Inception is a terrifying story based on documented historical fact that reveals what is really known about UFOs while it holds readers spellbound with a breathtaking thriller about organized evil, global conspiracy - and the secret future of our world ...

INCEPTION: THE FIRST BOOK OF THE EPIC TERROR SERIES PROJEKT SAUCER

About the author

W. A. Harbinson has been a journalist, magazine editor and TV scriptwriter. Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1941, he left school at fourteen, studied mechanical engineering, then joined the Royal Australian Air Force. While serving in the RAAF, he drafted his first novel, Instruments of Death. In 1980 he completed the classic Genesis, the epic novel of the world's most fearsome secret that became the inspiration for the Projekt Saucer tetralogy. (Inception is chronologically the first novel in this sequence.) Harbinson lives in north London with his wife and two children.

Inception

W. A. Harbinson

PROJEKT SAUCER: BOOK ONE

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In 1980 my 615-page novel, Genesis, based on a mass of research material, became a cult best-seller on both sides of the Atlantic. It remains in print to this day.

Reviewing the novel on its initial publication in the United States, Publishers Weekly said: 'Harbinson has drawn so heavily on factual material and integrated it so well into the text that the book begins to read like non-fiction ...' This conclusion was drawn by other reviewers, and over the years I received many letters from readers who obviously thought the same and begged me to tell them which parts of the book were fact and which were fiction. For the record, then, here are some facts.

Before writing Genesis, while researching a different novel altogether, I obtained through the Imperial War Museum, London, two short articles that attracted my attention. One was a routine war report by Marshall Yarrow, then the Reuters special correspondent to Supreme Headquarters in liberated Paris. The particular cutting I had was from the South Wales Argus of December 13, 1944. It stated: The Germans have produced a "secret" weapon in keeping with the Christmas season. The new device, which is apparently an air defence weapon, resembles the glass balls which adorn Christmas trees. They have been seen hanging in the air over German territory, sometimes singly, sometimes in clusters. They are coloured silver and are apparently transparent.' The second article, an Associated Press release published in the New York Herald Tribune of January 2, 1945, illuminated the subject even

more. It said: 'Now, it seems, the Nazis have thrown something new into the night skies over Germany. It is the weird, mysterious "Foo fighter" balls which race alongside the wings of Beaufighters flying intruder missions over Germany. Pilots have been encountering this eerie weapon for more than a month in their night flights. No one apparently knows what this sky weapon is. The "balls of fire" appear suddenly and accompany the planes for miles. They seem to be radio-controlled from the ground, so official intelligence reports reveal...'

Official 'Foo fighter' reports were submitted by pilots Henry Giblin and Walter Cleary, who stated that on the night of September 27, 1944, they had been harassed in the vicinity of Speyer by 'an enormous burning light' that was flying above their aircraft at about 250 miles per hour; then by Lieutenant Edward Schluter, a fighter pilot of the US 415th Night-Fighter Squadron based at Dijon, France, who, on the night of November 23, 1944, was harassed over the Rhine by 'ten small reddish balls of fire' flying in formation at immense speed. Further sightings were made by members of the same squadron on November 27, December 22, and December 24.

While no official designation of the Foo fighters was offered, most reports indicated that they appeared to be under some kind of control and were certainly not 'natural' phenomena. Indeed, according to a London Daily Telegraph report of January 2, 1945, RAF pilots were describing them as 'strange orange lights which follow their planes, sometimes flying in formation with them, and eventually peeling off and climbing (author's italics).

According to the Italian author Renato Vesco, in his book Intercept - But Don't Shoot (Grove Press, 1971), the Foo fighter was actually the German Feuerball, or Fireball, constructed at an aeronautical establishment at Wiener Neustadt It was a flat, circular flying machine, powered by a turbojet, and used during the closing stages of the war both as an antiradar device and a psychological weapon designed to disturb Allied pilots.

In any event, sightings of the Foo fighters tailed off and

ceased completely a few weeks before the end of the war.

The next wave of UFO sightings occurred in Western Europe and Scandinavia. From 1946 to 1947 many people, including airline pilots and radar operatives, reported seeing strange cigar- or disc-shaped objects in the skies. On June 21, 1947, Harold Dahl reported seeing saucer-shaped objects flying toward the Canadian border. Three days later Kenneth Arnold made his more famous sightings of saucer-shaped objects over the Cascades, also flying toward the Canadian border.

These and subsequent sightings led to speculation that both the Soviets and the Americans, utilizing the men and material captured in the secret research plants of Nazi Germany, including those at Peenemiinde and Nordhausen, were developing advanced saucer-shaped aircraft.

Were such speculations based on facts?

It would certainly seem so.

During the early 1950s, a former Luftwaffe engineer, Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, then resident at Hokerstrasse 28 in Bremerhaven-Lehe, West Germany, claimed that in 1941 he had designed the prototype for a 'flying top,' which was test-flown in June 1942. In the summer of 1944, with his colleagues Klaus Habermohl, Otto Miethe, and an Italian, Dr Giuseppe Belluzzo, he had constructed a larger version of his original prototype. Then, in the East Hall of the BMW plant near Prague, they redesigned the larger model, replacing its gas-turbine engines with an advanced form of jet propulsion.

An article about Projekt Saucer was later published in the indispensible volume, German Secret Weapons of the Second World War (English-language editions published by Neville Spearman, London, 1959, and the Philosophical Library, New York, 1959) by Major Rudulph Lusar. It included reproductions of Schriever and Miethe's flying-saucer drawings.

According to Lusar, the flying saucer consisted of a 'wide-surface ring which rotated round a fixed, cupola-shaped cockpit' The ring consisted of 'adjustable wing-discs which

could be brought into appropriate position for the take-off or horizontal flight, respectively.' Also developed was 'a discus-shaped plate of a diameter of 42 meters (138 feet), in which adjustable jets were inserted.' The completed machine had a height from base to canopy of 32 meters (105 feet).

Schriever claimed that his 'flying disc' had been ready for testing in early 1944, but with the advance of the Allies into Germany, the test had been canceled, the machine destroyed, and his designs either mislaid or stolen. His story was, however, contradicted by alleged eyewitness Georg Klein, who later stated to the German press that he had actually seen the test flight of the Schriever disc, or one similar, on February 14, 1945.

Doubt may be cast on Klein's date, because according to the War Diary of the 8th Air Fleet, February 14, 1945, was a day of low clouds, rain, snow, and generally poor visibility - hardly the conditions for the testing of a revolutionary new kind of aircraft. Nevertheless, according to author Renato Vesco, the test flight of a machine called the Kugelblitz, or Ball Lightning Fighter - which was rumored to be a revolutionary kind of supersonic aircraft - was conducted successfully over the underground complex of Kahla (near Nordhausen) sometime during February 1945.

Did the United States then become involved in flying saucer projects?

The short answer is: yes.

Evidence for US involvement surfaced with information about the US Navy's Flying Flapjack, or Flying Pancake. Designed by Charles H. Zimmerman and constructed in 1942 by the Chance-Voight Corporation, the Flying Flapjack, or V-173, was an experimental, vertical-rising, disc-shaped aircraft that used two 80-hp engines. A later, more advanced model, the XF5U-1, utilized two Pratt and Whitney R-2000-7 engines of 1,600 hp each. It was rumored to be over 100 feet (30 meters) in diameter and to have jet nozzles - resembling the 'glowing windows' seen on so many UFOs - arranged around its rim.

It was built in three layers, the central layer being slightly larger than the other two. As the saucer's velocity and maneuvering abilities were controlled by the power and tilt of the separate jet nozzles, there were no ailerons, rudders, or other protruding surfaces.

In appearance it was remarkably similar to those reported by so many UFO witnesses.

The US Navy claimed to have ceased working on the Flying Flapjack project in 1947 (the first version, the V-173, is stored with the Smithsonian Institution), but US involvement with saucer-shaped aircraft did not stop there.

The reports that started the modern UFO scare - the Dahl and Arnold sightings of 1947 - both stated that the saucers flew back toward the Canadian border. On February 11, 1953, the Toronto Star reported that a new flying saucer was being developed at the Avro-Canada plant in Malton, Ontario.

Both the US and Canadian governments vehemently denied involvement in any such project, but on February 16, after freelance photographer Jack Judges had taken an aerial photograph of a flying saucer resting outdoors in the Avro-Canada plant in Malton, the Minister for Defence Production admitted to the Canadian House of Commons that the firm was working on a 'mock-up model' of a flying saucer, capable of flying at 1,500 miles per hour (2,400 km/h) and ascending vertically. Shortly after this announcement, the president of Avro-Canada wrote in Avro News that the prototype being built was so revolutionary that it would make all other forms of supersonic aircraft obsolete.

The aircraft's official name was the Avro-Car.

According to official statements, the Avro-Car was tested in 1960 and subsequently abandoned as a failure. (The prototype is now on display for all to see at the Army Transportation Museum at Fort Eustis, Virginia.) However, while the Canadian and US governments have insisted that they are no longer involved with flying saucer construction projects, there are many who believe that they are lying and that the Canadian, British, US, and even Soviet governments

are continuing to work on highly advanced, saucer-shaped, supersonic aircraft based on the work done in Nazi Germany. Those who believe in this are often quick to point out that of the original Projekt Saucer team, Habermohl was captured by the Russians and taken back to the Soviet Union, along with over six thousand German technical specialists of all kinds, to work on similar projects; Miethe went to the United States with Wernher von Braun and other German rocket scientists and ended up working for Avro-Canada, in Malton; and Rudolph Schriever insisted right up to his death, in the late 1950s, that the Soviet Union and United States were both working on flying saucer construction projects based on material captured during the war.

For the purposes of my fiction, I have utilized many real-life people, including the mysterious John Wilson and the Nazi SS generals Artur Nebe and Hans Kammler.

The term 'real-life' is used in regard to John Wilson only in the sense that during the first modern UFO sightings - the Great Airship Scare of 1896-97 - when airships of unknown origin and advanced design were reportedly seen, and landed, all over the United States, the man whom most witnesses reportedly spoke to had introduced himself simply as "Wilson' and claimed that his airships had been constructed in Iowa and Illinois.

He was not seen or heard of after the great scare ended - though C. C. Akers, former sheriff of Zavalia County, Texas, to whom Wilson had referred when speaking to one of the witnesses, claimed that he had known a Wilson who was of 'a

mechanical turn of mind' and 'working on aerial navigation and something that would astonish the world.'

Regarding the SS general Artur Nebe: While he was placed on a Nazi 'death list' in 1944 and disappeared shortly after, his death was never confirmed. Many felt that he had simply fled for his life. As for General Hans Kammler, his history with the SS and the V-2 rocket program is well documented, but what became of him after he disappeared from Germany in April 1945 remains a mystery to this day.

These are some of the facts supporting the fiction of the original Genesis as well as Inception.

Ponder them wisely.

W. A. Harbinson London, 1990

CHAPTER ONE

The sun was still rising over the barren prairie near Roswell, New Mexico, when the Model T Ford, towing a trailer and churning up clouds of dust, approached the flat plain of Eden Valley, followed by a vintage black touring sedan.

Parked by the wooden shelter near the steel-webbed tower that soared sixty feet above the desert floor, with her knees propped up on the steering wheel of her car and her notebook resting on them, Gladys Kinder chewed on her pencil, watched the distant caravan approaching, then nodded thoughtfully and started to write. She began positively.

> Well, folks, what an era it has been! First the Civil War, then the Industrial Revolution, and now the Age of Science and Technology. And what advances have been made in the past few years! Michael Faraday explored electrical induction, Joseph Henry made startling advances in electromagnetism, Bell devised the telephone, Morse the telegraph, Edison the incandescent lamp, Heinrich Hertz detected radio waves, Marconi produced the wireless communicator, and other scientists are presently revolutionizing our concept of the essential elements of matter and the behavior of light-waves - all in the space of a few years!
>
> And this very day, just before we hail the bright and shiny New Year of 1931, our very own scientific genius, Robert H. Goddard, is about to launch his latest liquid-fueled, instrument-carrying, gyroscopically controlled rocket from the desolate plain known as Eden Valley.

Eden Valley! An appropriate name - since what is being created here could well lead to a world changed beyond our wildest imaginings.

A strange and terrible beauty is being born here in Roswell, New Mexico...

She studied what she had written, not pleased with its awkward mixture of the folksy and the academic, then looked up again as the caravan approached the steel-webbed launching tower and braked to a halt.

As the dust subsided around the vehicles, Gladys gazed around her to take in some background details, then hurriedly jotted down what she had seen:

From where I sit, which is close to the rocket's launching tower, the snowcapped El Capitdn Mountain rises from the foothills near the southwestern horizon. To the east are the sunlit slopes of the Caprock and, beyond them, the Staked Plains, where the Comanche Indians, Spanish explorers, and even Billy the Kid roamed not long ago...

Temporarily blocked and deciding to fill the rest in later, she put the notebook and pen back into her shoulder bag. As she looked up, five men stepped down from the two vehicles, casting long shadows on the desert floor.

She instantly recognized the forty-eight-year-old Goddard from his stooped walk and thin, tubercular body. He did not like journalists, did not approve of her being there, and so stared directly at her, his brown gaze intense over his mustache, before turning away to give instructions to his small group of mechanics and machinists.

Wilson wasn't among them.

Surprised, Gladys slid her knees off the steering wheel and looked south across the flat plain, hoping to see him driving toward her. Thwarted, she returned her gaze to the front in time to see the crew unwrapping the long bundle that had been covered with quilts and oilcloth and trussed down on the

back of the trailer towed by the Ford.

Once it had been unwrapped, the men lifted Robert H. Goddard's latest rocket out of the trailer bed.

It was a slender cylinder, about eleven feet long and nine inches in diameter, complicated with various tanks and tubing. One of its stabilizer vanes was painted bright red. The men carried it with considerable care to the sixty-foot launching tower, which had been guyed by cables and anchored in concrete.

Henry Sachs, the crew chief and instrument maker, and Al Kisk, Goddard's brother-in-law, climbed the tower and fastened cables to the striped rocket to hold it steady until its moment of release. Meanwhile, on the ground below, two of the mechanics, brothers Lawrence and Charles Mansur, reeled wire out from the tower to the control shelter that had been constructed about a thousand feet away from the launching tower and buttressed with sandbags. Then Lawrence headed out into the desert with his recording telescope and stopwatch while Charles walked up to Gladys and grinned nervously at her.

'No journalists are supposed to be here,' he said. 'Goddard's not pleased to see you.'

'Wilson told me I could come,' she replied.

'Oh, did he, indeed?'

'Yes.'

'So where's Wilson?'

'I was going to ask you that.'

'I don't know,' Mansur said. 'I don't know anything about that damned Wilson. No one does, Gladys - except maybe you.'

'And Goddard.'

'Goddard swears he's just an old friend.'

Then that's what he is.'

'He sure has a lot of priority for someone who's just an old friend and claims to know nothing about aeronautics.'

'So it goes,' Gladys said.

'You're a damned good journalist, Gladys. You've got eyes

and ears. You know damned well we resent him.'

'Why?'

'Why ask, since you know?'

'I only know what I'm told, so tell me.'

Mansur shook his head from side to side, grinning sardonically. 'All I can tell you is that I don't know a damned thing about Wilson. I don't, my brother doesn't, none of the other crew members do - and what Goddard knows, he's not about to discuss. In other words, Wilson is a mystery - he's just here as Goddard's friend.'

'Doing what? The cooking?'

'Very smart, Miss Kinder.'

'So, what?'

Mansur shrugged. 'Again, I don't know. All I know is that Wilson appeared out of nowhere about six months ago, that he's been tight as can be with Goddard since then, and that the two spend a lot of time in Goddard's workshop, doing God knows what According to Goddard, we're not supposed to talk about Wilson. As far as the public's concerned, Wilson doesn't exist. And as far as we're concerned - by which I mean Goddard's crew - Wilson has a mysterious hold on Goddard, with the master doing what the student bids. And he also has you in his bed - so what else do you want to know?'

Gladys smiled. 'Wilson's about sixty years old. Who the hell are you kidding?'

'Well, Gladys, you're thirty-five. And Wilson doesn't look like a sixty-year-old. He looks about your age.'

'Gee, thanks, Charlie!'

'Dammit, Gladys, you know what I mean.'

'Yes, Charlie, I do.'

What Charlie meant was that while Wilson was at least twenty years older than Goddard and claimed to be working for him, the general feeling among the crew was that he had somehow, surreptitiously, taken charge of the rocket project and was pulling all the strings behind the scenes. Charlie believed that because Gladys slept with Wilson, she must know more about him than anyone else; but she didn't

As a journalist for the Roswell Daily Record, as well as Wilson's mistress, she had been unable to resist asking him more than once about his past. She'd learned only that he had an aeronautical background, had never been married, and was the least emotional man she had ever known.

He was a mystery, all right - and most mysterious of all was the fact that although he worked constantly in Goddard's workshop, he had never once attended an actual rocket launching and had even insisted that if she, Gladys, wanted to keep seeing him, she had to ensure that his name was not mentioned in connection with Goddard's work.

And God knows, she did want to see him again. She needed to share his bed, was addicted, even against her better judgment, to what he could give her there. And what he gave her there was something that sometimes shamed her - a sexual heat in which love had no place because he could not conceive of it

He certainly wasn't a warm man, not impelled by finer feelings, but his very lack of emotion was what made him so good in bed, so patient and controlled, more exciting as a lover than most of those she had known.

And he was sixty years old...

'You're not really involved when you do it,' she'd once told him. 'You treat it as a functional endeavor, a mere form of release. You're not involved on any other level - least of all emotionally.'

'Count your blessings,' he'd replied with his familiar, slightly superior smile. 'It's because I'm not involved that I can control myself until you're satisfied.'

'You make me feel like an instrument of masturbation.'

'That's what sex is,' he said.

No, not an emotional man - certainly not a romantic one - yet it was true, as he had said, that his functional approach to the act of love was what made his loveless sex so exciting. He could keep going for hours - sometimes it seemed forever - and came to orgasm only when she begged him to do so.

Thus his coldness, while depriving her of affection, made the sex something special.

She had certainly needed it. He had come to town at the right time. Gladys had been born and raised right here in Roswell, the only child of farming parents, and had married too young to a man who, though decent in his way, had bored her to tears. The marriage had been a disaster, coming to grief on a bed of stone and producing no children. But when, five years ago, her husband had died of a heart attack, followed soon after by the death of both her parents, Gladys had felt that her life was falling to pieces and took refuge in drink.

The drink had dulled her pain and shock, but also released her from inhibitions, and she had taken up with a string of different men, most of whom disappointed her. She toughened up pretty fast, developed a pragmatic outlook, and charmed the proprietor of the Roswell Daily Record into trying her out as a journalist It was the best thing she'd ever done, giving her a sense of her own identity, and she'd buried the disappointments of her life in her work for the paper. She became a strong, independent woman easily bored, quick with her tongue, and discovered that a lot of men didn't like it and so shied away from her.

Not that she gave a damn - she didn't want to marry again. But then Wilson had come to town, looking to work with Goddard. Since, when Gladys met him through Goddard's assistant, Charlie Mansur, he'd made it perfectly obvious that he was intimidated by no one, she'd thought him a breath of fresh air and become involved with him.

It was not a romantic relationship, but it certainly had its moments, and she enjoyed the sex and found Wilson intriguing - a real mystery man. So, she was well pleased.

Returning to the present, Gladys looked away from Mansur as another car pulled up and Goddard's blond wife, Esther, climbed out with her camera and equipment. Henry Sachs filled the rocket's tanks with gasoline and 'lox,' or liquid oxygen, as Goddard greeted his wife. When Sachs had finished, Goddard checked the rocket's controls, connections,

pressure tanks, and aluminum-sheathed oxygen tank, waved to Larry Mansur in the distant observation post, then returned to the protected control shack with his wife and Sachs.

'Do I have to join them?' Gladys asked.

'No,' Charlie replied. 'You're far enough away to be safe, no matter what happens. But I have to join them.'

'You don't want me to get near Goddard, right?'

'Right, Gladys. Goddard's already mad that you're here, so I won't tempt the fates.'

Thanks, Charlie.'

'Okay, then.'

Charlie returned to the buttressed control shack as Esther Goddard put her camera on its tripod and pointed it through a hole in the shelter wall. Goddard looked at his watch and started counting off the seconds, letting the pressure-generating tanks build up to two hundred pounds, and eventually, after what seemed to Gladys to be an eternity, gave the order for the ignition to be fired.

Gladys knew he had done so when, from her vantage point well away from the launching tower, she heard a roaring noise and saw flames shooting out from the base of the rocket. The rocket shook violently as if about to blow about, lifted up slowly, reluctantly, then gained speed and suddenly shot out of the tower and soared toward the sky.

It climbed vertically, in a straight line, then veered south. It kept climbing as it headed south, at about a thousand feet, then ascended even higher, caught the sun as it leveled out at two thousand feet, then curved down again and raced toward earth. Its parachute didn't open, so it came down too fast, screeching and whistling, obviously out of control. It crashed into the sands of the desert about half a mile away, exploding in a great cloud of sand, its pieces scattering everywhere.

One of the men whooped with excitement, another bawled, The goddamned gyroscope!' and Henry Sachs had jumped into the touring sedan and was heading toward the scene of the crash even before the cloud of sand had settled down.

Gladys looked at Goddard, where he stood behind the

shelter, talking to his wife as she carefully checked her movie camera. The great scientist was actually smiling, which meant that most of the test had been successful - but then, when he glanced over his shoulder at Gladys, his mournful face registered disapproval that she was still there.

Not wanting to push her luck, and mystified by Wilson's absence, Gladys started her car and drove back across Eden Valley, heading south, toward Roswell.

Goddard's Mescalero Ranch was located on eight acres of land, three miles northeast of Roswell. As Gladys pulled up in front of the sprawling pueblo-style ranch house surrounded by scrubby trees and desert, she was struck again by the incongruity of Goddard and his rocket team being there, so close to the legendary Pecos River, where the men still wore blue jeans, high-heeled boots, and broad-brimmed hats, where the pioneer trails still cut through the nearby town to the borders of Mexico, and where the natives still talked about the exploits of Billy the Kid and other legendary, local desperadoes. She knew that Goddard had chosen this spot because he needed a relatively high region free from fog, and with a minimum of rain and snowfall - but even so, as she climbed down from her car and walked toward the house, the thought of rockets soaring over this barely modernized territory seemed slightly unreal to her.

She didn't actually go to the house, but instead went to the frame machine shop near it, where she guessed Wilson would be, as that's where he had slept during his stay here. After glancing automatically at the small static frame and concrete trough, called 'the bathtub,' located a hundred feet away and used for testing the rockets, she entered the unlocked machine shop and found Wilson kneeling on the floor by the cot he slept on.

He was packing his suitcase.

Shocked and confused, Gladys sucked in her breath - a sound loud enough to make Wilson stop what he was doing and look up at her.

His eyes were as blue as the sky above New Mexico, bright with an icy intelligence - and unnervingly steady.

'Hello, Gladys,' he said quietly.

'Hi,' she replied.

'You're back earlier than I'd expected.'

'So I see.'

He glanced down at his suitcase, smiled thinly, then closed the case and stood up to gaze steadily at her.

'I'm leaving,' he said.

Gladys closed her eyes, feeling sick to her stomach. Chilled by the flat tone of his voice, she knew he meant what he said.

'Open your eyes,' he said. 'Don't be childish. You always knew this would come. How did the test go?'

She opened her eyes and tried to see him for what he was. His hair was silvery, his face handsome but ascetic, and although he was sixty years old, he looked twenty years younger.

She only knew what he looked like.

'The test went okay,' she said. There was some problem with the gyroscopic controls, but otherwise it was fine... You were going to run away without telling me?'

'Yes,' he replied.

'Why?'

'Because I didn't want any arguments. I told you that someday I'd be going - and today is the day.'

'I didn't think you'd actually—'

'I'm not responsible for what you think - only for what I say. And I told you that one day I'd be leaving and going alone/

'God, Wilson, you're hard.'

You've known that since you've known me.'

'I think I'm going to have to sit down.'

'Help yourself,' Wilson said.

She took the chair at Goddard's old writing desk, next to his lathe and workbench, lit a cigarette, exhaled a stream of smoke, and squinted through it at Wilson. He was a tall man, as thin as his smile, and his blue gaze was steady.

'Okay,' she said, 'so you always told me you'd leave

someday. But I still didn't think you'd go this way - deliberately sending me out where I'm not wanted and then sneaking away.'

'I told you: I didn't want any arguments.'

'It's human to argue.'

To be human is to err.'

'We are lovers, Wilson. That must count for something.'

But he merely shook his head, arguing an academic point 'No,' he said, 'I'm afraid it doesn't. At least, not for me. The only thing that matters to me is my work - as I've told you repeatedly.'

'Yes, Wilson, you've told me repeatedly. I just happened to think you might not mean it.'

'I always mean what I say.'

Gladys's heart was racing and she felt desolated, but when she saw the icy glint in his eyes, she knew it wouldn't mean much to him. He would leave her as some people disown their pets - and he would never look back.

Accepting that, she was able to protect herself by becoming professional.

'You're a strange bird, Wilson.'

'You're free to think so.'

'I'm not the only one who thinks so. Goddard's men all think you're strange.'

Wilson smiled mockingly. 'What can I say to that? I'm not responsible for the thoughts of petty minds. What they think is irrelevant'

'They think you're the genius behind Goddard.'

'They're wrong: I was learning from him.'

'They think you know more about rockets than you let on - and that only Goddard knows how much you know.'

Wilson simply smiled again. 'I have to go now, Gladys.'

'Does Goddard know you're going?'

'No.'

'Is this how you say good-bye to him? To a genius with whom you've worked for six months? Is this how you thank him?'

'I thanked him by working for him for free. Now that I've

learned what I need to know, I've no reason to stay here.'

Shocked again at how truly cold Wilson was, Gladys blew another cloud of smoke and watched it spiraling in front of her.

'So what did you need to know?' she asked him.

'What Goddard could teach me.'

'About rockets?'

'Yes.'

'And what did you need to know that for?'

That's not your concern,' he said.

She looked intently at his blue eyes, trying to find what she had missed, but saw only a luminous intelligence, beyond rancor or warmth.

'If you're so concerned with rocket technology,' she said, 'why not stay with Goddard?'

'Because this country always betrays its great scientists -and will soon betray Goddard.'

'Does that mean you're going abroad?'

'Yes.'

'Where to?'

Wilson smiled. To where my own work will be appreciated.'

'And where's that?'

'I can't tell you.'

'I'm a journalist I can find out'

'It won't help you.'

'I can also find out just who you are.'

That won't help you either. Now I've got to be going.'

He picked up his suitcase, gazed down at her, smiled thinly, then walked out, not even kissing her good-bye. She had pride, but her heart betrayed her and she jumped out of Goddard's chair, then hurried to the doorway of the machine shop and looked into the morning sun.

Wilson climbed into his battered Ford, turned on the ignition, waved at her as if he were just going for a short trip, then drove toward the town of Roswell, with its pioneer trails and still-burning legends, to disappear into his unknown future and leave her all alone again.

'God damn you!' she whispered.

CHAPTER TWO

Ernst Stoll's heart was racing with anticipation when he saw his girlfriend, Ingrid, already seated at a table by a window in the Kranzier Cafe, Berlin. Feeling resplendent in his new SS uniform, almost like a movie star, he leaned over to kiss Ingrid's cheek, lightly stroked her short-cropped blond hair, then sat facing her and took hold of her hand.

You look lovely,' he said, meaning it. His excitement was raised by the pale beauty of her face, which was emphasized by her wide-brimmed black hat, black jumper, and string of pearls, all meant to match the new black coat she was wearing. 'And that coat suits you perfectly,' he added, 'Did you get it in Paris?'

'No,' she said with a gentle smile. 'Right here, in the Kurfurstendamm. Parisian fashions are frowned upon these days, so I made sure it was German. You look handsome in your brand-new uniform - black suits you as well - though I still wished you'd stayed with the Reichswehr, instead of joining the SS.'

'Let's have coffee and strudel,' he suggested, deliberately changing the subject, not wanting this particular day to be spoiled with even a small disagreement Yes?'

'Yes, Ernst.'

He called the waitress, gave her the order, then glanced out at the busy corner of the Unter den Linden and the Friedrichstrasse, its snow turned to slush by the many cars and pedestrians. When he returned his attention to Ingrid's green gaze, he was overcome by his love for her.

'You look excited,' she told him.

'It's seeing you,' he replied.

'No, Ernst, I don't think that's what it is. We both know what it is.'

He was grateful that she realized and didn't mind too much. Today was January 30, 1933. It would be a memorable day for Germany and already it was starting. Right now, Hitler and Goring were in the Chancellery with von Papen and Hindenburg, and the street between the Kaiserhof and the Chancellery was crowded with people. Before the day was out, Hitler would be the Chancellor of the Third Reich. A new era was dawning.

'I didn't expect to see you today,' Ingrid said. 'I was surprised to get your message. I thought you'd gone home for the fortnight'

'I couldn't miss this day,' he told her. 'And my parents understood. My father still doesn't approve, of course - he thinks I've betrayed my middle-class origins - but my mother recently joined the National Socialist Party, in secret, which I think is amusing.'

'I don't,' Ingrid said. 'A divided family isn't amusing. Your beloved National Socialist Party, which has already divided the country, is now dividing individual families. Do you think it's amusing?'

'I didn't mean it that way,' Ernst said, feeling a little embarrassed.

'No, I'm sure you didn't,' she said with soft sarcasm, then, perhaps realizing how she sounded, gently changed the subject. 'So, how is your family, Ernst?'

At that moment, the waitress returned with their coffee and strudel. They're fine,' Ernst said, pouring the coffee from the pot and thinking of his family home in Heidelberg, a grand house with fine gardens on the lower slopes of the majestic Odenwald. 'Father's sold his architectural firm and seems happy to have moved out of Mannheim - and Mother likes it as well.'

'I'm glad,' Ingrid said, 'though I'm also glad that I saw the

old house in Mannheim before it was sold - the house you were brought up in. There aren't many like that these days.'

Ernst knew what she meant. His father had been one of the most successful architects in Germany - his work conservatively based on neo-Renaissance and the 'safe' classicism of Ludwig Hoffmann - and his house in Mannheim, where he had spent most of his life, was a spacious residence built around an elaborate courtyard and guarded by wrought-iron gates. Within that imposing home, Ernst had been brought up to treat as perfectly natural enormous neo-Gothic rooms, French furniture, Empire upholstery, fireplaces faced with valuable Delft tiles, glittering chandeliers, maids with white caps, black dresses, and white aprons, and even butlers in purple livery with gilt buttons. Certainly, as Ingrid had noted, there weren't many houses like that these days - but the very opulence of the lifestyle is what had driven Ernst away from it and into the National Socialist Party, thus outraging his father as well as upsetting Ingrid.

He couldn't explain what attracted him to Hitler because he wasn't too sure what the appeal was. He only knew for certain that he'd been swept up in a tide of enthusiasm generated by his fellow students, first in the Institute of Technology in Munich, then in the University of Berlin, where he had been studying rocket technology under Professor Karl Emil Becker.

If he'd had any doubts at all about National Socialism they'd been swept away when, during his final semester at the university, he had attended an address that Hitler had delivered, in the Hasenheide Beer Hall, to the students of Berlin University and the Institute of Technology.

At first not impressed by the Charles Chaplin look-alike in a plain blue suit, who started speaking almost shyly in that dirty, gloomy beer hall, Ernst had soon been mesmerized by the rising passion of his rhetoric. He was astounded to find himself bawling and clapping with many other students in a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm. A few days later, unable to forget that mesmeric performance, he had joined the

NSDAP; then, a few months after that, he dropped out of the university to join the army as a commissioned officer with the Weapons Office. When recently offered a transfer to the elite SS, he had been thrilled beyond measure.

'You're looking very thoughtful,' he said to Ingrid, who was staring straight at him in her disconcerting manner,

'I was thinking what a pity it is that you dropped out of university in order to look handsome in such a uniform. You wanted to be an engineer, Ernst, and now you're a policeman.'

'A soldier,' he corrected her, perhaps too firmly. The SS isn't the Gestapo. Please bear that in mind. The Gestapo is the Secret Police organization, run by Goring. SS stands for Schutz Staffel, or Guard Detachment, and the SS, created by Himmler, is Hitler's personal bodyguard - not a secret police force.'

Ingrid shrugged. 'It's still sad, Ernst. And I still don't understand why you did it, apart from naivete.'

He felt a flash of anger, but tried to conceal it. 'As I told you before, I joined the army because I wanted to be a rocket engineer, and the army is the best place to do that.'

That much I understand.' She brushed the blond hair from her green eyes, gazed out at the busy corner of the Unter den Linden and Friedrichstrasse, then returned her quizzical gaze to him. 'But I still don't understand why you then had to join the SS, which, whether a police force or Hitler's personal bodyguard, is not the place for a promising young engineer.'

'Because,' Ernst lied blatantly, 'it is the elite of the army and I only want to be in the best. It's as simple as that!'

In fact, what he couldn't explain to her was the bitterness he had felt ever since being rejected by the German amateur rocket society, the VfR, whose members included not amateurs, as the title implied, but most of the leading rocket experts of the day.

Also known as the Spaceship Travel Club, the VfR had come into being in 1927 when a group of brilliant space-travel enthusiasts had taken over an abandoned three-hundred-acre arsenal, which they called their Raketenflugplataz, or Rocket Flight Place, in the Berlin suburb of Reindickerdorf, from

where they actually shot some crude, liquid-fueled rockets skyward. Intrigued by the success of the VfR, which by 1930 included rocket experts Rudolf Nebel, Willy Ley, Hermann Oberth, and Klaus Riedel, the Ordnance Branch of the army's Ballistic and Weapons Office, headed by General Becker, had appointed Captain Walter Dornberger to create a rocket-development project at the army's firing range at Kummersdorf, about fifteen miles south of Berlin. It was now widely assumed by those involved with rocketry that as soon as Hitler came to power (which he almost certainly would today), the VfR would be disbanded by the Nazis and become part of the Kummersdorf program.

Ernst had desperately wanted to be part of the VfR, irrespective of who controlled it. After his rejection because of his lack of practical experience, his bitterness had been made more acute when Wernher von Braun, a fellow pupil at the university, had been accepted.

Thus, when Ernst was persuaded by a friend that working with the SS technical intelligence group would at least give him the opportunity to keep in touch with the rocket program and perhaps, in time, even give him authority over it, he had not been able to resist asking for the transfer.

'Listen,' he said to Ingrid, covering his anger with a broad smile and taking hold of her hand again, T can't wait any longer. Let's go and see what's happening at the Chancellery. There's bound to be a decision soon - and I want to be there when it's announced.'

Ingrid's smile, though still loving, was also slightly mocking. 'You want to be a part of history, Ernst?'

'Yes, Ingrid, I do.'

She acknowledged his enthusiasm with a defeated shrug of her shoulders. 'Then let's go, Ernst!'

As they hurried along the snow-covered Unter den Linden, past its elegant shops and many pedestrians and the noisy flow of traffic, Ernst glanced frequently at Ingrid's flushed face, its beauty now emphasized by the raised fur collar of her black overcoat and broad-brimmed hat He loved her dearly, though

they often disagreed, particularly when they talked about politics and general morality. They seemed opposites, then.

She came from a good family in the wealthy Berlin suburb of Wannsee - but she didn't believe, as he did, in the National Socialist Party. She was a liberal, like his father, believed in her own class, and could not be convinced that Hitler would create a new, better Germany. Even now, when they were supposed to be in love, she and Ernst fought a lot about the issue, which wounded him deeply.

As they approached the corner of Berlin's finest shopping street and heard the sudden roaring of the crowd that had filled the Wilhelmstrasse, Ernst knew that they had just missed the announcement he had wanted to hear. Nevertheless, he practically dragged Ingrid around the corner, into the Wilhelmstrasse, where, between the Kaiserhof and the Chancellery, the great crowd was tramping the snow to slush and roaring approval.

Stopping by the Ministry of Justice, facing the Presidential Residence, Ernst received confirmation from a jubilant fellow citizen that Hindenburg had resigned and Adolf Hitler had just been sworn in as Chancellor of Germany.

Ernst whooped with joy, swept Ingrid up in his arms, and spun her around on the pavement.

'Wunderbar?' he exclaimed.

Any doubts about love or compatibility were swept away in the fervor of the rest of that memorable day. Ernst had no sooner released Ingrid from his embrace than he saw Adolf Hitler standing upright in the back of his open-topped car as it crept slowly through the mass of people in the Wilhelmstrasse, taking him back to the Kaiserhof. Shouting himself hoarse like all the others, Ernst watched his hero being driven past, then embraced Ingrid again, kissed her passionately, and realized that the excitement was contagious and finally getting through to her.

Excited, they went for lunch, got drunk on beer and schnapps, then took a room in the Adlon Hotel, where their

faces were known. They made drunken, passionate love, uninhibited by doubts, and Ernst thought that he would die in Ingrid's body, with its smooth, burning skin, perfect breasts, and sublime, pale-white legs. They broke apart drenched in sweat, breathing harshly, exhausted, and he felt that he had died and been reborn and could never stop loving her.

'You're magnificent,' he told her.

Then he had to leave to take part in the torchlit parade that spelled the end of that great day.

Darkness was falling on the city when, with thousands of other troops, all in uniform and with many wearing their swastikas, Ernst started marching from the Tiergarten. Accompanied by the beating of drums and the blare of martial music, they passed under the Brandenburg Gate, and then continued down to Wilhelmstrasse, where hundreds of young men were hanging from the railings or perched like birds in the trees.

Raising his voice with those thousands of others in the 'Horst Wessel Lied' and other patriotic songs, Ernst soon found himself in the torchlit darkness outside the Presidential Palace, where a weary Hindenburg raised his hands in salute. Then the crowd moved to the Reichchancellery where, to Ernst's immense joy, Hitler appeared at a window to look down fondly on his men and acknowledge with a smile their triumphant chanting of 'Heil, Heil, Sieg Heil!'

Hitler smiled and raised his right hand and the massed troops roared acknowledgment. Then Hitler went back inside and Ernst lowered his gaze - away from that lighted window, from the fluttering red and black flags, from the torches that had formed a river of fire in the Wilhelmstrasse ... and saw Ingrid emerging from the crowd, her eyes bright with excitement, her arms outstretched as the drums continued pounding and the noise became deafening.

She threw herself into his arms and clung to him as he stroked her light-blond hair.

'Oh, Ingrid!' he said passionately. 'A great day! The future is ours! Let's get married at once!'

'Yes!' she whispered, clinging to him, part of him. 'Yes, Ernst, let's do it!'

Their hearts beat like the drums.

CHAPTER THREE

'Yes,' Mike Bradley said, thinking about Gladys Kinder instead of the facts as he gazed out the window of General Taylor's office at the other buildings being constructed on the sloping green fields of Langley Field, Virginia. 'I told him we were about to form a National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics and were considering a team that would include him and other aeronautical geniuses, such as Charles Lindbergh and Orville Wright - and the legendary Robert H. Goddard still showed no interest He just doesn't give a damn.'

'Why?' Taylor asked pragmatically.

'Because he doesn't trust anyone,' Bradley replied with a frustrated shrug of his broad shoulders, remembering the polite, suspicious voice he had heard over the telephone, when he had called from his office on Wall Street 'Reportedly he patents every damned thing he invents, is notoriously secretive and uncooperative with his fellow scientists, feels that many of his ideas have been stolen by them, notably those in Germany, and will take help only from organizations like the Smithsonian Institution, which lets him do whatever he wants. In fact, he's even refused the assistance of the California Institute of Technology Rocket Research Project and has been relying instead on the inadequate funding of Clark University in Worcester, where he teaches physics when he's not working on his rockets.'

Though according to Charles Lindbergh,' General Taylor pointed out, 'whom I met here just yesterday, Goddard has recently accepted some other help.'

'True enough,' Bradley said. With Lindbergh's recommendation he was recently able to get a Guggenheim Foundation grant for $2,500, which enabled him to leave Clark and return to Roswell, New Mexico.'

Where Gladys Kinder lives, he thought. He'd been unable to stop thinking about her since their brief meeting. It's ridiculous, he thought. You're being ridiculous. She's just a sharp-tongued lady from a cow town and you're imagining things. Though he couldn't help wondering...

'Is that where he was when you phoned him? Back in Roswell?'

'No,' Bradley said. 'He hadn't returned there yet He was still at Clark.'

'If what you say is true, he thinks that if he joins our proposed National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics, he'll have to share his precious ideas with us.'

'That's my bet,' Bradley said.

General Taylor smiled laconically. 'Sounds like a burgeoning crackpot,' he said.

'But a brilliant one, General - and one you could do with on your side. Since a major function of the committee will be to assess the military possibilities of aeronautical developments around the world, a man of Goddard's background and reputation would be invaluable to you - not only for his technical knowledge, but also as a public relations weapon.'

'Well, we'll just have to get along without him.'

'I guess so,' Bradley said.

The sound of hammering from outside momentarily distracted the general and made him glance out the window. Following his gaze, Bradley saw some men in coveralls kneeling on the roof of the adjoining building as they expertly nailed down some more beams. When these buildings were completed, they would house the new National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics as well as a branch of the too-informal army air force intelligence. General Taylor was currently the head and Bradley was an increasingly enthusiastic, but unofficial, agent of the intelligence unit.

'It's interesting that he should be so concerned with German rocket development,' the general said, returning his thoughtful gaze to Bradley, 'since that's also what we're concerned with right now.'

The Pentagon isn't,' Bradley replied. 'Since the White House has adopted an isolationist stance regarding Europe, there's no Pentagon interest in German weaponry.'

'I can't speak for the whole of the Pentagon, let alone the White House,' Taylor said, 'but I think I can say with confidence that we in military intelligence are concerned with the growing militarism of Germany - particularly since Hitler was elected chancellor. It's not our belief that America will be involved in European politics per se, but there's certainly been enough concern to cause the air force to informally gather information on aeronautical developments in Hitler's new Germany and, especially, on any further developments regarding the—' The general glanced down at the notes on his desk. The Verein fur Raumschiffart, or VfR,' he read, then looked up again

'Right,' Bradley said. The German amateur rocket society.'

'It's wonderful,' the general said with a slight, sardonic smile, 'how bright boys like you can bring back such interesting information from their vacations in Europe.'

Bradley knew what the general was getting at He had been a highly decorated pilot during the Great War who had left the service in the mistaken belief that he was becoming too old for it and needed a more settled life. So, he studied law, married Joan, had two kids, Mark and Miriam... As a successful lawyer, specializing in the drafting of complex agreements between government departments and civilian aeronautical research establishments, he had become increasingly bored with Wall Street and started calling his old military buddies to ask them for work, official or otherwise, that was more important and exciting.

Convinced that matters in Europe would eventually lead to another world war, he had used his Ivy League Wall Street friends to build up strong connections in Washington, DC, and

London. Eventually he managed to convince the army's chief of staff, General Douglas MacArthur, to let him embark on an unofficial intelligence-gathering trip to Europe, in the guise of studying international laws relating to aeronautics.

During that trip, in 1932, aided by some old friends who were now with the well-organized British Intelligence Service, he had traveled extensively and reported, in particular, on the growing militarism of Germany. What he had seen there had shocked him and made him fear for the free world. He no longer shared his own government's confidence that America could stay out of Europe - certainly not if the National Socialists, under Hitler, got what they wanted - and upon his return to the United States had insisted in his lengthy report that the country must prepare itself for inevitable involvement in another world war.

While his report had not been taken seriously by the White House, since then General Taylor had used him as an unofficial agent between Taylor's army air force intelligence branch and British intelligence, as well as a legal adviser, general administrator, and headhunter for the soon-to-be formed National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics - which is why Bradley had made his recent, unsuccessful trip to Robert H. Goddard in Roswell, New Mexico.

'But why would our air force be interested in a bunch of amateurs?' General Taylor now asked, after a thoughtful pause.

'Because they're not amateurs,' Bradley told him. 'The Verein fur Raumschiffart was founded in 1927 and soon included most of the rocket experts of the day, including Hermann Oberth, Max Valier, Rudolf Nebel, Willy Ley, and Klaus Riedel.'

The general gave a low whistle of respect. 'That's some bunch of scientists,' he said. 'What were they up to?'

'We know that a number of small liquid-fueled rockets were fired from their testing ground in the Berlin suburb of Reinickerdorf. Then, in April 1930, Captain Walter Dornberger was appointed to the Ordnance Branch of the German Army's

Ballistics and Weapons Office, headed by one General Becker. Dornberger was to work on rocket development at the army's Kummersdorf firing range, approximately fifteen miles south of Berlin. Two years later the VfR demonstrated one of their liquid-fueled rockets to Dornberger and other officers at Kummersdorf.'

'I'm surprised I haven't heard of this,' Taylor said, sounding slightly aggrieved.

'Maybe that's because recently, with Hitler's support, the Gestapo moved in and overnight the VfR ceased to exist as a civilian organization.'

'But it's now being used by the army.'

'Right. A lot of its members, including the reportedly up-and-coming Wernher von Braun, were taken under Dornberger's wing and began working at Kummersdorf in strict secrecy.'

'Ah,' the general said softly, 'so that's why our air force is concerned!'

'Damned right,' Bradley said. 'And if they knew what I just learned in Roswell, they'd be even more concerned.'

'And what was that, Mike?'

'Since Goddard was so damned suspicious and frosty over the phone,' Bradley explained, thinking again of Gladys Kinder and feeling distinctly guilty, 'I visited Roswell in order to interview those who had known him there - his engineers, the local townsfolk, and so forth. Anyway, over the week I spent there, I became increasingly concerned with the fact that Goddard, with so little assistance either financially or from fellow scientists, had managed to make such extraordinary advances in rocket research. Then, shortly after the final launch, I was introduced to a woman—'

'I won't tell your wife that,' the general interjected.

Bradley grinned, as if appreciating the joke, but immediately he was consumed by the guilt he had been trying to keep at bay ever since his meeting with Gladys Kinder.

The proprietor of the Roswell Daily Record had put him in touch with her. They'd met in the bar of his hotel. He was

instantly intrigued by her air of worldly cynicism. In the course of a conversation about Goddard's rocket team, he'd become uncomfortably attracted to her, which she had soon realized.

She had passed a few mischievous remarks to that effect and actually managed to make him blush.

She was tall and lean and had a head of short-cropped brown hair, which made her seem slightly mannish, and gray eyes that were disconcertingly steady over a full-lipped, sardonic smile. She had been wearing a long, belted dress, with high-heeled boots and a Stetson hat He, in his gray suit, portly and not too tall, in his mid-thirties and starting to show it - though thankfully he still had his hair - had felt soft and pampered in her attractively casual presence.

You didn't meet women like that in New York — and besides, he just liked her.

Now, when he recalled her and also thought of his attractive, good-humored wife, Joan, who lovingly looked after their home and children in Connecticut he felt as guilty as if he had had an affair, which he certainly had not done.

He had simply been tempted, that's all... So why should he feel guilty?

'The woman, Gladys Kinder,' he continued uneasily, Vas a journalist for one of the local papers, the Daily Record. When I said I'd spent the past week checking up on Goddard and his old launching grounds in Eden Valley, she told me that two years ago she'd had an affair with another physicist who'd stayed with Goddard for six months, spent most of that time working and sleeping in Goddard's machine shop, and was considered by most of Goddard's men to have been very influential on Goddard's work. Those facts were later confirmed in my discussions with some of the rocket team.'

Even now, as he spoke to the general, Bradley thought it odd that the mention of Gladys Kinder as Wilson's mistress should make him feel slightly resentful and, perhaps, even jealous. It was too ridiculous for words, but he couldn't deny the feeling; and when he recalled her sly smile in the hotel's gloomy bar, her droll mockery of his obvious confusion in her

sensual presence, he was irresistibly seduced by her image and wanted to see her again.

Crazy. Just crazy...

'What was this woman's name?' the general asked, picking up his pen and staring with what Bradley, in the guilty panic of his thoughts, imagined was accusing intensity.

'Kinder,' Bradley replied, feeling a helpless stab of desire and its bed partner, guilt 'Gladys Kinder.'

'Kinder,' the general murmured, writing the name down. 'Gladys Kinder,' he emphasized, as if deliberately tormenting Bradley. 'Mmmm...' he murmured, studying the name thoughtfully before putting his pen back down, looking up again, and saying 'So, what about him?'

'Pardon?'

The physicist that the Kinder woman told you about'

'Ah, yes...' Bradley gathered his thoughts together. 'Miss Kinder told me that when the physicist had left for good after the rocket launching of December 31, 1930, Goddard had confessed to her that his mysterious, temporary assistant was a, quote, genius, who had helped him develop many of his more notable innovations, including liquid-fueled, self-cooled motors, gyroscopes for guidance and control, lightweight fuel pumps, and reflector vanes to help stabilize and steer the rockets. The guy's name was John Wilson.'

'Interesting,' General Taylor said, writing that name down also, then popping some gum into his mouth and starting to chew, 'but I can't see what relevance all this has to Adolf Hitler's Germany.'

'Well, I can't be too sure of this,' Bradley replied, 'but I do have my worries there.'

'Don't tease me, Mike.'

'WelI, for a start this John Wilson's a complete mystery. No one at Roswell knew where he came from, Wilson wasn't about to tell them, and even Goddard swore he didn't know anything about him, other than the fact that he was extraordinarily knowledgeable about physics and aeronautics, just turned up at the ranch one day, showed Goddard some of his own

drawings, and then asked if he could help him with the rocket project. As for Wilson's journalist friend, Gladys Kinder—'

He couldn't avoid the name, and it brought back all his guilt.

'—even though she was his mistress during that six months, she learned only that he had an engineering background and loathed the US government for reasons that he never explained. She also learned, just before Wilson's abrupt departure, that he intended leaving the United States for good and going to a country where people like him and Goddard would be appreciated, instead of being treated as cranks.'

There was more loud hammering from outside and General Taylor, after wincing, said, 'I can't stand this goddamned noise, Mike. Do you fancy a walk?'

'Sure,' Bradley said, feeling trapped with his recollections of Gladys and glad to escape. 'Why not?'

They left the office and walked outside, where the noise of the workers was even louder and the sun shone over the flat green fields. Relieved to feel the fresh air, Bradley followed the general away from the skeletal buildings and their many workers, down toward the banks of the Potomac River.

'So where do you think your mysterious genius, this Mr Wilson, went?' General Taylor asked, striding across the grass and glancing keenly around him.

'A lot of the German engineers,' Bradley said, 'including Wernher von Braun, revere Goddard and are known to have based their work on his ideas. Our mysterious John Wilson would certainly have known that- and would also have known that while here, in the United States, Goddard's theories were being treated with contempt, Germany was spending fortunes on rocket research that was, by and large, based on his work.'

'So you think this Wilson went to Germany.'

'I don't think it - I know it I checked yesterday with the Immigration Department and learned that one John Wilson left this country on January 20, 1931, that he stayed in London for a few weeks in early March of that year, and that he applied for a German visa that same month. According to British immigration records, a US citizen called John Wilson left

England by a boat sailing for Bremen, Germany, on April 5, 1931. There's no other record of his movements.'

'You mean, you think he's still there, in Germany.'

'Yes.'

'Have you checked with the German authorities?'

'They deny all knowledge of him.'

'But you think they're lying.'

'Yes. I think he's still there - and if he is, and if he's working on rocket research, we should be concerned.'

They stopped by the edge of the river and looked across to the other side. The fields that stretched out on all sides were flat, densely forested, and sun-splattered. There were birds flying overhead.

You're my best man for intelligence gathering,' General Taylor reminded him, 'so perhaps you can track him down.'

'I'm not so sure,' Bradley said, feeling the itch of frustration. 'We're talking about Hitler's Third Reich. One man on his own can't do much with this kind of problem. That's why we need a central intelligence-gathering organization,' he continued, warming to his favorite theme. The goddamned Brits have an intelligence system that puts us to shame. The last thing we had that remotely resembled an intelligence agency was Herbert Yardley's Black Chamber - which was only a codebreaking unit - and since that was closed down in 1929, we haven't had a damned thing to replace it. Which is doubtless why Yardley wrote his best-selling book exposing our so-called secrets - and why New York federal marshals, the goddamned idiots, have just raided the offices of a perfectly respectable publisher to impound Yardley's second book.'

The general laughed heartily at that one, then said, The way you pronounce the word "idiots", Mike, reminds me that you're an Irish-American.'

'Ha ha,' Bradley responded, but warmly, without malice. He was proud of his background and not ashamed of what he had become, which is not what he should have been. Although his uneducated grandparents had emigrated from Ireland and he

had been raised as a Roman Catholic, Bradley had gone against convention by becoming a staunch member of the Republican party, instead of a Democrat, which most of the Irish were. He had also, after winning numerous awards for distinguished service in the battlefields of France in the Great War become a very successful lawyer, with his own law firm on Wall Street So, yes, he was proud of his background and achievements - and knew that General Taylor, his close friend, had great respect for him.

'Anyway,' the general said, wincing when the hammering on the distant buildings started again, 'you were starting to talk a blue streak, so don't let me stop you.'

This guy, Wilson,' Bradley continued, 'who is possibly an aeronautical genius, has gone off to sell his talents to a country whose whole interest in science is geared to its aggressive potential - in other words, Hitler's Third Reich.'

'So?' Taylor asked.

'So, since the Third Reich is devoted to war, we should be keeping tabs on Wilson - but we can't do it because we don't have the necessary intelligence-gathering organization.'

'But we do have that'

'No,' Bradley insisted, 'we don't. What we have is an uncoordinated collection of different intelligence agencies - Army Intelligence, or G2; the Office of Naval Intelligence; the FBI; the Secret Service; the State Department; the Customs and Immigration services; the Federal Communications System Service; and the Treasury's Foreign Funds Control Unit - not one of which deals with the others, let alone recognizing them.'

'So?'

'So what we need is a centralized, coordinated intelligence, like the British Secret Intelligence Service.'

'A sort of Central Intelligence Agency,' Taylor said.

'Right, General. You got it!'

'Ah!' the general exclaimed softly. 'So that's why you came all the way from New York to see me, instead of using the phone. You want to ride your favorite hobbyhorse again and

persuade me to include you in the formation of a proper, coordinated intelligence-gathering agency. Have I got it right, Mike?'

'Yeah, General, you have. I'm a highly successful, thirty-eight-year-old lawyer with a plush office in Manhattan, but the best time I ever had in my life was during the war.'

'So I gathered,' the general said. The Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the Medal of Honor...'

'Right,' Bradley interjected. 'Which proves that I'm a survivor - and that I'm willing to hang in when the chips are down.'

'No argument there,' the general murmured. 'Come on, let's head back.'

They started walking away from the river, back to where the men with the saws and hammers and nails were swarming like flies over the frames of buildings that would soon house a branch of army air force intelligence and the new National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics.

When Bradley thought of aeronautics, he thought of John Wilson; and when he thought of that mysterious genius, he also thought, with guilty, helpless longing, of Wilson's mistress - the middle-age, laconic, and undeniably attractive Gladys Kinder.

He just couldn't help himself.

'Anyway,' he said, 'my kids are growing up, they're both now away at college, and although I still have Joan, I'm bored with my legal work. I'm also, as you know, deeply convinced that America will, sooner or later, have to become involved with the outside world. I accepted your offer of unofficial intelligence gathering in Europe because I hoped that it would lead to stronger ties with the intelligence services already existing over there. And having been there, I'm more convinced than ever that we need a central intelligence-gathering agency - and I happen to know that you believe that also and have even discussed it'

'You know more than you should,' General Taylor said,

'which is, of course, why we should take you on on a more permanent basis.'

They skirted around the building site and stopped by Bradley's car, which was parked just outside General Taylor's office, gleaming in sunlight.

'Are you in the process of forming such an agency?' Bradley asked as he slipped into his car.

'Very early stages,' the general replied, 'but the short answer is yes.'

'And can I be part of it?'

'Yes - when the time comes. In the meantime, you better get on the trail of this John Wilson. If we can't yet find out what he's doing in Germany, you might at least find out where he came from and just who he is.'

'I will,' Bradley said.

He watched the general walk back into his office, then drove away, feeling a lot better, disturbed only when he thought of Gladys Kinder and her relationship with Wilson.

'Goddammit!' he whispered.

CHAPTER FOUR

The two men came for Wilson at the Zeppelin Works at Friedrichshafen at eight in the morning and escorted him out of the factory without a word. Both men were wearing the black uniforms of the SS, and not those of the Gestapo, which Wilson took for a good sign. He felt no fear and asked no questions when, outside the factory, they ordered him up into the back of a canvas-topped truck that already contained a collection of men and women, none of whom looked too happy and some of whom were actually in handcuffs. Wilson sat between a Frenchman who tugged nervously at his peaked cap and a Jewish woman whose dark eyes glowed with dread, then the truck growled into life and began its journey to Berlin.

Two armed soldiers sat at the end of the truck, to ensure that no one tried to escape.

Wilson, who did not wish to escape, merely smiled at the sight of them.

The journey began in the gray mist of morning and ended in the evening, with the streetlights illuminating the monolithic architecture of Berlin. In that long eight hours they had been driven a great distance, from Friedrichshafen on the north shore of Lake Constance to steely-gray Munich, from there to Nuremberg, still somber in the noonday sun, then across the majestic, forested hills of Thuringia, with the shadows of the trees lengthening in the deepening light of afternoon, then through Dessau as darkness was falling and eventually into Berlin.

Wilson had taken it all in from the back of the truck, every

glimpse he could get through the canvas flapping near the two soldiers, and had noticed, especially, the many troop trucks on the roads, the armed soldiers in even the smallest towns. He was reminded, beyond any shadow of doubt, that this country was set for war.

It was just what he needed.

Throughout the journey, the two guards had said little to the prisoners, other than ushering them in and out of the truck two or three times to enable them to eat or go to the toilet. They had done this in a distant but reasonably civilized manner, but now, as they kept their charges covered while escorting them from the truck into a large, official-looking building, they both became noticeably more tense and officious, barking their orders and even hitting some of the prisoners with the butts of their rifles when they failed to move quickly enough.

Once inside the building, which was gloomily lit and drearily institutional, the predominance of immaculate black uniforms, gleaming boots, and blond hair made it obvious that this was SS headquarters.

One of the female prisoners started weeping and a man crossed himself, but Wilson, as he had done that morning, took it as a good sign that he was in the hands of the SS, which he had wanted, and not the Gestapo.

The prisoners in handcuffs were led away. Wilson and the others were told to sit on the wooden benches lining the walls of a gloomy corridor. A golden-haired SS sergeant took their identity papers, disappeared through a door, and returned shortly after to lead Wilson away from where he had been sitting, between the dark-eyed Jewish woman and the unshaven Frenchman who had constantly murmured to God for deliverance. Glad to be rid of them, Wilson was even more pleased when he was escorted into an office and made to stop before the desk of a man he recognized from his many photographs in the newspapers - the head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler.

He did not raise his head when Wilson was escorted in, but

continued to study the papers on his desk. Wilson recognized his own handwriting and the technical sketches he had included with his lengthy letter, and smiled, feeling pleased with himself, until Himmler looked up at him.

Wilson immediately removed the smile from his face and looked deeply respectful.

Himmler sighed, as if weary. He had bland, decent features, a neatly trimmed mustache, and gray-blue eyes whose mildness was emphasized by his glistening pince-nez spectacles. He was a man without vanity or cruelty or lust - but Wilson knew, the minute he saw those eyes, that he was also quite mad.

It was what Wilson needed.

'So,' Himmler said, 'you are Wilson - John Wilson - an American citizen.'

'Yes, Herr Himmler,' Wilson replied in perfect German.

'Reichsfuhrer,' Himmler corrected him mildly.

'Sorry, Reichsfuhrer.'

'And you've been living in Germany, under an assumed name and with forged German identification papers, for the past three years. This is correct?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer.'

'And as this fictitious German citizen, you've been doing important research work on advanced gyroscopic controls with the subsonic windtunnel at the Zeppelin Works in Friedrichshafen.'

'Yes, sir.'

Himmler offered a slight, chilling smile. 'You realize, Hen-Wilson, that these are criminal offenses - that you could even be labeled as a spy and executed accordingly.'

'My purpose isn't spying, Reichsfuhrer, as the notes and drawings I sent you clearly prove.'

'Ah, yes... the notes and drawings.' Himmler adjusted the spectacles on his nose and glanced down at Wilson's papers. When he raised his eyes again, he was still smiling in that slight, chilling manner. 'What these notes prove, Mr Wilson, according to my aeronautical advisers, is that you are an

extraordinarily brilliant physicist and engineer. What they fail to prove is that you are not here on behalf of your government - in other words, as a spy.'

'I have no reason to love the American government - and my only interest in life is my work. That's why I'm here.'

Himmler stared steadily at him, with a cold curiosity, then smiled bleakly and indicated the chair in front of his desk. 'Please,' he said. Take a seat. Can I fetch you some tea?'

'No, thanks,' Wilson said as he sat down and studied the powerful, soft-faced lunatic across the desk. 'I drink as little as possible.'

'And hardly eat, so I've been told. Does that explain your remarkably youthful appearance?'

'It helps,' Wilson said, not forgetting for a moment that Himmler, former fertilizer salesman and chicken farmer, was quietly obsessed with all kinds of esoteric theories, including astrology and runes, the secret of the pyramids, the spirit of the eternal Wandervogel, Horbiger's world of ice and fire, and, of course, the magical properties of certain diets. 'I eat and drink only the bare minimum,' he clarified, 'though I find that the odd glass of white wine can be beneficial.'

'You speak flawless German,' Himmler said. 'When and where did you learn it?'

'I learned it here, in Germany, Reichsfuhrer.'

Himmler raised his eyebrows to display his scepticism. 'Here, Mr Wilson? In the Fatherland? In a mere three years? I would think that even an adolescent, let alone a man your age, would have trouble in being so fluent in our difficult tongue after such a short period.'

'I have a retentive memory,' Wilson explained, 'and I learned it in three years. We didn't even learn French in Iowa, let alone German. I've learned it since coming here.'

He was impatient with the question, since languages came easily to him. He had never experienced difficulty in learning anything, so could not abide ignorance. And languages, compared to mathematics or science, were merely child's play.

'Ah, yes,' Himmler said, forgetting the vexing question of

language. 'Iowa! The heartland of America. Which is where you came from.'

'Yes,' Wilson confirmed, remembering the rolling plains, the cold winters and long hot summers, his parents working in fields of corn between sunrise and sunset while he, who could never stand the place, searched the distant horizon.

He looked back with no emotion, simply recalling it from his mind, and retained no more feeling for that landscape than he did for his parents. He remembered them treating him kindly, but that didn't mean much to him.

The past was a dead place.

Himmler nodded judiciously, glanced down at Wilson's papers, picked some up and let them fall to the desk again, then spread the fingers of his delicate, almost feminine hands over them. 'Naturally we've checked the details you gave us about your background and found them to be exactly as you stated. You're a remarkable man, Mr Wilson, perhaps even extraordinary - which would only make you all the more dangerous, should you not be what you say you are.'

'I'm a scientist, Reichsfuhrer. I want to get on with my work. I can't do what I want to do in America, so I came here, to Germany, where I know that my particular kind of talent is much in demand. It's as simple as that'

'Nothing is as simple as that, Mr Wilson, as you and I both know. You're an American citizen, and no matter your grievances, you must still love the country you came from.'

'I do not, Reichsfuhrer. To me, it's just another country and one that can't help me.'

Himmler actually looked shocked, as if blasphemy had been spoken. 'Patriotism!' he exclaimed. 'You have no sense of that?'

'No.'

'I find that hard to believe.'

'Believe it.'

'If you were a German citizen, I'd have you shot for that attitude.'

'I'm not German, Reichsfuhrer.'

Himmler picked up a pencil, drummed it on the desk,

tapped it lightly against his teeth, then put it down again. He signed, almost sadly. 'Even though our country is not at war with yours, what you've done, in coming here to work for us, is virtually treason. Are you a traitor? Is that what you want to be?'

Wilson had to admire him for saying that The chicken farmer was no fool. He looked like a schoolteacher, perhaps even a monk, but mixed in with his lunatic ideas was a steely intelligence. Not a vast intelligence, but a sharp one, which meant that he had to be handled carefully and never taken for granted.

'A traitor?' Wilson said. 'I don't think in such terms. I was exploited by my government, then betrayed and cast aside, and now I wish to lend my talents to those who will use them.'

'Lend your talents?'

The question actually amused Wilson. 'How wise you are, Reichsfuhrer, to understand that a man of my ambition would not willingly do anything for free. Naturally, I came here for the most selfish reasons - because I live for my work and only someone like you would have the vision and courage to finance it. I'll work for you as long as you finance my research - which is why 1 wrote to you.'

'And you do not care to what ends your research is finally put?'

'A true scientist can't be concerned with such matters. My only concern is the pursuit of ultimate knowledge - and I know you agree with that. I'm just as much a soldier as you are - but what I fight for is science.'

'Are you as ruthless as a soldier, Herr Wilson?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer, I am.'

Himmler smiled, obviously pleased with this response, though his smile held no warmth.

'Why me?' he asked softly. 'Of all the people in the Third Reich, why did you write to me, rather than to some influential scientist or politician? You must have known you were taking a great chance - exposing yourself as an alien who used false identification papers in order to obtain a position in one of our most important research establishments - and that I could

have decided to have you shot as a spy. So why me, Herr Wilson?'

'Because you're a man of vision,' Wilson said, combining a lie with a certain amount of truth. He felt that Himmler was, indeed, a man of great dreams, if not vision, who would support any kind of research, no matter how esoteric or even mad. For that, if for very little else, he would certainly be useful. 'Because you believe in the limitless possibilities of the future, will back your beliefs with actions, and will not let petty human emotions stand in your way. You and I, Herr Himmler, if I may say so, are similar that way.'

'What you say may be true,' Himmler replied, unmoved by flattery, 'but it still doesn't explain why I should give you, a foreigner, my support, particularly since you wish to take part in our most vital, and therefore confidential, research.'

You should give me your support, Reichsfuhrer, because my papers have shown you what I can do - and what I can do is much more than anyone you have could do.'

'Some of my scientists would take offense at that remark.'

That wouldn't change its accuracy. My work is proof of my genius. More important, I'm engaged in a project similar to one you've already started: the creation of a revolutionary form of transport and extraordinary weapon.'

'You mean Projekt Saucer.'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer.'

'And how did you know about that, Herr Wilson, since the project is under SS supervision?'

There are always whispers, Reichsfuhrer, particularly among scientists, and naturally I picked them up in Friedrichshafen. I was also puzzled to see certain, odd machine parts in the Zeppelin Works - but when combined with some of the experiments taking place in the wind tunnel, I realized they could only relate to the development of an aircraft shaped like a saucer - the kind of machine being researched with Projekt Saucer at Kummersdorf West.'

'What kind of experiments were you doing in the Zeppelin wind tunnel?'

'Tests relating to Prandtl's boundary layer.'

'The importance of which is?'

'If we can't solve the problem of the boundary layer, the speed and maneuverability of our aircraft will always be limited.'

'Please explain.'

The perfect flying machine will be one that requires no runway, since it will take off vertically, will be able to hover in midair, and will not be limited in flight by Prandtl's boundary layer.'

'I am not an engineer,' Himmler reminded him impatiently.

'According to Prandtl's theory of the boundary layer, the air sweeping in on an object in flight increases its resistance in direct proportion to the increasing speed of the flying object. Because of this, the speed of any flying object is finite. However, if some method can be found of removing the boundary layer, virtually limitless speed and maneuverability will be achieved.'

'And a disc shape is the best shape for this?'

'Potentially, yes. The buildup of the boundary layer is dramatically increased by the many surface protuberances of a normal aircraft - wings, tails, rudders, rotors, and so forth. If we could get rid of those - by somehow wrapping them together as part and parcel of the one, circular, smooth-surfaced flying wing - we would at least be on the road to the perfect flying machine.'

'And you think that we can accomplish this here in Germany?'

'I think you're the country with most interest in such developments and certainly the most advanced so far. Regarding vertical-rising aircraft, the Focke-Wulf Company has already announced that it has almost completed its FW 61 helicopter, which will be the first fully operational helicopter in existence. Regarding experimental tailless aircraft, or flying wings, devoid of vertical stabilizing or control surfaces, the Horten brothers of Bonn have already produced some successful prototypes. As for other

problems standing in the way of limitless speed and maneuverability, it was a German, Professor Ludwig Prandtl, who, at Gottingen in 1904, defined the nature of the boundary layer. Since then, many other German scientists have been experimenting with revolutionary new types of aircraft in the hope of finding a way of defeating that layer. A disc or saucer-shaped aircraft, without any surface protuberances, is the logical outcome of that research.'

Himmler's smile was as chilling as the gaze behind his small pince-nez. There are those who would say that such an aircraft cannot be built'

'The foolish always speak loudest.'

'And you think that you can help with such a project?'

'I can complete it, Reichsfuhrer. I have been working toward this goal all my life and have now almost reached it.'

Himmler glanced at Wilson's technical drawings, which had been done in black ink, then raised his eyes again as he spread his slim hands in a questioning manner.

'But are you close to reaching it?' he asked. 'My scientists often say the same thing - but so far they have failed.'

'Just look at my drawings, Reichsfiihrer.'

'I am not a scientist, Herr Wilson. Your drawings look impressive, but to me they are meaningless - though initial reports have certainly confirmed that your written work is extraordinary. These drawings will have to be studied further by people more knowledgeable than I. In the meantime, I have to consider what it is you want from me.'

'I've told you that, Reichsfiihrer. I wrote to you not only for the reasons we've just discussed, but also because I know that the SS is gradually taking over the security and management of the Third Reich's major scientific and research establishments, that soon it will be the most powerful organization in Germany, and that you, its Reichsfiihrer, are the only man in power with the vision to see what can be done in this particular field. Already you've implemented a disc-shaped aircraft project; only I can take that project to its completion - but I need your support.'

There was silence for a moment and Wilson waited patiently, neither excited nor frightened. He was fully in control as Himmler stared steadily at him. He did not flinch from the mild monster, but neither did he try to challenge him. Instead he let his gaze go slightly out of focus, as if gazing inward.

Which he did in a sense, thinking back upon America, remembering Goddard and how the Americans had mocked him while these clever Germans revered him. Well, Goddard was back in Roswell, struggling along on a mere pittance, while he, Wilson, if Himmler went as he thought he would, would soon have all the money and equipment he could possibly want.

Pleased, he focused again upon Himmler, whose mild gaze concealed madness.

'You do realize, Herr Wilson, that once I gave that support, you would be committed to working for the Third Reich for the rest of your days?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer.'

'And that if you betrayed us, or even tried to leave the country, I would personally have you executed?'

Tes, Reichsfuhrer, I realize that, also.'

Tou are therefore willing to commit yourself totally to the Third Reich and all it stands for?'

Tes, Reichsfuhrer,' Wilson said. He lied easily, as he was beyond morality, thinking only of his own plans for the future and ignoring all else. 'I'm willing to do that.'

Himmler stared steadily at him, his gaze searching, then he nodded, as if coming to a decision, though not without doubts.

'You must really despise your government,' he said, 'for what they did to you.'

'No, I don't,' Wilson said. 'Such emotions are redundant I'm here not because I want revenge, but because my government won't support me and I think you will. It's as simple as that'

'You are more than committed to your work,' Himmler observed. 'You are clearly fanatical.'

'I live only for my work - as you do - and that makes us superior men.'

'I think you really believe that, Herr Wilson.'

'I do, Reichsfuhrer. I do.'

Himmler smiled at the subtle flattery but was otherwise unmoved by it. He then glanced down at Wilson's drawings, scratched his nose while studying them, shook his head from side to side in wonder, and looked up again.

'I am going to have you placed in the custody of the Gestapo,' he said, 'in their headquarters in the Prinz Albrechtstrasse. You needn't worry. I do this merely for convenience. I wish to have these drawings examined in more detail - and to have you interrogated at length, regarding your past and present attitudes as well as your work. Naturally, you will be interrogated by one of my intelligence officers - but hopefully one with an engineering background. Should the results of our investigations prove positive, you will, as you request, be given work at the rocket research establishment at Kummersdorf West. On the other hand, if our findings are negative, you will be shot and buried as the German citizen whom these false identification papers say you are. Is that acceptable, Herr Wilson?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer - and thank you.'

Himmler nodded at the armed guard in the corner of the room, and Wilson was led out to begin his journey to Gestapo headquarters.

CHAPTER FIVE

Bradley met Robert H. Goddard on the porch of the latter's large frame house on a street shaded by horse chestnut trees in Worcester, Massachusetts, in the winter of 1933. The snow had not yet come, but the air was gray and cold, and the leaves were blowing around Bradley's feet when Goddard shook his hand and ushered him inside.

It was a pleasant, old-fashioned house, with its original furniture covered in relatively new slipcovers, its windows draped with chintz, and a wood fire burning in the large, open fireplace. Bradley knew that Goddard had lived here all his life, and it certainly suited him, being an unpretentious, comfortable place.

'Please take a seat,' Goddard said, his voice as formal as his appearance when he indicated the sofa by the fire. 'I'm sorry I can't offer you much - my wife's not home at the moment - but I can at least make a cup of coffee.'

That'd be fine,' Bradley said. 'I'll have it black, with no sugar.'

Goddard nodded solemnly and disappeared into the kitchen; he returned a couple of minutes later, carrying two cups of coffee. Bradley noticed his stooped walk, which, like his bald head, had been caused by tuberculosis in his youth. Goddard handed Bradley the black coffee, sipped at his own, then took the armchair facing the settee. His eyes were brown over a small mustache, his gaze slightly suspicious, and Bradley remembered that he wasn't keen on representatives of a government that had ignored his remarkable talents for too long.

'So,' Goddard said, 'you insisted on seeing me, even after I put you off on the phone when you called me at Clark. Have you come to make me an offer?'

Bradley grinned. 'No,' he said. 'I'm in neither science nor finance. I have heard that you've had trouble getting financed, but that's not what I'm here for.'

'If you're not part of the government's scientific community, why come to see me? The US government has never shown much interest in my work, so I'm naturally surprised that one of their representatives should turn up on my doorstep - more so since he hasn't come to offer me help.'

The National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics was recently formed to advise the government on every aspect of aeronautical development, political and scientific, both here and abroad. For that reason it was composed of those most respected in the aeronautical community. You were invited to join - and you rejected the offer.'

'With all due respect to Orville Wright and my good friend Charles Lindbergh, I don't consider such an offer to be of help. In making me such an offer, you were seeking my help - and what I need is government backing for my expensive research. That has never been offered.'

'I'm sorry.'

'I'm sure you are.'

Realizing that this was not going to be easy, Bradley decided to skip the formalities. 'In fact, perhaps to make matters worse, I'm asking for help again.'

'Obviously not scientific help.'

'No. I'm an intelligence officer for the US Army Air Force and I need information.'

'Information about my work?' Goddard asked suspiciously.

'No,' Bradley replied. 'I need to know about someone who worked with you - a man named John Wilson.'

Goddard straightened up, looking surprised, then collected himself by sipping some more coffee. When he lowered the cup and saucer to his lap, his eyes were masked.

'Ah, yes,' he said, 'Wilson. An odd bird. So why do you want to know about him?'

'Because I have to find him,' Bradley told him, 'and he hasn't left many tracks. Do you mind if I smoke?'

Goddard shook his head to say he didn't mind and Bradley, who smoked only when he didn't know what to do with his hands, lit a cigarette.

'Why do you have to find him? Has he committed an offense?'

'No,' Bradley said, exhaling a stream of smoke. 'And that's all I can say for now. But please accept that this man must be found - and you're our first lead.'

Goddard shrugged. 'I can't help you much, Mr Bradley. I doubt that I know any more about him than you do - I only worked with him.'

'With him? I thought he worked for you.'

'You mean as my assistant?'

'Yes.'

Goddard smiled for the first time - a slight, laconic smile. Well, he certainly was that - or was supposed to be that - but a man like Wilson doesn't work/or anybody. He was too bright for that.'

'How bright?'

'Brilliant. He was clearly a genius.'

As Goddard wasn't known for his generosity to fellow scientists, Bradley was surprised by this description.

'You're supposed to be a genius,' he said. 'Are you saying that—'

The word genius is used far too casually for my liking,' Goddard interjected, 'and so isn't one I'd normally use lightly. Yet I'd apply it without doubt to Wilson. The man was a genius.'

'How much did you learn about him?'

'Not much, Mr Bradley. He was guarded about his past, almost paranoid about remaining anonymous, and seemed to have few interests, other than space flight. Like me, he thought it possible to fly to the moon - and that's why he came to me.'

'When was that?'

'In 1930.'

Bradley saw a glass ashtray on a low table near the bookcase, so leaned sideways, picked it up, balanced it on one leg, and nicked some ash into it 'And how did he come to work with you? Did he initially write to you?'

'No. He simply turned up out of the blue, told me he was an aeronautical engineer who had designed airships—'

'Airships?'

'Correct.'

'Did he say he did that work in Europe or America?'

'He certainly didn't mention Europe. In fact, I got the impression that he had never been there in his life.'

'Yet that's where most of the airships have been constructed and flown.'

'That's where the first airships were constructed and flown,' Goddard corrected him. The first was built by Henri Giffard of France in 1852; powered by a 350-pound engine, it was successfully flown over the Paris Hippodrome at a speed of she miles an hour. An internal combustion engine fueled by hydrogen from the airship's bag was then used by the German, Paul Haenlein, for his even more successful flight in 1872. Albert and Gaston Tissandier of France successfully powered an airship with an electric motor in 1883, and the first rigid airship, with an aluminum-sheeting hull, was built in Germany in 1897. And I don't have to tell you that the Germans used a number of large Zeppelin airships to bomb Paris and London throughout the Great War.'

'All European airships,' Bradley reminded him.

'Yes, of course - they were the best known. But a few airships were constructed here in the 1920s, and more are being constructed right this minute - so there appears to be nothing remarkable in Wilson's assertion that he worked on airship designs.'

'Which must have been just before he came to work for you.'

'Probably,' Goddard said.

'What else did he tell you?' Bradley asked.

'He was obsessed with the possibilities of space flight - and

therefore with my rocket research. He said he had been inspired by the fact that I had managed to launch liquid-fueled, instrument-carrying rockets, and informed me that he wanted to work with me and learn from me.'

'I'm surprised you let him.'

Goddard didn't smile at all. 'As he was older than I,' he said, 'I was certainly initially uncomfortable with his suggestion, suspecting him to be someone simply desperate for work. However, he showed me his papers, which proved beyond doubt that he had attended MIT between 1888 and 1893 - before my time there - then Sibley College at Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York, where by 1895 he'd obtained his Bachelor of Science in aeronautics. He also proved, both verbally and with various papers he'd written and let me read, that he had an extraordinary - and I don't use the word lightly - an extraordinary grasp of aeronautics and physics. Naturally, Mr Bradley, after that, I couldn't turn him away.'

'He started working for you immediately?'

'Yes.'

'This was at your Guggenheim-financed experimental station in Roswell, New Mexico?'

'Yes.'

'For how long?'

'Approximately six months.'

'That doesn't seem too long.'

'No, but it was all he needed. During that period he helped me enormously - but he also learned everything I'd discovered so far about steering systems, gyroscopic controls, and various kinds of self-cooling combustion chambers. Those were the things he wanted to know about - and when he'd found what he needed, he left, with not even a good-bye note.'

'Not exactly showing gratitude,' Bradley said.

Goddard smiled for the second time. 'Wilson wasn't a man for gratitude - and I learned as much from him as he did from me, so I can't really complain.'

Whether or not Goddard felt the need to complain, Bradley certainly thought that Wilson's abrupt departure could only

be the act of an extraordinarily cold, thoughtless, self-centered man. When he also thought of how casually Wilson had dismissed and left his former mistress, the intriguing Gladys Kinder, he was even more convinced that the man he was trying to picture clearly was not the warmest, most sensitive soul on earth. Certainly he was a man who used people and casually cast them off- a man who didn't need love or friends.

A man completely alone.

'So what did you think about him as a person?' Bradley asked Goddard, desperately hoping to fit a human face to his shadowy quarry.

'I don't know what you mean,' Goddard said with scientific detachment.

Bradley blew a smoke ring and watched it grow larger and thinner before disappearing. Then, realizing what he was doing, he felt a little embarrassed. 'Did you become friends in any sense?' he asked.

Goddard shrugged, at least displaying his confusion, which made him more likable. 'I got on well with him,' he said, 'but in an academic way. We both lived for our work, we'd both had bad times with the government, and we agreed that the mind should rule the heart - not vice versa, as is commonly believed. Oddly enough, then, though there was little warmth between us, we had much in common.'

Bradley hardly heard the last remark, for his lawyer's instincts, always turned to the unusual, had honed in on something else.

'Did you say he'd had trouble with our government?' he asked, leaning forward, forgetting the ashtray, but managing to grab it before it fell off his leg.

'Yes,' Goddard said. 'Just like me.'

'You mean the trouble was related to his work?' Bradley asked as he rearranged the position of the ashtray.

'Yes,' Goddard confirmed. 'He didn't tell me much about himself, but he did say that he'd come from Iowa, worked on some airship projects, and come to me when those projects were first taken over by, then dropped by, the US government

Is that why you're interested, Mr Bradley? Were you involved in his problems?'

Feeling distinctly uneasy, Bradley was nevertheless able to answer honestly. 'No. I know nothing about them. It's interesting, though, that he should have said that What do you think?'

'I don't think I have to tell you, Mr Bradley, that for years I've felt neglected by the US government - and if Wilson was working on airships, or similar projects, and was then either dropped or blocked by the government, he would feel as bitter as I do - which is very bitter indeed.'

Bradley almost felt Goddard's bitterness. He was deeply embarrassed by it, but disguised it by drinking more coffee and then clearing his throat.

'Did he say or do anything to substantiate such bitterness?'

'Yes,' Goddard said without hesitation. 'Just before our rocket test flight of December 31, 1930, which Wilson should have attended, he told me that our government didn't appreciate its brightest minds, that it would eventually make things difficult for me, and that I should consider leaving the country for good and taking my talents where they'd be more appreciated.'

'And where did he suggest, Mr Goddard?'

'Germany,' Goddard said innocently. 'He reminded me that the German rocket scientists revered my work and that because of that I'd certainly get the financing there that I couldn't get here. Two days later, while we were testing our latest rocket, he packed up and disappeared.'

'Was your rocket test a success?' Bradley asked, thinking it wise to lighten the conversation.

'It was pleasing,' Goddard replied. The gyroscopic controls didn't work properly and the descent parachute didn't open, but the rocket reached a speed of 350 miles per hour and a height of nearly two miles.'

'That's impressive.'

'Yes, it's impressive - but not to your superiors.'

Feeling that he'd just been slapped on the face, and also

oddly haunted by the ghostly man he was pursuing, Bradley finished his coffee, stubbed his cigarette out, placed the ashtray on the table, and prepared to leave.

'Is there anything else you can give me that might help me?' he asked.

'No,' Goddard replied, standing up to show him to the door. What I've told you is all I can tell you. Apart from that, he's a mystery.'

Bradley sighed. Thanks anyway,' he said. 'I'd like to apologize for how the government's treated you, but—'

'It's not your place to do so.'

'Yeah,' Bradley said, grateful for the unexpected sensitivity. 'Right It's not my place. Thanks again, anyway, Dr Goddard - and the best of luck for the future.'

Goddard just smiled and nodded, led him to the door, remained on the porch till he drove away, then disappeared back into his attractive, old-fashioned house.

Bradley drove straight to MIT, flirted with the middle-age lady who worked in the records department, and soon learned that John Wilson had indeed attended the university before going on to Cornell in Ithaca. He was also able to ascertain from Wilson's old registration card that at the time of his enrollment, he had been living in Massachusetts with only his father, that before that he had lived with both his parents in Montezuma, Iowa, and that he had been born there on July 6, 1870.

Growing ever more intrigued by the fragmented trail of his brilliant, mysterious quarry, Bradley took the next train out of Massachusetts.

'Airships,' he muttered to himself as he sat in his reserved seat in a first-class car and lit a cigar. 'What next? I wonder.'

The train moved into darkness.

CHAPTER SIX

Ernst awakened at dawn, after a night of bad dreams, thinking he was in a cell in Stadelheim Prison, his heart pounding with fear. Then he saw his own bedroom, felt Ingrid beside him, and so heaved a sigh of relief and reached out to touch her.

She was naked beneath the sheets, her skin smooth and warm, and aroused, he rolled in against her, hoping to waken her.

She did not awaken immediately, which disappointed him again, and still caught in the web of his frightening dreams, he gazed through the windows. The curtains had not been drawn and he saw the dawn's dark-gray light, gradually illuminating the houses opposite, in the modest-priced Berlin suburb of Helensee. They had moved here a year ago, two weeks after they were married and had honeymooned in Paris - which, compared to Berlin, had been like heaven on earth. It seemed longer than a year ago (so much had happened in the turbulent period) and Ernst, now the father of a daughter, Ula, wondered where all the joy had gone.

Germany had changed dramatically in the fifteen months and he had changed with it

Not wishing to think about it, feeling the need for escape, he pressed himself against Ingrid's spine and ran his hands over her. He heard her breathing change, felt her stiffen and then relax, so he whispered her name into her ear and she sighed and turned into him. She gazed at him with sleepy, catlike green eyes, then kissed him sensually.

It was the dawn's sole reward, and he made love with

feeling, aware that it was not like it had been, but grateful to have her. Ingrid's body was still sublime, a soft retreat from harsh reality, and he slid along her belly, sucked and licked her breasts and neck, and moved inside her with the desperate need to obliterate what had recently been haunting him - the knowledge that he was losing her love as his pride was destroyed.

When he had finished and was hoping to rest on top of her, she slid out from under him.

'I'll get breakfast,' she said.

'Please, Ingrid, stay in bed a little longer.'

'No,' she said. 'You'll be late.'

Reminded by that remark of what the day might yet bring, Ernst felt a cold chill of dread slipping through him. He had forgotten that he had been ordered to report back to barracks unusually early in preparation for possible action against the SA, or Brownshirts, who were reported to be planning an armed rebellion under the leadership of Captain Ernst Roehm.

Another police duty, Ernst thought bitterly as Ingrid, in a dressing gown, padded from the room and he slid his legs out of the bed and went into the bathroom.

As he attended to his ablutions, he pondered the fact that even he was becoming confused by the sheer number of conflicting groups within the Third Reich's increasingly nightmarish police structure. Top of the list were the Gestapo, or Secret State Police. Originally under the command of the debauched Hermann Goring, recently it had been taken under the wing of Himmler, who was also head of the SS. The SS had been formed as Hitler's personal Guard Detachment but was fast becoming the most feared police force of all. Next came the SD, which acted as the long-range Intelligence and Security Service of the SS, under the control of the dreaded Reinhard Heydrich. Last of the major groups was the SA, originally formed as part of the SD and consisting of Ernst Roehm's brown-shirted Storm Troops, who represented the military arm of the Nazi Party and were used mainly to intimidate, beat up, or murder those openly opposed to it. Now

that degenerate madman, Roehm, was rumored to be planning a putsch, or armed revolt, against the Reichswehr... And today's police duty, Ernst suspected, had something to do with that situation.

He resented being involved in such duties - more so because Ingrid had frequently expressed her contempt for the SS, which she viewed as fascistic and brutal. He also resented them because what he had been promised, eighteen months ago, would be aeronautical intelligence gathering for the SS technical branch had in fact turned out to be secret service intelligence gathering against, and the arresting of, all those who opposed Hitler's National Socialist Party.

Ernst had escorted more unfortunate souls into Stadelheim prison and Gestapo headquarters than he cared to remember - and there were stories about both of those places that he preferred to forget.

Suddenly filled with the dry-throated nervousness that always gripped him when he thought of his SS duties, he had a quick bath, dressed even more urgently in his gleaming black SS uniform, looked fondly in on his nine-month-old daughter, where she was sleeping in her cot in her own brightly painted room, then went into the kitchen to have coffee with Ingrid.

She was sitting at the table, a steaming mug in her hands, her short-cropped blond hair attractively disheveled around her delicate features. Having Ula had not made her lose her figure, which remained slim and sensual; and Ernst, as he took the chair facing her, was grateful for that.

'I'd forgotten I had to be there so early,' he said, sipping his coffee. 'I also forgot to tell you that I may not be coming home tonight. It could be a long duty.'

What is it this time?' Ingrid asked him, her green gaze steady over her steaming mug.

'I don't know,' he lied, because he had been ordered to do so and did not dare do otherwise. They only said that it was some kind of police action that could take a long time.'

In fact, he had been told in confidence the previous day by Gruppenfuhrer Josef Dietrich, commander of Hitler's

elite SS bodyguard, the Leibstandarte - SS Adolf Hitler, that for months the SA, under the command of the notorious homosexual, Captain Roehm, had been in growing, increasingly open revolt against Hitler in particular and Himmler's SS in general, and now that conflict was coming to a head. According to Dietrich, Goring, SS chief Heinrich Himmler, and the dreaded SD chief Reinhard Heydrich had formed a secret alliance to get rid of Roehm and were going to act soon.

Ernst dreaded the form such an action might take, but tried to look unconcerned.

'Another police action,' Ingrid said, putting his previous thoughts into words and imbuing them with soft sarcasm. 'Before we married I said you'd become a policeman - and that's what you are.'

'I'm not a policeman,' he insisted too loudly, aware that he had had to do this too often. 'I'm not a member of the Gestapo. so stop suggesting I am.'

'You do the Gestapo's work,' Ingrid replied, not perturbed by his outrage, 'and that's just as bad.'

'I obey orders,' he said, 'and that's all I do. It's not the kind of work I wanted, it's certainly not what I expected, and although I don't always like what I'm told to do, I must obey orders.'

'You could try refusing.'

'That's nonsense, and you know it. I'm an SS officer, a German officer, and you know what that means.'

'It means you work as a policeman.'

'It means that if I don't do what I'm told, I'll be imprisoned myself - or possibly shot Is that what you want?'

Ingrid placed her cup on the table and gazed down at her coffee, perhaps trying to hide the blush he could see on her cheeks.

'I'm sorry,' she said. 'I know you're not really a policeman. I also know you don't like what you're doing and my attacks make it worse. I hate saying these things, but I can't help myself. I hate the SS - and I can't bear the thought that you,

who should have been an engineer, are doing their dirty work. It just makes me sick.'

'It sometimes makes me sick as well,' he said, 'but what else can I do? I am an officer in Heinrich Himmler's SS - and it's too late to get out'

Ingrid raised her head again. 'Are you sorry you joined?'

He shrugged. 'I'm not sure. Sometimes I feel betrayed - they said I would be in technical intelligence - but at other times, and I certainly can't deny it, I want to surrender my own feelings to the general good.'

'And you think that what's happening at present is for the general good?'

Ernst heard his own sigh like a soft wail of defeat. 'We can only hope,' he said. 'At the moment, things certainly look ugly, even shameful, but one hopes that the end will justify the means - and that's all one can hope for.'

Ingrid had just been about to take his hand, but she stopped, glanced at him, sat back, and glanced vaguely around her as if looking for exits.

'Everything's changed so quickly,' she said, shaking her head in bewilderment. 'Nothing's been the same since that night outside the Chancellery. It's only been fifteen months, yet now we live in a city filled with brown-shirted brutes, secret police, intimidation and fear. It's been like a bad dream.'

Ernst knew what she meant and rarely stopped thinking about it. He, too, remembered that wonderful moment in Wilhelmstrasse, when Hitler had appeared at the window of the Chancellery to smile down on his cheering men. It had been a great moment, a transcendental experience, one that had seemed to offer the promise of a magical future. A mere fifteen months ago...

And since then?

Ernst could not forget that he had been one of the truckloads of SS men, hastily sworn in as auxiliaries to the SA, who had, in March 1933, just a few days before he'd married Ingrid, swarmed through the city to round up known Reds and Social Democrats and take them into 'protective custody' - a

term that, even then, was rumored to mean imprisonment, torture, or execution.

Nor could he forget that he had been one of the many proud SS guards who sang the 'Horst Wessel' song in the Kroll Opera House, temporary site of the new Reichstag, the tumultuous night that Hitler, wearing his brown SA uniform and standing on a stage decorated with a huge swastika flag, made the speech that expunged democracy from the German parliament.

Nor could he forget that while the midnight calls and arrests increased, along with the whispers about torture and murder in SA and SS prison cells, he had been one of the many loyal 'policemen' who had seized union offices throughout the nation, arrested labor leaders, confiscated union files and bank accounts, shut down their newspapers, and in one awful day obliterated organized labor in the whole country.

Now the Fuhrer, Adolf Hitler, was ruling a totalitarian state known as the Third Reich - and he, Ernst Stoll, once a mere technical student, had aided his ruthless climb to power.

Naturally, Ingrid was right He had a lot to be ashamed of. But though he sometimes acknowledged this to himself, the shame and despair in which he writhed made him loathe her for saying it.

'I have to go now,' he said.

Feeling like someone being sucked into quicksand, and filled with the feeling that today would be a nightmare, he walked around the table, kissed Ingrid's cheek, and started out of the house.

'Don't do anything you'll be ashamed of,' Ingrid joked, trying to lighten the depression he was clearly showing.

'I'll try not to,' he replied with a smile and a wave, before stepping outside and closing the door behind him.

Waiting on the pavement in the morning's brightening light for the jeep that would transport him to Stadelheim Prison, he could not shake off his recollections of the past fifteen months and realized why he was losing Ingrid's love as his pride was destroyed. He had become a policeman, the emissary of

butchers, and as his resistance was eroded and his pride subtly destroyed, Ingrid's respect for him, the basis of her love, was also being eroded.

The Third Reich was driving a wedge between them, just as Ingrid had said it would.

The jeep that Ernst had been waiting for turned the corner at the bottom of the street, drove toward him, and pulled to the curb. As his fellow officers, Willi Brandt and Franck Ritter, both lieutenants, were taking up the rear seats, Ernst sat up front with the driver - not without noticing that the normally ebullient Brandt was looking gloomy while Franck was clearly excited.

'So,' Ernst said, as the jeep moved out into the almost deserted road and headed for the Prinz Albrechtstrasse, 'another early-morning call for the elite. It is so nice to be wanted.'

'It depends what they want us for,' the gloomy Brandt said, 'since that may not be nice.'

'I always like the early-morning calls,' Franck said, sounding excited. 'It usually means action.'

'I like action in the movies,' Brandt replied. 'I don't like to be part of it. Not when it involves arresting people and throwing them into that prison.'

They deserve what they get,' Franck said. 'If they didn't, we wouldn't arrest them. They are the dregs of society - drunks, illiterates, gypsies, communist traitors, and Jews - and what we do is for the good of the country, which is why I enjoy it.'

'You'd enjoy torturing or shooting them even more,' Brandt said in a remarkably careless outburst, 'but that doesn't make it right.'

Those are the words of a traitor!' Franck snapped. 'I could report you for that!'

'If it gets me off this duty,' Brandt responded, 'please be my guest.'

Unnerved by the conversation, Ernst told them both to shut up, then glanced at the awakening city through which they

were moving. It was a warm Saturday morning and already the news vendors were out, selling the propaganda to be found in the Illustrierte Beobachter and Frankfurter Zeitung while the Brownshirts took up their positions on the sidewalks, preparing for another day of insults, beard-tugging, and other carefully planned humiliations.

An average weekend in Berlin, 1934.

Ernst felt even worse when the jeep pulled up at the main entrance to the grim Gestapo headquarters in the Prinz Albrechtstrasse. He was startled by the number of SS jeeps and troop trucks lined up along the pavement, and even more startled when, inside the dreary, gloomy building, he found that it was packed with heavily armed SS troops.

This is no ordinary working day,' Brandt whispered, looking even more upset. "What the hell's going on, Ernst?'

'Something big!' Ritter exclaimed, his eyes gleaming with excitement. 'I knew it! I knew?

Even as he spoke, the door behind them opened again and more SS troops hurried in.

'They've arrested Roehm!' someone whispered.

'Hitler himself did it!' someone added.

'It's us or the SA,' another voice said. 'And today will decide it.'

Hardly able to believe what he was hearing, Ernst led his two comrades up the stairs and along some packed corridors, until he came to the office of his superior, Gruppenfuhrer Josef Dietrich. As Ernst stopped in the doorway, Dietrich barked orders to a group of SS officers. When the officers left, all looking anxious, Dietrich waved Ernst inside.

'Heil Hitler!' he snapped, then added more reasonably: 'Prepare yourselves, gentlemen. Operation Calibra has begun, You are in for a busy day.'

'I'm sorry, sir,' Ernst replied, 'but I'm not familiar with that code name.'

'No, Lieutenant, of course not. Only the most senior officers were informed. It had come to our attention that Roehm was planning a putsch and the ultimate destruction of the authority

of the army and SS. However, early this morning, our courageous Fuhrer, in the company of Goebbels, flew to Bad Wiessee and personally arrested that disgusting pervert and the nest of homosexual traitors he calls his stormtroopers, at the Pension Hanselbauer, near the Tegernsee. According to my reports, most of the pig's men were still in bed when the raid took place - many of them caught in flagrante delicto with fellow SA troops or local youths. One's stomach churns just to think of it.' Here the gruppenfuhrer shook his head in disgust. 'However,' he continued, 'they were all rounded up and are this very moment being transported back to Berlin to be incarcerated, with Roehm himself, in the Brown House, prior to being quickly tried and judged. Today, gentlemen, we will wield our long knives - so prepare to shed blood.' Ernst's soul plunged into despair - but he found no escape.

At ten o'clock that warm Saturday morning, he was informed that the cells of Stadelheim Prison were already packed with SA leaders. Those still in the Brown House, including Roehm, had demanded to see the Fiihrer, but were refused and, instead, transported to Stadelheim in an armored car. There Roehm was put in a solitary cell, not far from the one he had occupied after the Beer Hall putsch.

Shortly after learning of Roehm's incarceration, Ernst was called to the office of Gruppenfuhrer Dietrich, who told him that the purge was beginning.

'I personally,' Dietrich informed him proudly, 'have been put in charge of the executions of the SA men being held in Stadelheim Prison. Meanwhile, you are to go with Lieutenant Ritter to the home of General von Schleicher and once there, put him to death. You understand?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst replied, burning hot and cold with shock and disbelief. He was being ordered to kill the former chancellor of Germany. 'I just think—'

'Don't think, lieutenant, just obey. And when you've done that, drive straight to Stadelheim to receive further orders. Now good luck and - Heil Hitler!'

Unable to believe his ears, but forced to accept that this was real, Ernst soon found himself seated beside the hated Franck Ritter in one of the many police cars that were careening through the streets of Berlin in the great roundup of enemies of the regime. As if in a dream that was becoming a nightmare, he saw one unit, the men all wearing steel helmets and armed with rifles and submachine guns, surrounding von Papen's office. There was the sound of gunshots, sudden and frightening as they passed. Ernst felt sick to his stomach, too hot, completely unreal; and closed and opened his eyes when they passed a similar unit as it surrounded Roehm's opulent residence on the Tiergartenstrasse.

Sirens wailed in the distance.

Too soon for Ernst's liking, he and Lieutenant Ritter were being ushered by an unsuspecting cook into the study of a comfortable house in a suburb of Berlin. While Ernst licked his dry lips and fought to stop himself from shaking, Ritter asked the distinguished-looking gentleman sitting at the desk if he was indeed General von Schleicher.

'Yes, of course,' the former chancellor replied, looking up in surprise, even as Ritter pulled his pistol from his holster, cocked the safety catch, and opened fire.

The noise was appalling in that confined space.

Fumbling in a state of nerves, having not killed before, Ernst fired in a daze even as Schleicher was falling - and, worse, just as Frau von Schleicher appeared out of nowhere, rushed toward her stricken husband, and was cut down by the bullets that Ernst and Ritter were still firing.

Two bodies lay on the floor in dark pools of spreading blood.

While Ernst stood there, too shocked to move, Ritter hurried over to the bloody bodies on the floor, examined them dispassionately, then looked up and said, 'This bastard's dead, but his wife's still alive. An ambulance is coming for them, dead or alive, so let's go. There's more work to do.'

Which was certainly true.

In the courtyard of Stadelheim Prison the slaughter was well under way, but Ernst, when he reported to Gruppenfuhrer

Dietrich, was told to make his way back to the Gestapo headquarters in the Prinz Albrechtstrasse where there was plenty of worthy work still to do. After driving there in traffic jammed up by the police roadblocks and SS trucks being used to raid other SA groups, he was ordered down to the cells. It was a hell of smoke and ricocheting gunfire, of aggressive bawling and piteous screaming, and Ernst didn't know what to do, didn't want to do anything, turned away to rush out again, but was pushed back by an officer. 'That bastard in there!' the officer bawled. That rat in his hole!'

Pushed forward by the officer, Ernst found himself beside the weeping Willi Brandt in a crowd of jostling SS troops, firing his pistol, as the others fired, into Cell 16. There Gregor Strasser, winner of the Iron Cross, first class, devoted National Socialist and once the Fuhrer's friend, dodged back and forth, his eyes astonishingly bright, trying to avoid the hail of bullets. Finally, jerking spasmodically, he collapsed in his own blood and was given the coup de grace.

The cells stank of cordite and piss and the rank sweat of terror.

There were no names after that - only bodies spurting blood. Ernst went with the others, losing control of himself, firing his pistol in dark prison cells, in the hot, sunlit court-yards, then driving across the city to execute others in their homes, then on to the Lichterfeld Barracks - here, there and everywhere, through the day, into the night - murdering SA troops and government ministers and policemen and politicians.

He fell asleep in darkness, awakened to the new day, took part in more executions at lichterfeld Barracks and Columbia House, an SS torture chamber, until, at approximately four o'clock the following morning, he was finally allowed to holster his pistol and wash the blood from his hands.

Like his good friend Willi Brandt, he wept and then dried his stinging eyes.

He remembered returning home and telling Ingrid what had happened. He remembered, also, that she did not show any sympathy for his exhaustion, any understanding of his feelings of shame and horror, but only reviled him for what he had done, said she would never forgive him, and told him never to touch her again, because he would simply revolt her.

That morning, as he lay on the sofa, he drew his strength from contempt for her.

He became a good Nazi.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Wearing a gray suit, plain white shirt, and tie, Bradley was feeling more like a full-time lawyer and less like a disappointed, part-time intelligence agent when he picked up the telephone in his office high above Wall Street.

'Miss Kinder?' he checked tentatively. 'The Miss Kinder, from Roswell, New Mexico?'

'That's right,' Gladys Kinder replied. 'You sound surprised, Mr Bradley.'

'Well, I certainly wasn't expecting to hear from you, so, you know, I was—'

She chuckled in a familiar, sensual manner. Well, here I am.'

'Where, exactly?'

'In the Algonquin Hotel. It's famous for its famous resident writers, so I wanted to stay here.'

What are you doing in New York?' he asked, feeling guilty at how glad he was to hear her voice. 'It's a long way from Roswell.'

'I'm on my way to Europe,' she replied, 'and I'm sailing from this fair city, so I thought I'd give you a call. I remembered that you'd taken a shine to me when we talked in your hotel, so I figured you'd at least buy me a drink.'

'I really don't think—' he began, taken aback by her insolence, embarrassed by her accuracy, and horrified that his secretary might be listening. 'I mean, I—'

She chuckled with throaty amusement 'Oh, stop worrying, Mr Bradley. I know you're not the playboy kind. I really called

because I've got some information that I think might intrigue you.'

'What information?' he asked carefully.

'Wilson. You remember John Wilson?'

'Yes,' he replied, sitting up straight in his chair, even as the mention of Wilson's name revived his feelings of bitter disappointment. 'Of course I do. He's the reason you and I met in the first place, so...'

'Still interested in him?'

'Well, not exactly. I mean...' He didn't quite know how to phrase it He didn't even want to think about it, since it made him mad and frustrated. That project's sort of cooled down,' he tried. 'It kinda got put on ice.'

'Ah-ha!'

'Right,' Bradley responded, already feeling too emotional just hearing her voice.

'So explain, Bradley. I thought you were hot for Wilson.'

'I was, Gladys, but various things got in the way. Basically, it was decided from above that what we had on Wilson wasn't enough to establish him as someone worth wasting good government money on. In short, I was taken off Wilson's case and given some others, so I haven't done anything about him for some time. I asked them to give me a few more days, but they cut me dead on the spot.'

'And when was that?'

'A couple of days after I'd visited MIT to check Wilson's background and education. Since he'd gone from there to Cornell, I was going to go there next, but when Taylor put a stop to the project... well, I was really disappointed and I kinda lost interest.'

'I've been to Cornell,' Gladys said. 'I went there to visit a friend before leaving for Europe; and since Wilson had once told me that that's where he'd been educated, I decided to check his records while I was there. I come cheap, so buy me lunch and I'll give it all to you.'

At once embarrassed and charmed by her unusual boldness, Bradley practically stuttered, Well, I don't know,

Gladys, I'm pretty busy here ... and what with the project being put on ice and all... Well, I don't...'

'You don't want to see me before I leave for Europe?'

'Well, yeah, I do, but...'

'Then don't make excuses. And believe me, Bradley, when vou have this information on Wilson, I don't think you'll have any problem at all in reviving the project - so you win on both counts. Now, do you want it or not?'

'I want it,' Bradley said, already excited. 'Where and when can we meet?'

'My ship leaves tomorrow, so can you meet me today? I've a prior engagement for tonight,' she said, sounding teasing, 'so how about lunch right here?'

'You can't make it any other time?'

'No.'

'Then lunch it is.'

'I'll be at a table in the restaurant. One o'clock?'

'Right,' he said. Thanks for calling.'

'My pleasure, Bradley.'

Feeling remarkably flustered, Bradley put the phone down just as Mark, his eighteen-year-old son, entered the office.

'Hi, Dad,' he said.

The young man was blessed with his mother's warm brown eyes and sensitive features, which no doubt helped, Bradley thought, with the many young ladies he dated in Manhattan during the weekends. In fact, Mark, though oddly shy, was a considerable ladies' man who kept one set of girlfriends in Manhattan, where he went to college, and another in Connecticut, where he lived with the family on weekends.

Bradley had always liked people who could surprise him and Mark could certainly do that.

'Hi, kid,' Bradley said, as his son took the chair at the other side of his desk. 'Is it lunchtime already?'

'Yep, it sure is. Don't tell me you were working too hard to notice. I don't fall for those tricks.'

Feeling guilty, Bradley grinned. 'Did I promise you lunch today?'

'Yeah,' Mark replied, 'but I'm letting you off the hook. Since my lecture's been canceled and I've got the afternoon free, I'm going to have lunch with Gail Mitchell, who looks sweeter than you.'

'Gail Mitchell? Do I know her?'

'I don't think so. She lives in Brooklyn Heights. I met her through a friend at college and she's rich and impossibly attractive and too tall for you.'

'I may be only five-foot-seven,' Bradley said, unburdened of his guilt, 'but what there is, is all man. Anyway, never mind. I was going to disappoint you. I'm having an unexpected business lunch today, so I'm glad you're fixed up.'

'Who are you lunching with?'

'Dave Marsh,' Bradley lied instinctively, impelled by the return of the guilt caused by the thought of Gladys Kinder and using the name of a friend he met often for lunch.

'You mean that other lawyer?'

'Right'

'I think I met him at home a few years ago.'

'You did. We once invited him for Thanksgiving. He got drunk and made a pass at your mother, which gave her a thrill. Anyway, since it's urgent, I had to cancel you and arrange to meet him instead.'

'Charming,' Mark retorted.

'Well, I knew you'd have a tall lady at hand, so I wasn't too worried. Come on, let's go.'

They left the office, took the elevator down to Wall Street, and stood outside on the busy, sunlit pavement.

'Are you having a long afternoon or just lunch with your Amazon?' Bradley asked.

'Just lunch.'

'Okay. Since it's Friday afternoon, why not meet on the platform of the station at three o'clock sharp and we'll go back together?'

'Sounds good,' Mark said.

'Okay, son, I'll see you.'

While Mark sauntered off along the crowded sidewalk,

Bradley grabbed a taxi to the Algonquin Hotel on 44th Street. He found Gladys Kinder already seated in a booth in the Rose Room, drinking bourbon and smoking a cigarette.

She certainly looked her age, which she had said was thirty-eight, but even in her old-fashioned clothes, which were doubtless the rage in Roswell, she had an undeniable attractiveness and, at least to him, an oddly opaque, provocative sensuality.

She made him feel slightly out of breath.

As he sat beside her in the banquette, wondering why she had chosen it instead of an open table, she held up her glass, grinned laconically, and said, 'I've been on the wagon since last night, but I couldn't resist this. We working journalists are all the same.'

'It looks almost empty,' Bradley observed. 'Shall I order another one?'

'Why not?' she responded.

'Shall we also order the food?'

'Sure,' she said. 'Why not?'

Instantly recalling her ability to hold her liquor, and also remembering that when drinking she could be impish, Bradley ordered two more bourbons. He went through the menu with her, ordered the food for both of them, then, when the aperitifs had arrived, raised his glass to her.

'Cheers,' he said.

'Cheers, Mr Bradley,' she replied, also raising her glass and smiling.

'Mike - just call me Mike.'

'That sounds really intimate, Mike - but what the hell, call me Gladys. Not the most romantic name in the world, but I have to live with it.'

He had to grin at that one. 'You said you were on your way to Europe. Did you really mean that?'

'Yep. Sure did, partner. I never quite recovered from the way Wilson left me, I didn't particularly like being a middle-age spinster in New Mexico, and so I wangled myself a job as foreign correspondent to the Roswell Daily Record, which I've

served so well so far. Those good ol' boys in Roswell always treated me fine, and when I told them I needed to get aways, this is what they came up with. It doesn't pay much, but I'll see Europe, and I've dreamed of that all my life.'

'Based anywhere in particular?'

'London. But I'm hoping to go to Spain. I think things are happening there.'

'Bad things.'

'I guess so.'

Over the meal, Bradley told her what he knew about Europe, which was considerable, and all the time he felt himself falling into her, as if in a dream. She wasn't like the women he knew - she was rough-edged and laconic - but that very difference, which seemed more pronounced here, in these sophisticated surroundings, made her even more attractive to him.

Talking about their first meeting in the Roswell hotel's gloomy lobby, she said, 'You had the East Coast written all over you and I thought that was cute.'

She also joked about how shocked he had seemed when, after informing her that he was in Roswell to interview the members of Goddard's rocket team, she responded by not only telling him she had been Wilson's mistress, but by elaborating in drunkenly mischievous, intimate detail just what she and her remarkably youthful sixty-year-old lover had done together in bed.

'You looked as shocked as a cheerleader trapped in a baseball team's shower room after a winning game. God, that was something!'

Finally she reminded him that he had found her attractive, that she had seen it in his face, and that his blushing response to her teasing had simply confirmed it.

'Yes,' he murmured, 'I guess it did.'

He had never had an affair before and certainly didn't plan to start one now, but when he thought of her going off to Europe, probably never to be seen again, he was filled with an unutterable sense of loss. It was an unexpected, inexplicable

feeling, and it left him bewildered.

So bewildered, in fact, that he almost forgot to ask her about Wilson - though eventually, over the coffee and brandy, he did get down to business.

'You said you'd been to Cornell,' he reminded her. 'Is that true or not?'

She became more serious then. 'Yeah,' she said, 'it's true.' Opening her handbag, she withdrew two sheets of typed notes, unfolded them, and spread them out on the table. She was briefly distracted by her brandy, but eventually, after imbibing and inhaling, she blew smoke and started reading from her neatly typed notes.

'Name: John Wilson. Born July 6, 1870, in Montezuma, Iowa, to Cass and Ira Wilson, both listed as farmers. Attended elementary school in Montezuma then high school in Des Moines. Stunning reports from both schools for his academic achievements - though all agreed that he seemed to have few friends and cared only for studying. In the fall of 1888, when he was eighteen years old, he signed on at MIT - apparently, shortly after his mother died and his father sold their farm in the Corn Belt and moved back to Worcester, Massachusetts, his hometown. At MIT, Wilson studied aerodynamics, with particular emphasis on the wind-tunnel experiments that took place in the Engineering A Department In 1893 - the same year his father died - Wilson's reports, in which every subject is listed as 'exemplary,' thus setting a college record, gained him entry to Sibley College, Cornell University, where he studied experimental engineering. By 1895 he'd obtained his bachelor of science degree in aeronautics and left Cornell. The university records don't say where he planned on going when he left - but they do reveal that between 1896 and 1897 he returned frequently to the university to attend the lectures of Octave Chanute.'

She stopped reading and raised her eyes from the notes.

'Anything else?' Bradley asked.

'No,' she replied. 'At least not until he turned up, in the fall of 1930, to work for six months with Robert H. Goddard, whom

we all know and love as the controversial rocket scientist and a later, if more renowned, MIT graduate.'

Bradley wrinkled his brow. 'Did you say 1930?'

'Yep.'

'You mean there's nothing on this guy from 1895 to 1930 -a period of approximately thirty-five years?'

'Not so far. He appears to have wiped his own tracks clean. We don't know what he did for a living following graduation, but we do know that he frequently returned informally to Cornell to attended Chanute's lectures, given throughout 1896 and 1897. Then, when Wilson was twenty-seven years old, he dropped out of sight completely - and he didn't reappear until 1930, when he worked for six months with Robert Goddard, before disappearing again, as completely as he'd done the first time.'

That's incredible,' Bradley said, blowing another cloud of smoke. 'A guy can't disappear that completely for thirty-five years, then suddenly turn up again at sixty years old!'

Gladys sighed. 'So far that appears to be the case. Wilson seems to be some kind of authentic genius. He obtained his BA in aeronautics when they were very rare indeed, he claimed to Goddard that he had designed airships - and yet we can't find a thing on what should have been the most productive thirty-five years of his life.'

Bradley gave a low whistle.

'Would that be possible in this day and age?' Gladys asked, but before Bradley could open his mouth to reply, she raised her index finger and asked, more emphatically: 'One: Would a man with that track record be capable of designing airships? And, two: If he was capable of doing so, could he have done it in total secrecy for so long?'

She glanced across the crowded restaurant at the group of people arguing noisily in a cloud of cigarette smoke at a table in the middle of the room. They included William Shawn, the associate editor of the New Yorker, an increasingly blind and visibly drunken cartoonist named James Thurber, a matinee idol theater reviewer, Robert Benchley, and the deceptively

sweet-faced satirical writer, Dorothy Parker. Grinning slightly and shaking her head, as if she didn't believe it, Gladys turned back to Bradley.

'I'd already checked out that possibility,' Bradley said, 'and in answer to your first question - yes, Wilson could have gone into airship design with that kind of background. Although there were no formal aeronautical courses at MIT when Wilson was there, there were plenty of informal courses on propulsion and the behavior of fluids - two subjects that Goddard later made his own. And certainly, by 1896, instructors and students at MIT had built a wind tunnel and were experimenting with it to get practical knowledge of aerodynamics. As for Sibley College, the experimental engineering courses that Wilson attended would have been conducted by professors Rolla Clinton Carpenter, George Burton Preston, Aldred Henry Eldredge, Charles Edwin Houghton, and Oliver Shantz - some of the greatest aeronautical thinkers of their day. Finally, Octave Chanute was the world-famous engineer who, in 1896, emulated the successful manned hang-glider experiments of the German, Otto Lilienthal, at an aerial experiment station on the Lake Michigan sand dunes near Miller, Indiana - so, again, Wilson learned from the very best'

'But what was the state of knowledge at the time?' Gladys asked, still skeptical about what he was telling her.

'Well,' Bradley replied, 'according to what I learned at MIT, it was certainly more advanced than is generally known. For instance, Cornell's courses at the time included mechanical and electrical engineering and machine design and construction. As for specific aeronautical texts of the time, they were surprisingly advanced and would have included the Smithsonian Institution's Experiments in Aerodynamics, published in 1891; the Lawrence Hargraves experiment reports of 1890 to 1894; the 1893 reports on Sir Hiram Maxim's experiments on engines, propellers, airplanes, and flying machines; and the Aeronautical Annual of 1895, 1896, and 1897, which contained original contributions from most of the

leading aeronautical scientists ... So assuming that Wilson was some kind of genius, he certainly could have attained the knowledge necessary to design airships.'

'Oh, boy!' Gladys exclaimed softly, obviously intrigued. 'And question two?'

'Could a man of such talents have worked in America for thirty-five years, possibly designing airships, without leaving any tracks behind?' Bradley nodded emphatically. 'Yes, Gladys, it's certainly odd, but I think it's possible. The period we're talking about was the greatest so far in the history of aviation - the first successful flight of S. P. Langley's flying machines; Santos-Dumont's flight in an airship from Saint Cloud to the Eiffel Tower; the Wright brothers' first successful heavier-than-air manned flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina; Goddard's first experiments in rocketry; Wilbur Wright's seventy-seven-mile flight in two hours and thirty minutes; then, only seven months later, in 1909, Louis Bleriot's flight across the English Channel; the dogfights and airship raids of the Great War of 1914, and the continuing advances made since then - so yes, Wilson could certainly have designed airships... or even more advanced forms of aircraft.'

'But could he have done so in secret?'

'Yes, it's possible. In fact, it was a time when financiers were in fierce competition with one another to sink money into experimental aeronautical projects - so most of those projects were wrapped in the strictest secrecy. Wilson could, therefore, have worked in almost total anonymity with the full support, even encouragement, of his financial backers. And the US government,' he continued, practically talking to himself, 'quietly backed more than one aeronautical project - particularly during the late 1930s - and usually insisted that such projects be kept secret They also occasionally took over civilian aeronautical projects and either ran them in strict secrecy or, for one reason or other, quietly aborted them.' He scratched his nose, coughed into his clenched fist, and spread his hands on the table. 'So,' he said, 'there it is.'

There was a moment's silence which seemed to last forever.

then Gladys said: 'Tell you what... I'll run a check on all the companies that were known to be working on such projects and see if Wilson's name pops up magically. It depends, I suppose, on whether or not he used his own name - but I'll certainly give it a try for you before I catch the boat - since the guy who obtained these notes for me, who works in the registrar's office at Cornell, is my date for this evening.'

Bradley, very much to his surprise, was upset to hear that, though he managed to hide the fact.

'Shall I call you at home tonight?' Gladys asked him.

'Sure,' he said, giving her his number, but feeling as guilty as a man arranging an assignation, 'that would be great. Now I have to go, Gladys. I'm meeting my son at Penn Station at three o'clock, to take the train home.'

He felt embarrassed saying it, but Gladys just smiled wickedly. 'Ah, yes,' she said, 'I remember. You told me all about your family. A lovely wife and a boy and girl, as I remember.'

That's right,' Bradley said. Though the boy and girl are older than you might think. In fact, Mark is eighteen.'

'A good age,' Gladys said.

Yet she seemed sad at that moment, or at least a little regretful, and when they left the hotel and faced each another on 44th Street, Bradley, not normally a romantic man, hardly knew what to say.

She had somehow sneaked up on him.

Well,' she said, offering her sunburned hand and a lopsided grin, 'it was nice to see you again, Mike Bradley. I'll give you that final call tonight, then it's au revoir, baby.'

Thanks,' he said. 'Au revoir.'

She just stood there as he climbed into a taxi and let it drive him away.

He was almost choked up.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Bradley met Mark at three o'clock at Penn Station and they took the train back to Bridgeport, Connecticut, unencumbered with the usual rush-hour crowd of fellow commuters. As Bradley had already phoned to say they would be early, his wife, Joan, was waiting for them in her car and drove them back to their relatively modest, ranch-style home, just ten minutes from the station and surrounded by expansive gardens and protective trees. There Bradley refreshed himself with a shower, dressed in casual slacks, shirt, and pullover, relaxed for an hour with the radio and another whiskey, then joined Joan and his two children for dinner in the oak-paneled dining room.

Modestly drunk from his lunch with Gladys Kinder and the additional whiskey, and still an Irish sentimentalist at heart, Bradley, after sharing a bottle of red wine with his family, found himself glancing from his wife to his daughter, quietly startled at how similar they looked in all but their age. Joan was thirty-eight, five days older than Bradley, and although their daughter, Miriam, was still only seventeen, she and her mother were almost like twins - sharing the same delicate features, dark hair, enchanting cafe-au-lait eyes, and a quietly mischievous sense of humor.

Bradley, usually sentimental but now guilty because of his guiltless passion for Gladys Kinder, was even more in love with both of them tonight than he was normally.

'How did school go today?' he asked Miriam.

'The same as always,' she replied. 'Clark Gable was teaching

math, Bette Davis taught history, and Errol Flynn discussed the things he knows best, then gave out his phone number That's why I love school, Dad.'

Bradley grinned. 'Well, school's certainly improved since my day - and the results are so wonderful.'

Miriam lowered her head and blushed.

'Gee,' Mark said, 'what a sweet kid! She makes me feel so mature, so protective, when she blushes like that.'

'Shut up, Mark,' Joan warned him.

'Sorry, Mom,' he replied.

'Who's taking you to the prom?' Bradley asked. 'Have you decided that yet?'

'Whoever asks her,' Mark informed him.

'Shut up, Mark,' Joan warned him.

'I told you,' Miriam replied, smiling sweetly. 'Errol Flynn gave me his number and a welcoming smile.'

'He's too old for you,' Joan said.

'A nice guy,' Mark said, 'but too old.'

'What about that kid who walks you home from school? At least he looks like Errol Flynn.'

'Looks aren't everything, Dad.'

'His father's rich,' Joan reminded her.

'Money's not everything, Mom.'

'It's nearly everything, Miriam.'

Will he be taking you?' Bradley asked.

Miriam sighed. 'He hasn't asked me.'

'When he asks, are you going to say yes?'

Miriam sighed. 'I suppose so.'

'A real lucky guy,' Mark said.

Yes, isn't he?' Miriam responded.

'Please finish your desserts,' Joan said to all of them, 'so I can clear this table and put up my feet.'

'Yes, ma'am!' they all exclaimed at once.

Joan did in fact put her feet up after dinner, stretching out on the sofa, while Bradley sat on the floor beside her, having a brandy and feeling deeply grateful for the good life he had. The kids had retired to their own rooms and he was about to

put on the radio, but Joan stopped him by taking hold of his wrist and pulling his hand onto her stomach, which still was as flat as an adolescent's, and seductively warm. 'No,' she said, 'I don't want to hear the radio. Let's just talk for a while.'

'Okay, dear. Sure. Anything special?'

'Nope,' she said with a lazy smile. 'Nothing special at all. flow did your day go?'

The same as always,' he replied. 'Clark Gable came by for a drink, Bette Davis dropped in for a smoke, and Errol Flynn called to discuss his marriage. That's why I love it at work.'

Joan chuckled softly, squeezed his hand, then lightly stroked his wrist 'So what did you really do?' she asked. 'Was it something exciting?'

'Mostly routine,' he replied. The best part of the day was lunch with Dave Marsh, who sends love and kisses.'

Joan's smile was quietly radiant. 'Ah, my boyfriend!' she said softly, oblivious to Bradley's shame. 'Was this just your usual monthly get-together or something special?'

'He's going to check someone out for me,' Bradley told her. 'A guy called John Wilson. A guy who's starting to intrigue me. A real mystery man...'

He told her all about Wilson, taking longer than he had expected, and then added that he was expecting a late-night call from one of Dave Marsh's friends: a lady named Gladys Kinder.

When he stopped talking, Joan rolled onto her hip, to stare directly, steadily at him with her lovely brown eyes.

'Be careful, Mike,' she told him. 'Don't let this become another obsession. You're easily bored, always searching for new adventures, and I know that you're looking at intelligence work to get you out of the office. But I repeat, please be careful. Don't become obsessed with this mystery man. We have a good marriage, but it's been through its troubles, and most of those troubles occurred when you became obsessed with your work. So please, Mike, no matter how intriguing this man is, don't let him threaten our marriage.'

'I promise I won't'

She went to bed shortly after and he promised to follow immediately, but instead sat on, thinking about what she had said and accepting the truth in it They did have a good marriage, but it had had its troubles, and in nearly every instance the problem had been caused by his obsession with some job or other and his subsequent neglect of home and hearth. He loved Joan and the children, appreciated what he had, and didn't want ever again to let work, or anything else, take him away from them.

And he was silently vowing not to let this happen when the telephone rang.

'I think I've found our man,' Gladys Kinder said. 'Our mysterious Mr Wilson. In 1895, the year Wilson left Cornell, a now-defunct New York financial company, Cohn and Goldman Incorporated, financed an aeronautical company, reportedly to research and, if possible, construct passenger-carrying airships. While Cohn and Goldman denied repeatedly that they were attempting to build commercial airships - as most speculators routinely did in those days - I have confirmation that they constructed their factories in Mount Pleasant, near the border of Iowa and Illinois... And according to the company records, the man put in charge of the whole project was a relatively unknown aeronautical scientist named John Wilson.'

Bradley was surprised to find himself releasing the breath he had been unwittingly holding in.

'Anything else?' he asked.

'No, Mike. Those are the only clippings I could find on either Wilson or the company Cohn and Goldman.'

'It's more than enough to go on,' Bradley said. Thanks a hell of a lot, Gladys.'

Excited and confused at once, he was just about to hang up, but Gladys spoke urgently enough to stop him. 'One more thing, Bradley... In checking the clippings, I was also reminded that the following two years - 1896 and 1897 - were notable for one phenomenon in particular: the great wave of

mystery airships. They called them UFOs - unidentified flying objects.'

'Why?'

'Because most of the reports indicated that the airships were more advanced than any known to have been constructed at the time. Also, they were reported to be carrying passengers, or crewmen. They landed frequently, usually to collect water for their engines, and at such times the crewmen talked freely to anyone who approached them... And the crewman who features most frequently in the reports is a man who called himself—'

'Wilson?'

'Right.' She chuckled and then went serious. 'I'm gonna arrange to have a friend send you the newspaper clippings about those sightings - and that's about it, Mike. After this, I'll be on my way to Europe. No more lunches. No phone calls...'

Her voice trailed off into a silence that spoke volumes and left Bradley grieving.

'Gladys, I don't know how...'

'What's domestic life like out there in Connecticut?'

'It's very nice.'

'Yeah, I thought so. Good-bye, Mike.'

'Good-bye, Gladys.'

The phone went dead. Bradley felt very emotional. He forgot to join Joan in bed, but instead went into his study and sat at his desk. He pulled out the notes he had collected on Wilson and started to ponder them.

The next morning, having not slept a wink, he rang General Taylor.

CHAPTER NINE

'I'm Lieutenant Ernst Stoll,' Wilson's new interrogator said when the cell door had closed behind the man and he took the hard wooden chair facing the bed upon which Wilson was seated. 'I am, as you can see, a member of the SS, not the Gestapo, and I work for the technical intelligence branch. Naturally,' he added, waving the papers in his right hand and offering what seemed like a shy smile, 'I know who you are, so shall we begin?'

'What if I say no?' Wilson asked.

'I would ignore you, of course.'

Wilson smiled. 'Let's begin, then. I take it, as you're from technical intelligence, that we've made a little progress - or at least finished with relatively unimportant matters.'

That's true,' Lieutenant Stoll said, mildly amused by Wilson's impertinence. 'Your background and motivation have been ascertained, so I'm here to talk about the work you have shown us and wish to do for us.'

'Good,' Wilson said, deliberately keeping his gaze steady, searching the lieutenant's face for what it was hiding, because all faces were masks. Lieutenant Ernst Stoll was young, perhaps in his middle twenties, and while he looked diabolically handsome in his gleaming black uniform, his face did not display a confidence to match. Indeed, he seemed a little haunted, a man divided within himself, and was obviously trying to cover his doubts with his dryly polite, distant manner.

'You have a technical background?' Wilson asked him.

'Yes,' Stoll replied with a flicker of pride. 'I studied

aeronautical engineering at the Institute of Technology in Munich, then rocket technology under Professor Becker at the Institute of Technology, Berlin University.'

'Ah!' Wilson exclaimed softly, with admiration. 'Becker! So were you a member of the German Amateur Rocket Society?'

'No,' Stoll said, briefly displaying hurt and resentment, then hiding it by changing the subject. 'I trust you found the previous interrogations civilized,' he asked, looking up from his papers.

'Yes,' Wilson said. 'Perfectly civilized. Surprisingly so.'

Lieutenant Stoll raised his eyebrows as if puzzled. 'Why surprisingly so? Is it not what you would have expected from German officers?'

'Given the sounds that have emanated from some of the other cells, I take it that not all German officers are so civilized when interrogating their prisoners.'

Ernst looked embarrassed, then smiled bleakly. 'Ah,' he said, 'that. Well, some prisoners are more troublesome than others, as I'm sure you agree. A little persuasion often goes a long way - though I hope that the noise from the other cells didn't make you lose too much sleep.'

Because he had been forced to listen, day and night, to the screaming of those being abused in the other cells or torture chambers of this Gestapo headquarters and prison, Wilson would certainly have lost a good deal of sleep had he been the kind to need a lot of it. As he was not, and as the fate of others did not concern him, he'd had a relatively comfortable time.

Nevertheless, hoping to find out more about the situation outside the prison, he said, 'Yes, I lost some sleep - particularly during that day and night two weeks ago, when this whole place turned into a madhouse of bawling and shooting.'

'You mean June 30?'

'Correct.'

The lieutenant's facade nearly crumbled, revealing revulsion mixed with shame, but he quickly regained his composure and smiled again, bleakly. 'Ah, yes, the Night of the Long Knives. That's what they call it now.'

'Is it true that the SS murdered over a hundred, maybe two hundred, SA officers and others in that one bloody purge?'

'No, it's not true,' the lieutenant replied with self-defensive anger. Those men weren't murdered, but executed, because they were traitors.'

'Executed without trial,' Wilson corrected him.

'You're impertinent, Herr Wilson. Count your blessings that you're American. Count them also because that purge, about which you are so sarcastic, has ensured that the SS, and not the SA, are now virtually ruling the Third Reich. The SS will therefore be in control of any research establishment in which you're likely to find yourself.'

'My request, then, is being seriously considered.'

'That's why I am here.'

Realizing that after weeks of interrogation in this prison cell, he was close to getting what he wanted, Wilson allowed himself the luxury of a feeling of triumph. When Lieutenant Ernst Stoll of SS Technical Intelligence lowered his head to study the papers on his knee, Wilson recognized his original drawings and notes, cunningly unfinished, for the kind of aircraft the Nazi's Projekt Saucer was trying, unsuccessfully, to create. It was also what he was trying to create, and with their help he would do it.

Lieutenant Stoll looked up from his notes and said, 'While I'm very impressed, I find it hard to believe that during the period you worked in secret - between 1895 and 1930 - you could have made the extraordinary technical advances indicated in these notes and drawings.'

'You've already tested my intellect and knowledge and know that both are remarkable - so why doubt my achievements?'

'We cannot check your actual engineering or scientific achievements until we get you into a research center; however, according to what we can gauge from these remarkable notes and drawings, your achievements were completely divorced from the general scientific achievements of the time. Those were very early days, and your achievements seem too advanced even to have sprung from that period.'

'It's a widely held misconception that those were early days,' Wilson replied, 'but they were in fact the most productive days in the history of science. As you've studied aeronautical engineering and rocketry, I needn't tell you about the extraordinary advances made in those fields during that period. However, I should remind you that by 1895 Rontgen had discovered X rays, Marconi had invented wireless telegraphy, Auguste and Louis Lumiere had invented the Cinematographe, the first main railway was electrified, and Ramsay had detected, by spectroscope, helium from a terrestrial source. By 1896 we had Rutherford's magnetic detection of electrical waves, the construction of an electrical submarine in France, and the first successful flights of S. P. Langley's flying machines. By 1897 numerous patents for flying machines had been registered, and J. J. Thomson's work on cathode rays had led to the evaluation of the electron. The rest I'm sure I don't have to tell you: From the successful test flights of Langley's flying machines in 1897 to the first cross-channel flight took only one decade - and in that decade Robert H. Goddard had already begun his experiments in rocketry. So, lieutenant, I was not too advanced for my own time - and indeed my work did spring from it and was nurtured by its achievements.'

Stoll smiled frostily, glanced down at Wilson's notes, then looked up again. 'Your work has been studied by our Projekt Saucer scientists and engineers at the German Rocket Research Institute at Kummersdorf, just outside Berlin. While it is agreed that your designs are remarkable, they remain incomplete and would not lead to a workable saucer-shaped aircraft. You claim that with our help you'd be able to complete this project, but why, since our own scientists have failed repeatedly to do so, should we place our faith in your undoubted talents?'

You know I can't answer that,' Wilson said carefully, 'but can only show you what I can do when I'm actually working.'

'I understand that, Herr Wilson, but perhaps you can at least give me some indication of the direction you'd be heading in.

For instance, what would separate your work from that which is already being done by our scientists at Kummersdorf? We agree that an aircraft shaped like a saucer would fly better than any other, but that shape also has its own problems, which so far we can't solve. How, then, would you approach this problem that has so far foiled us?'

Wilson had no intentions of telling them everything he had discovered, but he knew that he had to give them enough to whet their appetites and encourage them to let him work for them. He therefore leaned forward on the bed and chose his words carefully.

'Your scientists have been researching along conventional lines,' he said, 'but a saucer-shaped aircraft wouldn't respond to conventional laws of aerodynamics, so we have to look elsewhere.'

'I'm not sure I understand,' Stoll replied, though his gaze was steady and thoughtful.

'When I was working with the wind tunnel at Zeppelin in Friedrichshafen,' Wilson said, 'I helped test many of the experimental products coming from Kummersdorf - and it soon became clear to me that the Kummersdorf scientists were trying to construct some kind of saucer-shaped aircraft.'

'You've already told us you knew that,' Stoll said impatiently.

'I remind you of it,' Wilson replied, unperturbed, 'because I also ascertained that most of the Kummersdorf designs were based on the tailless, or "all-wing," aircraft, the Horten 1, which was designed and constructed by the Horten brothers, Walter and Riemer, for the German Air Ministry, at their factory in Bonn, from 1931 to 1932. That so-called all-wing aircraft, which in prototype was a glider, had a span of forty point seven feet, a wing area of two hundred and twenty-six square feet, and a wing-loading of two pounds per square foot. It had a flying weight of four hundred and forty pounds, a gliding angle of twenty-one degrees, and a flying life of approximately seven hours.'

'Your intelligence gathering is commendable,' Stoll said sarcastically, 'but what is the point of this?'

The Horten brothers were convinced that the most important form of aircraft would be the all-wing type, which is why there were no vertical stabilizing or control surfaces on their flying wing, the Horton 1, why it was virtually flat and crescent-shaped, like a boomerang, and why the pilot was placed in a prone position - to reduce cockpit size.'

'Yes, Herr Wilson, I know this, but—'

'That so-called flying wing certainly flew for seven hours - but it could never have been the basis of a flying saucer for one very good reason.'

'Yes?'

'It was still faced with the problem that's repeatedly foiled your scientists: the limitations imposed by the boundary layer.' He could see that he had Stoll's interest, though the German was trying to disguise it by showing little emotion. Amused, Wilson said, 'Have you heard of the boundary layer, Oberleutnant?'

Stoll just smiled at the sarcasm. 'Why don't you remind me, Herr Wilson? You talk so well about these things.'

'While being four or five thousand times less viscous than oil, air is still viscous,' Wilson said, enjoying himself. 'Because of this, the air sweeping in on the solid body of an aircraft forms imperceptible stratifications of resistance and consequently decreases the speed of the body in flight. These layers of air are therefore known as the boundary layer - and the boundary layer increases its resistance in direct proportion to the increasing speed of the flying object, thus imposing severe limitations on its speed and maneuverability.'

'And in layman's terms?' Stoll asked, clearly amused by Wilson's enthusiasm for lecturing.

'In layman's terms,' Wilson continued, drawing Stoll into his web, 'the major problem regarding supersonic flight is to somehow move this negative air as far to the rear of the aircraft as possible, thus minimizing the expenditure of energy required to propel it through the sky. Moreover, it's possible that a revolutionary type of aircraft could - by not only completely removing the boundary layer, but by somehow

rerouting it and utilizing it as an added propulsive force - fly through the skies using little other than the expelled air itself. Should this be accomplished, we would have an aircraft capable of remarkable speeds while using only the bare minimum of conventional fuel.'

'So you plan to devote all your energies to solving the problem of the boundary layer.'

'Yes,' Wilson said, playing his trump card, 'and Germany is the place for doing that.'

'I am flattered - but why Germany?'

'As I explained to your Reichsfuhrer, the boundary layer was introduced to the world of aerodynamics by the German professor, Ludwig Prandtl, at Gottingen in 1904. Throughout the following years, many other German scientists, including professors Betz, Flettner, and Junkers, experimented with specially equipped aircraft in attempts to reduce the boundary layer. Most of the experiments were based on the 'suction' method, in which the negative air is sucked into the wing itself, through tiny holes or slots, then expelled by means of a pump located in the fuselage. While this was a step in the right direction, the resulting aircraft still required heavy, obstructive engines - also the main problem with the flying wing jet fighter the Horten brothers envisaged - but it's my belief that in order to get rid of the boundary layer completely - and in order to make use of the "dead" air not only for acceleration, but for maneuvering as well - what we need is an aircraft devoid of all obstructing protuberances, such as wings, rudders, and even normal air intakes, and one not requiring a large, heavy engine. In other words, this revolutionary new aircraft should be the perfect 'flying wing' that offers the least possible resistance, sucks in the "dead" air of the boundary layer, and then uses that same air, expelling it at great force, to increase its own momentum.'

'And how do you propose creating such a machine?'

'By building the perfect flying wing - a circular wing that is, in a sense, wrapped around its suction pump, with the pump being part and parcel of the engine - a machine shaped like a

saucer - and by constructing it from a porous metal that will act like a sponge and remove the need for air intakes altogether. This would result in frictionless air flow during flight - an aircraft that slips through the air in the same way as a piece of wet soap slips through the fingers. Its speed and maneuvering capabilities would be literally limitless.'

Wilson felt excited merely thinking about it, and could see, in the sheltered gleam of Stoll's dark gaze, that he was feeling the same way. Nevertheless, the young oberleutnant was being careful about showing his feelings.

This sounds wonderful in theory,' he said, 'but practise is something else. I'm not sure that your so-called porous metal is a realistic proposal.'

'In fact, it's being worked on right now,' Wilson said, 'and right here in Germany. Among the many other experiments I helped run in the Zeppelin wind tunnel were those concerning different porous metals being created by the scientists of Gottingen and Volkenroda - a compound of magnesium and aluminum. The scientists are calling it Luftschwamm, or aerosponge... and I think it will work.'

He knew that he had won the instant he saw Lieutenant Stoll fold up his papers and slip them back into his briefcase. 'It's interesting,' the lieutenant said, pushing his chair back and standing up, 'that even the great Russian, Tsiolokovsky, evinced a strong interest in circular, hyperbolic, and spherical airframes.'

'I can see that you know more about this subject than you pretend, Oberleutnant,' Wilson replied, thus making the somber SS officer smile. 'And knowing that, you clearly also know that the extensive research into all-wing aircraft and rocketry that's been carried out in Germany during the past decade is directly due to German admiration for Tsiolokovsky's theories.'

'And due to admiration for the American, Robert H. Goddard, for whom you worked for six months.'

'I have to admit that although he's my junior, I learned a lot from Goddard about the problems of stabilization and

gyroscopic controls. That's why I wanted to work with him -it was my only weak area.'

The lieutenant smiled genuinely for the first time and said, 'Come, Herr Wilson, we are leaving. We are going to put you to work. We do not have much time, so don't bother with your possessions. This cell will be cleaned out as soon as we leave, and your possessions here, as well as those being kept by the Gestapo, will be forwarded to you this afternoon. So please, follow me now.'

Quietly exultant, Wilson was led out of the cell and up the stairs to the lobby near the front door of the building. There, while he adjusted to his sudden sense of space and movement (after weeks in his tiny cell, this lobby appeared to be immense and far too crowded), he was given an army greatcoat Then he was led out into the Prinz Albrechtstrasse and into a waiting police car.

Seated in the rear beside the notably more relaxed Oberleutnant Ernst Stoll, Wilson gazed out the window as the car pulled away from the curb and proceeded through Berlin. In the early afternoon's gray light, the city looked solid, busy, and perfectly normal, except for a notable increase in military personnel and vehicles, which seemed to be everywhere.

'This is a city preparing for war,' Wilson said.

'Yes,' the lieutenant replied. 'You are very observant.'

Intrigued by the handsome young lieutenant's oddly haunted look and reticence, Wilson said, taking a chance, 'Am I allowed to ask if you are involved with scientific work as distinct from intelligence?'

Lieutenant Stoll sighed. 'You may ask,' he said, 'and the answer is no. I am no longer involved in scientific research per se, but instead am forced to use my scientific knowledge for the gathering and analyzing of technical intelligence material.'

'Which is why you were sent to interview me, right?'

The oberleutnant sighed again, as if deeply depressed. 'Yes, Herr Wilson, that is the case. And now I will take you to Kummersdorf West, where you will work with men less

talented than I was. Such is life, I suppose.'

'You can't protest?'

'To be a member of the SS is to obey. I obey and take pride from that.'

Wilson doubted that Ernst Stoll was taking pride from his work and filed the knowledge away in his head for future reference.

The journey to Kummersdorf did not take long - it was only fifteen miles from Berlin - and the car soon slowed down at barbed-wire fences and a guarded gate. It was inspected by a particularly careful SS officer and eventually waved through, then stopped in front of an enormous hangar in a broad stretch of bare ground that ran out to more barbed wire and signs announcing that an army firing range lay beyond.

Puzzled to find only this enormous hangar and bare ground where he had expected to find a hive of activity, Wilson glanced questioningly at Stoll. The oberleutnant, as if reading his mind, smiled understandingly and said, 'Projekt Saucer has been separated from the Rocket Research Institute proper by that army firing range. Beyond the firing range are Wernher von Braun's more impressive research works, which is what you were, I assume, hoping to find.'

'Frankly, yes,' Wilson said, hearing the moaning of the wind and seeing only swaying, untended grass around that single, enormous hangar, under the leaden gray sky.

'Try not to be too disappointed,' Ernst said, as he led Wilson across the windblown grass, toward the already rusted, corrugated-iron hangar. Tou will be visiting the Research Institute on a regular basis, contributing your knowledge to their rocket projects, but most of your time will be spent here, in conditions of strict secrecy, where you will work more specifically on Projekt Saucer. Even those who work at the other side of the firing range do not know what we're doing here.'

The main hangar doors were closed and the small side door was guarded by armed SS troops who gave the Nazi salute when Stoll approached. After returning the salute in a

desultory manner, Stoll motioned Wilson into the hangar. Stepping inside, Wilson was temporarily blinded by the bright light. He adjusted to it as Stoll came in behind him and stood beside him, then saw an enormous open floor, surrounded by glassed-in offices and filled with machines and a few men in oily coveralls.

Raised about six feet off the concrete floor on a hydraulic platform was the skeletal prototype of a saucer-shaped craft, about forty feet in diameter and rising up to a central dome.

Its discus-shaped ribcage of steel covered what looked like two Hirth 80 hp engines.

'It'll never fly,' Wilson said.

Stoll smiled. 'No, it won't.'

Obviously pleased by Wilson's perception, he led him across the hangar floor to one of the larger offices. Stepping inside, he suddenly stiffened, gave the Nazi salute and said, 'Heil Hitler!' then stepped aside to introduce Wilson to a man who, even wearing his Reichsfuhrer's uniform, did not look like a soldier.

'So, Herr Wilson,' Heinrich Himmler said, 'we meet again, yes?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer - I'm glad to say.'

'I'm sure you are, Herr Wilson - since if we hadn't met again here, you would now be a dead man.'

Reminded by that remark that his assessment of Himmler was not amiss, Wilson glanced over the lunatic's shoulder at the men grouped behind him. As they were all wearing oily coveralls, they were either scientists or engineers.

'Would you care to inspect our flying saucer, Herr Wilson?'

'I do not have to inspect it, Reichsfuhrer,' Wilson replied, 'to know that it won't fly.'

Himmler simply smiled. 'How arrogant you are, Herr Wilson! But come,' he added, crooking a delicate index finger and indicating the men standing nervously behind him, 'please jet me introduce you to the rest of our team. This,' he said, indicating with a nod a young man with a lean and hungry look, 'is Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, who originally designed

this flying saucer, which you insist will not fly. And this,' he continued, when Wilson had shaken the hand of the solemn young designer, 'is the physicist Klaus Habermohl, and his associate, Otto Miethe. And this,' he ended, when Wilson had shaken the hands of Habermohl and Miethe, both of whom were middle age, 'is Dr Giuseppe Belluzzo who, though Italian, has become an invaluable member of our team. Gentlemen, I give you Herr Wilson, an American genius!'

Ignoring Himmler's quiet sarcasm and the resultant nervous chuckles, Wilson shook the hand of the small, plump balding Belluzzo and expressed his gratitude that he would soon be working with him. When the rest of the team had crowded around him to congratulate him on his work, which they had assessed for Ernst Stoll, Wilson said to Schriever, 'Few experiments work out the first time, and the fact that this particular saucer will not fly is of no great importance. What is important, Flugkapitan, is that you've already made such progress and that now, if we all work together, we can build successfully upon it. I therefore congratulate you, Flugkapitan, for building the first flying saucer.'

'Thank you, Herr Wilson.'

Schriever bowed stiffly, acknowledging Wilson's praise. Before anything else could be said, Himmler walked away from them and Oberleutnant Stoll urgently waved his hand, indicating that he and Wilson should follow.

Falling in beside Stoll, Wilson left the office and found himself standing in the great hangar, beside Himmler, who was facing Rudolph Schriever's skeletal flying saucer prototype and smiling in his mild, chilling way.

'You do not think it will work?' he asked.

'No, Reichsfuhrer,' Wilson replied.

'Then you are very diplomatic, Herr Wilson, which means you are cunning.' He then turned to Wilson, looked up through his glittering pince-nez, and said, 'Flugkapitan Schriever, for obvious reasons, is still in charge of this project, but you are the one from whom we expect results. Once a week you will visit Wernher von Braun at the Rocket Research Institute at

the other side of the firing range, and anything you have discovered that is of no use to this project but may be of use to von Braun, you will pass on to him, to be used as he sees fit.' 'I understand, Reichsfuhrer.'

'You understand also, I hope, that I will be kept informed of your progress, or lack thereof, by Oberleutnant Stoll here' - he indicated the nervous Ernst Stoll with a nod of his head— 'and that anything you wish to discuss, you must discuss with him - not with Flugkapitan Schriever.'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer, I understand.'

'Good,' Himmler said. 'Now is there anything you want to know before I leave?'

Wilson glanced across the hangar, saw that mostly empty, valuable space, then returned his gaze to Himmler and said, 'My task is a large one, and apart from scientists and engineers, I am going to need hundreds of unskilled laborers. Where will I find them?'

Himmler adjusted the pince-nez on his nose, gazed across the vast hangar at the glittering skeleton of Schriever's saucer, then looked up at Wilson with a thin, icily controlled, deadly smile.

'The camps,' he said, almost whispering.

CHAPTER TEN

The administration buildings at Langley Field, Virginia, had been completed when Bradley made his next visit - officially as an advisor on aeronautical law, unofficially as one of General Dwight Taylor's intelligence agents - to attend a meeting of the recently formed National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. Seated with him around the table in the main building were his old friend General Taylor, of the still too informal army air force intelligence branch, and the twelve members of the committee. Though most were Pentagon officers with technical backgrounds, also included were the aging yet still dapper Orville Wright who, in 1903, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, with his brother Wilbur, had made the first airplane flight in history; and Charles A Lindbergh, the handsome, aristocratic flyer who had won the nation's heart when, in 1927, he had made the first nonstop airplane flight between two continents in his now-legendary monoplane, The Spirit of St Louis, then won the sympathy of that same nation when, four years ago, his two-year-old son had been kidnapped and murdered.

Since its formation, the committee had been meeting once a month to discuss national and international aeronautical developments. This day should have been no different from any other... but most of those present were looking shocked.

'Eighteen years ago,' a radio announcer was saying, 'dejected German soldiers retreated from France across the Hohenzollern Bridge spanning the Rhine. Twenty-two days ago, at eleven-thirty a.m. on March 7, 1936, three of Adolf Hitler's battalions crossed that bridge again, this time marching back into the Rhineland.

Within hours twenty-five thousand German troops had occupied the Rhineland, with no retaliation from the French. Today, March 29, 1936, again without benefit of guns, ninety-eight point eight percent of the electorate voted for Adolf Hitler, thus making him the Fiihrer of all Germany. War in Europe is now virtually guaranteed...'

General Taylor turned the radio off, stared thoughtfully at it for a moment, then returned to take his seat at the head of the long committee table.

Well, gentlemen,' he said, 'there it is. Adolf Hitler's now the absolute dictator of the Third Reich - and he's not going to be satisfied with the Rhineland. As the man said, this clearly means war in Europe.'

War in Europe is not our concern,' said a silvery-haired gentleman from a cloud of cigar smoke at the end of the table.

'I think it is,' Taylor replied, 'to the degree that it affects Germany's interest in aeronautical research, which already is alarmingly advanced. Mike,' he added, turning to Bradley, Svhat do you think?'

'I'm seriously worried,' Bradley said. The Nazis are, as you say, already dangerously advanced in aeronautical research - and I think if s safe to say that most of that research will now be turned toward its potential for warfare.'

'It still doesn't affect us,' the dapper Orville Wright said, 'since America is taking an isolationist stance - and Europe's a long way away.'

'I don't believe we can cling to isolationism for too long,' Bradley said, 'and as long as there's even the faintest possibility that we'll be involved in war, sooner or later, we should be seriously concerned about technological advances anywhere in the world - but particularly in Nazi Germany.'

'Your concern seems extreme,' a technical advisor said, puffing on his pipe and pursing his lips to blow the smoke out. 'Have you reasons for this?'

'For the past couple of years,' General Taylor said, 'Bradley, in an unofficial intelligence capacity, has been trying to track down someone for us - a mysterious physicist and aeronautical

engineer called John Wilson, who once worked with Robert Goddard' - here the general glanced at Goddard's friend, Charles Lindbergh - 'before reportedly traveling to Germany to work for the Nazis, possibly under a false passport'

'Bradley's already asked me about this John Wilson,' Lindbergh pointed out, 'and I had to tell him, honestly, that I'd never heard of him in connection with Goddard until Bradley himself mentioned him. Obviously, as Bradley had already done, I then checked with Goddard and received confirmation that Wilson had indeed worked with him in 1930 for approximately six months.'

'So what's so worrying about this fellow?' Orville Wright asked impatiently.

'What worries me,' Bradley said, 'is that according to even Goddard, this Wilson was a scientific genius with a particular interest in rocketry and space flight He also appears to have been a completely unemotional, ruthless son of a bitch who didn't give a damn about anything other than his own work.'

'Sounds like your average scientist or politician,' someone said, thus encouraging a spasm of cynical laughter around the smoke-wreathed table.

When the laughter had died down, Bradley said patiently, What I'm trying to get across is that this mysterious Wilson, who's possibly a scientific genius and utterly ruthless, had reason enough, and is certainly fanatical enough, to contribute his genius to a foreign power, irrespective of its nature or motives. And it seems clear from the evidence that the country he's chosen is Nazi Germany.'

There was a long, uncomfortable pause until Charles Lindbergh said thoughtfully, 'Are you suggesting that this Wilson was actually more advanced in his thinking than Goddard?'

'Yes,' Bradley said without pause.

'I find that hard to credit,' Lindbergh said.

'So did I,' Bradley replied, 'but not any longer.' He pushed his chair back, stood up, and walked around the table, distributing to all the members of the committee typed copies of Wilson's curriculum vitae. While they were reading it he lit a cigarette,

smoked it, and gazed out the window, thinking of how far aeronautics had advanced since Samuel Pierpont Langley, American astronomer, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and aeronautical theorist (ironically also born, like Goddard and Wilson's father, in Massachusetts, where Wilson himself had attended MIT), had sent his quarter-scale, steam-powered 'aerodrome' into a flight over the Potomac River and these very fields, which had since been named in his honor. From those innocent beginnings, nearly forty years ago, a dark new age was dawning...

'Has everyone finished reading?' General Taylor asked, obviously impatient to continue.

Most of the heads, hazed in smoke, nodded affirmatively.

'If s certainly impressive,' Orville Wright said, 'but it doesn't prove that this man created anything out of the ordinary, in secret or otherwise.'

Aware of Wright's illustrious position in the history of aviation, that Charles Lindbergh had been forthright in his support of Robert H. Goddard, and that both men might therefore be more skeptical than most, Bradley said, 'While I can't confirm that Wilson worked on airships more advanced than those built officially, I think it's worth pointing out that during the period 1896 to 1897 - when Wilson had left Cornell University and disappeared completely to work, as we now know, on airship design and construction - America suffered what is now known as the Great Airship Scare.'

'I remember it well,' Orville Wright said. 'It lasted for months. There was a great wave of sightings of mysterious airships that were actually carrying passengers, or crew members, who reportedly spoke to the locals when they landed. At the time I put it down to mass hysteria'

'Well,' Bradley said, 'maybe it was and maybe it wasn't - but certainly most of the reports of contact between the airship crews and the witnesses mentioned a crew member who called himself Wilson. Please, gentlemen, bear with me.'

Bradley withdrew from his briefcase the press clippings that Gladys Kinder had sent him, spread them out on the table before

him, and talked while reading from them, one by one.

'As you all probably know,' he began, 'the first major UFO flap was indeed in 1896 - beginning about November of that year and continuing until May 1897. That was five years before the first experiments of Orville, here, and his brother, Wilbur; but there were, by that time, various airship designs on the drawing boards or in the Patent Office. For instance, according to my clippings here, on August 11, 1896, patent number 565805 was given to Charles Abbot Smith of San Francisco for an airship he intended having ready by the following year. And another patent, number 580941, was issued to Henry Heintz of Elkton, South Dakota, on April 20, 1897.'

'In all fairness,' Lindbergh said, 'you should point out that while many of the UFOs sighted were shaped roughly like the patented designs, there is no record of those airships having been built'

'Okay,' Bradley said, 'I concede that - but the fact that there's no record of them doesn't necessarily mean they weren't built'

'But the reported UFOs resembled the airships on the patented designs?' a disembodied voice asked from farther along the table.

Yes,' Orville Wright said. 'At that time the general belief was that aerial navigation would be solved through an airship, rather than a heavier-than-air flying machine - so most of the earlier designs looked like dirigibles with a passenger car on the bottom.'

'Cigar-shaped.'

'Right'

'Okay, Bradley,' General Taylor said. 'Please continue.'

What stands out in the 1896-97 sightings,' Bradley continued, 'is that the unidentified flying objects were mostly cigar-shaped, that they frequently landed, and that their occupants often talked to the witnesses, usually asking for water for their machines.'

'I remember that,' Orville Wright said, still proud of his memory.

'Now, the most intriguing of the numerous contactee stories,' Bradley went on doggedly, 'involved a man who called himself Wilson - he never gave his first name.'

Bradley's throat felt dry, so he swallowed, coughed into his fist, then started reading again from his notes and clippings.

The first incident occurred in Beaumont, Texas, on April 19, 1897, when one J. B. Ligon, the local agent for Magnolia Brewery, and his son, Charles, noticed lights in a pasture a few hundred yards away and went to investigate. They came upon four men standing beside a large, dark object that neither of the witnesses could see clearly. One of those men asked Ligon for a bucket of water, Ligon let him have it, and then the man introduced himself as Mr Wilson. He then told Iigon that he and his friends were traveling in a flying machine, that they had taken a trip out to the gulf - presumably the Gulf of Galveston, though no name was given - and that they were returning to the quiet Iowa town where the airship and four others like it had been constructed. When asked, Wilson explained that electricity powered the propellers and wings of his airship. Then he and his buddies got back into the airship and Ligon watched it ascending.'

'I get your drift,' Orville Wright said. 'That particular Wilson said he was returning to the quiet Iowa town where the airship and four others like it had been constructed - and your Wilson, the one in these notes, originally came from Iowa.'

Bradley just raised his hands in a questioning manner, then started reading again.

The next day, April 20, Sheriff H. W. Bayer of Uvalde, also in Texas, went to investigate a strange light and voices in back of his house. He encountered an airship and three men - and one of the men introduced himself as Wilson, from Goshen, New York. Wilson then inquired about one C. C. Akers, former sheriff of Zavalia County, saying he had met him in Fort Worth in 1877 and now wanted to see him again. Sheriff Baylor, surprised, replied that Captain Akers was now at Eagle Pass, and Wilson, apparently disappointed, asked to be remembered to him the next time Sheriff Baylor visited him. Baylor reported that the men from the airship wanted water and that Wilson requested that their visit be kept secret from the townspeople; then he and the other men climbed back into the airship and, quote, its great wings and fans were set in motion and it sped away northward in the direction of San Angelo, unquote. Incidentally, the county clerk also saw the airship as it left the area.'

He glanced up from his notes to see what effect he was having on the learned gentlemen; thirteen faces stared attentively at him through a haze of cigarette and cigar smoke, so he lowered his gaze and started reading again.

Two days later, in Josserand, Texas, a whirring sound awoke farmer Frank Nichols, who looked out from his window and saw brilliant lights streaming from what he described as a ponderous vessel of strange proportions, floating over his cornfield. Nichols went outside to investigate, but before he reached the large vessel, two men walked up to him and asked if they could have water from his well. Nichols agreed to this request - as farmers in those days mostly did - and the men then invited him to visit their airship, where he noticed that there were six or seven crew members. One of those men told him that the ship's motive power was highly condensed electricity and that it was one of five that had been constructed in a small town in Iowa with the backing of a large New York stock company.'

'So what we're talking about,' Lindbergh said, 'are five or six airships, originating in a small town in Iowa.'

'Right,' a granite-faced Pentagon general confirmed from a haze of smoke.

The next day,' Bradley continued, 'on April 23, witnesses described in this Houston Post clipping as two responsible men, reported that an airship had descended where they lived in Kountze, Texas, and that two of the occupants had given their names as Jackson and...'

'Wilson,' General Taylor said with a sly grin.

'Right,' Bradley said, not returning the grin, but instead concentrating on his reading, which was making him feel oddly self-conscious. 'Four days after that incident, on April 27, the Galveston Daily News printed a letter from the aforementioned C C. Akers, in which Akers claimed that he had indeed known a man in Forth Worth, Texas, named Wilson; that Wilson was from New York; that he was in his middle twenties; and that he was of a mechanical turn of mind and was then working on aerial navigation and something that would astonish the world.'

That letter could have come from a hoaxer,' Orville Wright

pointed out with a jab of his finger, 'after he'd read the original story mentioning the unknown Akers.'

'Finally,' Bradley read, deliberately ignoring the famous, and famously testy, old man, 'early in the evening of April 30, in Deadwood, Texas, a farmer named H. C. Lagrone heard his horses bucking as if in stampede. Going outside, he saw a bright white light circling around the fields nearby and illuminating the entire area before descending and landing in one of the fields. Walking to the landing spot, Lagrone found a crew of five men, three of whom engaged him in conversation while the others collected water in rubber bags. The men informed Lagrone that their airship was one of five that had been flying around the country recently; that theirs was in fact the same one that had landed in Beaumont a few days before; that all the airships had been constructed in an interior town in Illinois - which, please note, borders Iowa - and that they were reluctant to say anything else because they hadn't yet taken out any patents. By May that same year, the wave of sightings ended - and the mysterious Mr Wilson wasn't heard from again.'

As Bradley gathered his notes and clippings together, there was a bewildered, or disbelieving, silence from those sitting around the table and either smoking or drinking water or beer. Eventually, when the silence became too obvious, Lindbergh propped his elbows up on the table, rested his chin on his clasped hands, and said, 'So what's being suggested here is that the mysterious Wilson of the so-called Great Airship Scare of 1896-97, who made frequent remarks about having constructed the airships - either five or six - in a small town in Iowa, is the same Wilson who worked for Robert Goddard and now works for the Nazis.'

Bradley shrugged and again raised his hands in a questioning manner.

'We're talking about a sixty-six-year-old man!' Lindbergh pointed out in softly spoken disbelief.

Unable to refute that point, Bradley said, 'I'm not saying it's definite, but it's certainly worth investigating. We do have proof that a John Wilson was born and raised in Montezuma, Iowa, and

that when he left Cornell University, he was placed on the payroll of the New York financiers Cohn and Goldman, who owned an aeronautical research factory located in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. I should therefore remind you, gentlemen, that Mount Pleasant, while in Iowa, is practically on the border of Illinois - the other location given by Wilson for the construction of his airships - and that it's close to the town of Montezuma, where Wilson was born and raised. These could be coincidences, of course, but I seriously doubt it.'

There was another uncomfortable silence until Orville Wright, who did not smoke or drink, broke it with a fit of coughing, waved his neighbors' cigar smoke away from him, and said, 'So assuming that both Wilsons are one and the same, do we know what he's up to in Nazi Germany?'

'Yes,' General Taylor said, looking relieved to be on home ground. 'According to British intelligence, there are reports that an American scientist - identity unknown, but believed to be John Wilson, who disappeared in Germany in 1931 - is presently working in a secret research establishment at Kummersdorf West, about fifteen miles from Berlin.'

There was silence around the table for a moment, while they all took this in.

'Are there any known results of this collusion?' Orville Wright asked.

'We have an unverified report,' General Taylor replied, from a source who worked in the Rocket Research Institute at the other side of the army firing range that divided it from the more secret hangar in Kummersdorf West, that although even Wernher von Braun didn't know what was going on in that hangar, the American scientist, presumably Wilson, would visit him once a week to pass on to him any technical innovations he had discovered that might help in the development of what we believe to be the A-2 rocket program.'

'Rockets?' Orville Wright asked.

'Yes, Orville, rockets.'

Wright wrinkled his brow and looked almost shocked, then asked plaintively, 'But do we have to be concerned with such

developments? Are they not simply pipe dreams, like those of Goddard?'

'Goddard's rockets are no longer pipe dreams,' Lindbergh said angrily.

'Well,' Taylor said in his quietly remorseless manner, 'we can't be too sure just how much Wilson's innovations have contributed to this, but we do know from British intelligence that as early as December 1934 - about a year after Wilson is believed to have started working at Kummersdorf - two highly advanced A-2 rockets, constructed at Kummersdorf, gyroscopically controlled, and powered by oxygen-and-alcohol-fueled motors, were launched from the island of Borkum in the North Sea and reached an altitude of one and a half miles. And I should make it clear, unpalatable as it may seem, that those stabilized, liquid-fueled rockets are the only known, serious challengers to the rockets of Wilson's old work mate, Robert H. Goddard.'

'I find this unbelievable,' Orville Wright said, looking unusually flushed.

'Believe it,' General Taylor replied shortly. 'In fact, just a few weeks ago, shortly after Hitler's infamous advance across the Hohenzollern Bridge, Captain Walter Dornberger, the head of the Rocket Research Institute, his assistant, Wernher von Braun, and their team of one hundred and fifty technicians demonstrated some more motors at Kummersdorf, including one with an unprecedented three thousand five hundred pounds of thrust And while it was widely believed that the brilliant von Braun was responsible for this great achievement, he resolutely refused to take credit for it, insisting that others, whom he claimed he could not name, deserved most of the credit'

'And you think von Braun was referring to those on the other side of the firing range?' Lindbergh asked.

'Yes,' Taylor replied. To those on the other side of the firing range in general - but maybe to Wilson in particular, since the most revolutionary advances have been made since his arrival at Kummersdorf.'

There was another awkward silence, which was certainly not the norm, and Bradley glanced at Lindbergh, who was gazing

distractedly at the table, remembered the widely publicized kidnapping and disappearance of his child, and felt stricken with sympathy and shame.

He knew what the shame was and could certainly not disown it: He had promised Joan that he would never again let work come between him and her, let alone him and the children; but he knew that in the past year, even against his better judgment, he had let Wilson become an obsession that was keeping him away from his family more than he had planned. It was causing problems at home, as his obsession with legal work had done before - deeply wounding Joan and thus angering Mark and Miriam - and so, when he looked at Lindbergh, at that courageous and haunted face, he was filled with shame because he knew he was ignoring what Lindbergh had lost - the precious gift of a family.

As if reading his mind, Lindbergh looked up, stared directly at him, then, breathing deeply, almost wearily, returned Bradley's thoughts to the matter at hand by asking 'Can we take it that this Wilson is still at Kummersdorf?'

'Yes,' General Taylor said. 'According to British intelligence—'

'What would we do without them?' a muted voice asked sarcastically.

'According to British intelligence,' Taylor repeated, smiling knowingly at Bradley, the recent demonstration at Kummersdorf so impressed the German commander-in-chief, General Fritsch, that permission has since been given for Dornberger and von Braun to build an independent rocket establishment in a suitably remote part of Germany, where research and test firings can be carried out in the strictest secrecy. If s believed that the chosen site is near the village of Peenemunde, on the island of Usedom, off the Baltic Coast. It's also believed that the unknown American, whom we believe to be John Wilson, will not be going with the rocket team but will be left where he is, with the other members of his team - doing only God knows what, in Kummersdorf West.'

The final silence was far too long, filled with too much tension, and forced even Bradley, schooled in law and psychology, to try escaping it by gazing out the window at the cloud-streaked, iridescent blue sky over the green fields of Langley.

'So,' Lindbergh said, offering him a reprieve, 'we can take it that John Wilson exists and is working in Germany. However, we're not at war with Germany and Germany isn't at war with Europe - at least not yet - so what's the point of this meeting?'

He was staring directly at Bradley, his gaze concerned, not accusing; but Bradley, who could think only of Joan and his children - of the blessings he was abusing as he faced this tragic figure - was incapable of making a coherent answer. He thought of Lindbergh's murdered child, of all he had owned and lost, and realized that even understanding that, he, Mike Bradley, blessed with a loving wife and children, was letting his obsession with John Wilson threaten all he loved most.

He felt shame and a terrible helplessness, for he knew damned well that he wouldn't stop until this mystery was solved.

He would risk all for that.

'Let me put it another way, Mr Bradley,' Lindbergh said. 'Since you've investigated this case and called this meeting to discuss it, what is it that you're trying to tell us?'

'If we get into a war,' Bradley said, 'we might have to stop that man.'

'Stop him?' Orville Wright asked hoarsely.

'Yes,' Bradley said without thinking. 'Stop him dead in his tracks.'

Chapter Eleven

Ernst was unhappy as he hurried through the jostling shoppers in the Friedrichstrasse, late for his lunch appointment with Ingrid. In fact, he was slightly hung over, as he was so often these days, and was reminded, by the stout, red-cheeked housewives all around him, that the Berlin he now knew so well by night was very different from the more respectable city that the sun shone upon.

When the sun set on Berlin in this troubled year of 1937, powdered and rouged young men solicited in the yellow lamplight of the Kurfurstendamm, government officials and men of commerce rubbed cheeks with sailors and soldiers in dimly lit bars on the Motzstrasse, hundreds of men dressed as women and women dressed as men danced in the riotous ballrooms of the West End, the novel, the bizarre, and the perverse were nightly paraded before the noisy crowds in the Scala or the amusement palaces of the Wintergarten, the nightclubs, cabarets, revues, vaudeville shows, and erotic Tanzbars were packed with male and female prostitutes, pimps, transvestites, fetishists, homosexuals, and drug addicts. In general, while the National Socialists called for a new moral order, the spirit of decadent pleasure prevailed to a background cacophony of jazz, dancing feet, exploding champagne corks, screams, laughter, and tears.

A very different world, indeed - and one that Ernst had, in the company of his fellow SS officers, become increasingly familiar with in recent months.

He thought of this with a certain amount of shame when

he saw Ingrid sitting, in a fur-collared winter coat and broad-brimmed hat, at a table by the window of the Kranzler Cafe.

Haunted by vague snatches of memory from the previous evening's debauch... Hot dogs and beer at the Scala with Willi Brandt and Franck Ritter, then naked girls at the Schauspielhaus, then Ritter embracing a drunken sailor by the toilet in a Tanzbar, then an opium dream of sensual perversity with the endlessly inventive, amoral Brigette... Yes, haunted and guilty, he uneasily composed himself as he entered the cafe and joined Ingrid at her favorite table by the window.

'My dear,' he murmured, brushing her rouged cheek with his lips and then sitting facing her. 'Sorry I'm late.'

'You're always late,' she accused.

'I can't always guarantee getting away on time. My superior officers don't think that way. What are you drinking?'

'White wine.'

'Already? At lunchtime?'

Ingrid shrugged in an indifferent manner. 'It helps pass the time,' she said.

Not wanting her to drink alone, and feeling thirsty anyway, Ernst ordered a beer for himself.

'Shall I order lunch now?'

'I'm not really hungry,' Ingrid replied. 'Just get yourself something.'

Ernst shook his head. 'I'm not hungry either,' he said, still feeling ill from the previous evening and yearning only to slake his thirst with the beer. 'Still, I think you should eat. You don't eat enough these days.'

'I'm just dieting, Ernst.'

'For me?'

'For you.'

That's nice,' he said.

Knowing she didn't mean it, he was also discomfited by her steady gaze. Though still green as jade, it was not as bright as it had been. Sitting in this particular cafe reminded him of the day he had proposed to her, the day Hitler became chancellor, and filled him with remorse and incomprehension

at how they had both changed. They had been young and in love then, but now, four years on, they were saddened adults who seemed to have lost each other along the way. Ingrid was

still pretty, but in a less sensual, more matronly way, and the darkness in her eyes came from disillusionment, caused mainly by him. He knew it and was wounded by it, but could do little about it, since he too had changed beyond repair, if not for the better.

Best not to dwell on that...

'So,' he said instead, 'how are the children?'

'They're fine,' she replied. They haven't changed much since last week. Ula complains that you only come home at weekends, but Alfred is still too young to miss you, so you needn't feel too bad.'

'You're being mean to me.'

'I'm not.'

'It's not my fault that I can only come home weekends. We're compelled to live in the barracks during the week, and that's all there is to it. I know it's not particularly nice for the children, but we just have to live with it.'

'You like being away from home. You can't wait to get back to your SS friends. When you're home, you have little patience with me or with the children. You're not nice at all, Ernst.'

'That's not true,' he replied.

Yet as he took his first sip of the beer the waitress had brought, he had to acknowledge that Ingrid was right. His daughter, Ula, was now three years old and beautiful, his son, Alfred, was a mere two months old and lively, but he saw them so rarely these days, he hardly knew them at all. He felt guilty over that but could not ignore Ingrid's charge that deep down he preferred not being home.

In truth, he now felt suffocated by Ingrid's presence - something that had begun after that dreadful weekend now remembered as the Night of the Long Knives. Ashamed of himself at the time, he now accepted the necessity of that bloody purge and could not tolerate the fact that Ingrid despised him for taking part in it.

For weeks after the purge, she had not let him touch her, meanwhile pouring scorn upon him; but later, after reluctantly surrendering to him and becoming pregnant with Alfred, she had rejected him with more finality than before.

You have blood on your hands,' she had told him, 'so keen them off me. I don't want to be contaminated by you or what you represent. You've arrested and killed innocent people, once reluctantly, now willingly, and I can't bear the thought that my children will learn about what you do. Don't touch me. Don't ever touch me again. Take your pleasures elsewhere.'

Which is exactly what he had done. Which in turn was why he spent so much time with his comrades - not just in the barracks, as he insisted on pretending with Ingrid, but in the drunken, decadent pleasures of a Berlin unrestrained by moral values, in the nightclubs and cafes and erotic Tanzbars of the night; and, most irresistible of all, in Brigette's snakelike embrace...

Just thinking about Brigette made him feel sick with lust and shame, though he tried not to show that to Ingrid. After drinking some more beer, he placed the mug back on the table, wiped his lips, and smiled more casually than he felt.

'So, who have you arrested this week?' Ingrid asked him.

The remark wiped the smile from his face and filled him with anger.

'No one,' he said. 'As you know, I'm now based at Kummersdorf West, in charge of technical intelligence. My duties involve the gathering of information relating to foreign and domestic scientific research. I don't arrest anyone.'

'But you spy on the scientists you deal with. You keep your eyes and ears open.'

Yes,' he said. 'Naturally.'

You think it's natural to spy on people?'

'Not natural,' he said with a weary sigh. 'A necessity, Ingrid. Someone has to do it - and I take pride in doing it well.'

'But why do you have to keep your eye on our own scientists and engineers? Can no one be trusted these days?'

'It's not that bad, Ingrid,' he lied, knowing that in these

troubled times no one could be trusted, that the enemy within was always a danger, and that the importance of the work being done at Kummersdorf West called for even more vigilance. It would be more than his life was worth to tell Ingrid about Projekt Saucer and the strange American, Wilson, working there under a German alias, but when he thought about it, he did so with a mixture of awe and resentment.

He was in awe of Wilson's genius, about which he had no doubts, and resented the fact that those who worked with him - Schriever, Habermohl, and Miethe - were doing the work that he, Ernst Stoll, was better equipped to do.

'You wanted so much to be a rocket engineer,' Ingrid said, as if reading his mind, 'and instead you've become someone who reports on the achievements of others. That must really hurt, Ernst.'

The mockery, which rolled off her tongue with relish, was even more hurtful.

'I only hurt to give you pleasure,' he replied. 'I hope you're suitably grateful.'

'Don't be bitter, Ernst'

'I can't help it,' he replied. 'You complain because I don't come home much and that I've little patience when I do come home - yet you do nothing but pour your scorn upon me. What makes you so superior?'

'I don't feel superior. I just despise you for the way you've accepted what the Nazis are doing.'

'If I didn't, I'd be imprisoned - or even shot.'

That may be true, Ernst. But you don't accept it just because of that. Now you actually believe in it.'

'I believe in the Fuhrer. He may not always be right, but he knows the end justifies the means - and I also believe that.'

'That's despicable,' Ingrid said.

Ernst simply shrugged. This argument could lead them nowhere. Each time they met it was the same, always ending in an argument, and already he yearned to be back at Kummersdorf, keeping his eye on John Wilson.

The American fascinated him - even frightened him a little. He was sixty-six years old, yet looked fifteen years younger, and his eyes, which were still bright with intelligence, were also as cold as ice. Ernst thought him slightly inhuman, a man divorced from normal emotions, but one whose genius, allied to obsession, was producing remarkable results in the hangars of Kummersdorf. In fact, the dream of a saucer-shaped aircraft was coming closer each day...

'What are you thinking?' Ingrid asked him.

'Nothing,' he replied, unable to discuss the American or Projekt Saucer.

'You're certainly not thinking of me or the children - that much I can tell.'

'Please, Ingrid, stop this.'

'Why? I'm enjoying it! I can tell by the dreamy look in your eyes that we're not in your thoughts.'

'You're trying to pick a fight.'

'It keeps me awake, darling. I need something to keep me awake while you sit there in front of me, hardly looking at me, probably yearning to be with your virtuous comrades and the whores you all play with.'

'Ingrid!'

'I know, Ernst! I know everything! Do you think I'm a fool? Did you really think I didn't know that when you were supposed to be sleeping in the barracks, you were getting drunk with your SS friends and probably picking up the whores in the Motzstrasse? Do you think I'm dumb, Ernst?'

'That isn't true at all!' he lied, shocked and angry that she had guessed what he was up to.

'Of course it's true, Ernst!' Her green eyes were bright with rage. That's why you're away from home so often. That's why you stay out half the night and come home exhausted. Those whores are in your clothes. They're in the pores of your skin. You can't wash the smell of them away, so don't try anymore. I don't want your damned denials, Ernst. I just want the truth.'

Why didn't he tell her? Get this marriage over and done with...

Because SS men didn't get divorced and have successful careers.

'Do we have to discuss this now, Ingrid? Can't it wait for a better time?'

'What better time? There is no better time. I wanted to get this off my chest, which is why I asked you to meet me here.'

'All right. So you've got it off your chest. Can we now change the subject?'

'No. That's not all I wanted to say. I also wanted to tell you that your work appalls me, your promiscuity humiliates me, and that if we must live together like this, let's quietly live separate lives.'

'We already do, Ingrid. You haven't let me touch you for months. I think that's separate enough - and it certainly explains why the whores you mention seem so attractive.'

And he couldn't help smiling when he said it, taking pleasure from vengeance.

Surprisingly, she returned his smile with one of her own.

'Good,' she said. 'I'm glad you find them attractive. That means you won't be too upset when I confess that I've been seeing another man for a while now - a nice man, ten years older than you, but so much kinder and decent. I just thought you should know.'

Ernst burned hot and cold, felt his whole body stiffening, then had to control the racing of his heart and a suffocating mixture of rage and humiliation. He wanted to kill her.

Why did you want me to know?' he managed to ask.

'Because I've lived for too long with the knowledge of your philandering and now I want it out in the open.'

'You want revenge.'

'I've already had that, Ernst. That's how my affair started - though it isn't why it continued. I just came to care deeply for my lover and I won't keep it hidden.'

Ernst had to resist the urge to slap her face.

'You want a separation?' he asked.

'Yes,' she replied.

'You can't have one,' he told her. The SS doesn't approve

of divorce, so I won't even consider it. And if you try to go ahead with it, the SS will ensure that the children are handed over to me. Are you willing to pay that price?'

She looked at him with hatred. 'No, Ernst, I'm not. You know I'd never give up the children.'

Then the marriage continues.'

'I won't give up my lover.'

'And I won't give up my whores. Let's just live our separate lives together and keep our mouths shut.'

The gleam of hatred receded, but her gaze remained antagonistic. 'I don't think we can do that,' she said.

'Perhaps not normally,' he replied, 'but I also had something to tell you - and clearly, in the light of this conversation, it's come at the right time.'

'Oh? What?'

He could not resist swelling slightly with pride. 'Reichsfuhrer Himmler has plans for a special expeditionary force to travel by boat to the Antarctic early next year - and has personally suggested that I go with it.'

'The... Antarctic?'

'Yes.'

'For what purpose?'

'He didn't say,' Ernst replied honestly, though he knew that the expedition was in some way related to Projekt Saucer. 'He only suggested that he'd be pleased if I volunteered - which of course I did instantly. Now, Ingrid, you and I can live separate lives without too much pain - at least for a few months.'

He sat back in his chair and gazed steadily at her, finding it easier to hide his rage and humiliation behind a display of pride. Ingrid studied him at length, not sure if she should be pleased or not, then nodded in a thoughtful, accepting manner and said, 'Yes. I think that will be good for both of us. It's come at the right time.'

Ernst sighed and sipped some beer, thinking of how the blood from wounded emotions could be so easily mopped up... Yet even as that cynicism gripped him, he saw Ingrid's tears.

She sniffed, but failed to hold the tears back, so wiped them away with her hand and shook her head sadly. 'What happened, Ernst?'

The question drove a stake through his heart, and he writhed with the pain of it He knew what had happened -Adolf Hitler - but he couldn't admit that now. The love they had shared had been destroyed by his devotion to duty... or, more accurately, by his fear of the consequences of disobedience. Now, when he saw Ingrid's tearful eyes, he understood that he was giving away what he valued the most: her love and his pride.

'Nothing in particular,' he lied, debasing himself even more. 'We just drifted apart. Let's say we both grew up.'

She quivered as if whipped, but then managed to control herself. 'I have to leave now,' she said in a distracted, conversational manner, 'and collect the children from my mother's. Can I take it you'll be home tonight for dinner?'

'No,' Ernst said, watching her dry her eyes and stifling his pain, 'I don't think I will be. Now that we're leading separate lives, I see no point in lying.'

Ingrid smiled bitterly and nodded, then wiped her eyes with a handkerchief. 'Are you leaving now as well?' she asked, standing up and glancing out at the wintry sunshine over the busy corner of the Friedrichstrasse and Unter den linden.

'I have five minutes to spare,' he said, 'so I'll just finish my beer.'

'Just one, I hope,' she said without thinking.

'Yes, Ingrid,' he replied automatically. 'Just one, then I'm leaving.'

She leaned down to kiss him frigidly on the cheek, then waved good-bye and walked out.

How pretty she still is, Ernst thought helplessly, as he watched her departing through the dense crowds, looking elegant in her fur-collared, belted coat and broad-brimmed hat. How very attractive!

Then, with a grief that lacerated him, he ordered another beer.

* * *

The day became confused after that. Feeling cold after his second beer, he decided to have a cognac and drank it while brooding about Ingrid and life's disappointments. Ingrid was disappointed with him and he felt the same about life in general, and when he thought about that, after having another brandy, he could only think of the American, Wilson, in the hangar at Kummersdorf, creating the kind of aircraft that he, Ernst, had once dreamed about... as a student at the Institute of Technology, when he and Ingrid were still in love.

He thought a lot about John Wilson. The American fascinated him. He was an old man, a very old man, kept alive by his faith.

Yes: faith - what Ernst had once possessed, but lost - and because of that, the American was working miracles while Ernst simply observed him.

He felt sick just to think of it.

He not only feared the odd American, but also what he was building.

A miraculous, saucer-shaped aircraft.

A terrible weapon.

Filled with an awe and resentment exaggerated by drunkenness, Ernst, who had been given the afternoon off, had too many brandies, then went to meet his SS comrades in a Tanzbar recommended by Franck Ritter. Colored lights bled through smoke, a tacky band was playing, and two practically naked girls were performing an erotic dance with umbrellas. Sitting at a table near the wall at the back of the room, Willi Brandt was drinking a stein of beer and gloomily watching the dancing girls while Franck Ritter, resplendent in his SS uniform, was fondling the gaudily dressed transvestite sitting beside him. Ernst joined them at the table, had another few drinks, compared notes with Brandt on the various erotic acts on the stage, then left in disgust when the insatiable Ritter led the giggling transvestite by the elbow into the toilets.

'The elite of the New Order!' Ernst exclaimed. 'Is this what we've come to?'

He and Brandt did a tour of familiar haunts, but ended up, as usual, in the White Mouse in the Franzosischestrasse in time for Brigette's evening performance. The revue bar was filled with uniformed officers of the Reichswehr and SS, plus fat-bellied businessmen and their whores, and they roared their approval and gave the Nazi salute when Brigette came on stage, almost naked except for a steel-studded, black-leather halter and gleaming jackboots, with a peaked military cap slanted rakishly over red hair and her tongue licking brightly painted, pouting lips.

She was grinding her hips lasciviously and cracking a bullwhip over the naked spine of the man who was crawling across the stage on his hands and knees. Brigette sat on his back, riding him like a horse, and she kept cracking the bullwhip and gyrating upon him until, when he was prostrate beneath her, she slowly, seductively removed her steel-studded, leather halter and let him reach up to her...

It was a crude, erotic performance, arousing the audience to fever-pitch, and though Ernst was disgusted and drank far too much brandy, he too was aroused by what he saw and could not wait to have her.

He had her soon enough - an hour later, in her apartment when she teased and tormented him, whispering 'My pretty boy! My sweet lieutenant!' and sent him into spasms of relief and bottomless shame. With her diabolical artistry, her finely controlled sense of debauchery, she helped him forget Ingrid, the loss of his career, the frustration and fear that he always felt at Kummersdorf when he saw Wilson working. He took Brigette like a savage, was in turn devoured by her, felt exultation and grief as he shuddered and spent himself, then rolled off her and thought of the Antarctic with unbridled longing.

He could hide from himself there.

Chapter Twelve

'Good afternoon, Herr Wilson,' Himmler said in his frostily polite manner. 'I am sorry to have had to bring you all this way, but I have good reason for doing so.'

'Naturally, Reichsfuhrer,' Wilson said, taking the wooden chair at the other side of Himmler's desk in his room in the Pension Moritz and glancing out at the soaring, snow-covered Austrian Alps. He had been dragged out of bed that morning, flown from Berlin to Munich, put on a train to Salzburg, then brought here, to the picturesque village of Berchtesgaden, in a jeep driven by a blond SS moron. Himmler enjoyed pulling such surprises, but Wilson was not amused.

'Can I order you some herbal tea, Herr Wilson?'

'Thank you for considering my tastes, Reichsfuhrer, but I've already had my morning tea and I don't drink after breakfast.'

Himmler seemed mildly amused. 'I know that you're careful about what you eat and drink,' he said, 'which may explain why, for a sixty-six-year-old man, you look remarkably youthful. In fact, you still only look about fifty, which is truly amazing.'

'Coming from you, Reichsfuhrer, I take that as a compliment. It is true that I'm careful about what I eat and drink. I also believe that most people do too much of both, so I'm frugal even with what I permit myself.'

'Do you take vitamins?' Himmler asked with somber interest.

'Yes. I've done so all my life. I eat and drink the minimum, take vitamins every day, and meditate whenever I get the

chance. In this way, I've managed to hold off the aging process though it must come eventually.'

'And then?'

'With your continued backing of the SS medical experiments, I'm sure we will soon find surgical remedies for the aging process - and when we do, I'll be one of the first to make use of them.'

'That would be a great gamble, Herr Wilson.'

'Not at my age,' Wilson replied.

Himmler smiled, then clasped his hands under his chin and said, 'You believe in the Superman, Herr Wilson?'

Wilson knew just whom he was dealing with - an insane visionary - but he also knew what he, personally, wanted - and when he saw the priestly madness in Himmler's eyes, he was convinced he could have it.

'I believe that man's destiny is to evolve into the Superman,' he said truthfully, though not without regard for Himmler's ego, 'but that we humans, if not constrained by wasteful emotions, can hasten that process.'

Himmler nodded approvingly. 'Good,' he said. 'I believe in this also. We cannot let sentiment stand in the way of progress. We must eradicate man's imperfections - if necessary, creating the New Man from the bones of the old. We must cleanse the earth by purifying the blood. We must exterminate the Jews and the infirm and maladjusted, use the lesser races as slaves to the Reich, create a race of pure Nordics. History will exonerate us. What we do, we do for progress. We are changing the course of history and aiding evolution - and when we die, as surely we must, our achievements will live on. You and I understand this.'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer,' Wilson said, not interested in the Aryan race, but willing to use Himmler and his ilk to create his world of pure science, which is all he now lived for.

Perverse? Most certainly - though he could live with that truth. All across Berlin, in the Reich's most august offices, were the other high priests of the demonic New Order: Hermann Goring, Joseph Goebbels, Rudolph Hess, Martin

Bormann - alcoholics, drug addicts, occultists, and degenerates - the very epitome of that gross irrationalism which Wilson so much abhorred. There too the Gestapo butchers, the drilled ranks of the SS, and all the torture and murder that went on every day in the basements. Wilson had to accept it. Science could not moralize. Those irrational brutes were no more than the means to achieving his ends. Progress needs its trampled bones. Death gives way to more life. Evolution knows neither right nor wrong and transcends ephemeral matters. So, he would work with them. In doing that, he could use them. And glancing out at the snowy slopes, then returning his gaze to Himmler, he felt nothing but hope for the future, the glow of fulfillment.

'Why did you wish to see me, Reichsfuhrer?'

'I wish to take you on a little walk that I think will be instructive to you. But first, I would like to be informed about the progress of Projekt Saucer.'

'Now that the rocket teams have left for Peenemunde and we can use their facilities, we're making quicker, more definite progress. As you know, I decided to stop work on the larger flying saucer prototype and instead concentrate all our efforts on making a miniature version of it, which can be used as an antiaircraft weapon. The final drawings for that smaller saucer will soon be completed - in the next week or two.'

'Good,' Himmler said. 'And you think this smaller version will actually fly?'

'I know it will,' Wilson said firmly.

'What kind of antiaircraft weapon will it be?'

'As a miniature version of the larger prototype, it will be a small, flat, circular flying machine, powered by a turbojet engine. It can be used as an antiradar device that, by flying in the vicinity of an aircraft in flight, will overionize the atmosphere surrounding it and, by so doing, subject its radar to the adverse action of powerful electrostatic fields and electromagnetic impulses.'

'And if it works—'

'It will, Reichsfuhrer.'

'- you can then construct a larger version without fear of it failing.'

'Exactly, Reichsfuhrer.'

'And who contributed most to this final design? You, or the officer nominally in charge of Projekt Saucer - Flugkapitan Schriever?'

Wilson thought carefully before answering.

He was aware that his greatest innovations were likely to be stolen from him and passed on to the rocket scientists now at Peenemunde and other, even more secret SS research establishments. He understood, also, that Rudolph Schriever, who had more arrogance than scientific talent, was spying on him for Himmler and would, while doing so, also try to take credit for his achievements. For this reason, while pretending to be open with Schriever and his fellow engineers, Wilson had actually showed them only selected parts of his great work - just enough to convince them, and thus Himmler, that he was worth keeping on. Also, by letting them steal relatively minor aspects of his work to utilize in their own, otherwise largely worthless designs - and by then praising them individually, secretly, for those designs - he was subtly setting them against one another, which kept him in control.

Naturally, because Himmler trusted his young flugkapitan, Wilson could not inform him of this fact and instead said, 'I must confess that Flugkapitan Schriever was surprisingly innovative and contributed greatly to the final designs. He is an excellent physicist.'

Clearly pleased that he had chosen correctly, Himmler asked: 'And the others? How are they faring?'

'No problems,' Wilson replied, not wishing to show his contempt for his fellow scientists, but being careful not to praise them too highly either. 'Of course Habermohl and Miethe are only engineers, but their designs for various parts of the saucer have been quite helpful. Miethe designed the outer shell for the latest model and deserves a commendation for that alone.'

'I will see to it,' Himmler said, then gave a light sigh,

unclasped his hands, and pushed his chair back. 'So,' he said, standing upright, 'let us go for our short walk.'

He led Wilson out of the room and into the heavily guarded and crowded lobby of the rustic pension. Glancing across the room, Wilson saw the handsome, uniformed architect, Albert Speer, sitting on a settee and discussing the architectural plans spread out before him and his assistants. Himmler nodded coolly at him, then, when four uniformed SS guards had closed in around him, he led Wilson across the crowded lobby and out of the pension.

'Is the Fuhrer here?' Wilson asked, having noted the strong contingent of armed guards inside and now noting the many more outside.

Himmler nodded in the direction of nearby hills where Wilson saw a figure in lederhosen walking through the snow, accompanied by a woman, whom he assumed was Eva Braun, and guarded by half a dozen armed SS troops.

'He's staying in the pension,' Himmler explained, 'while renovations are made to the Berghof. Come! This way, Wilson.'

Followed by the four SS guards, he led Wilson to a jeep that was parked right in front of the pension. When they were both sitting in the rear, one of the armed guards climbed into the front and drove toward the majestic, snow-covered slopes of the Kehlstein Mountains.

When they had left the village behind and were passing through the guarded gates of an area closed off by barbed-wire fences, Himmler waved to indicate the ugly dormitory barracks clinging to nearby slopes and said, Those barracks house hundreds of construction workers. This was once a solitary, very beautiful mountain valley, but it's now the auxiliary headquarters of our beloved Fuhrer. In order to make this conversion, Bormann tore down centuries-old farms and numerous votive churches, despite the protests of the parishes. Also, despite further protestations, he confiscated state forests and made this a private area that extends from the floor of the valley to the top of the mountain and covers

approximately two and a half square miles. Finally, with no regard to the exceptional beauty of the area, he turned forest paths into paved promenades, laid a network of tarmac roads through the formerly lovely landscape, and erected barracks garage buildings, a hotel, a manor house, a complex for the growing number of our workers, then, finally, those ugly barracks desecrating the once-virgin slopes.' He glanced around him with satisfaction, adjusting the pince-nez on his nose and squinting into the sun. 'As a lover of beauty, do I disapprove of this?' he asked rhetorically. 'No, of course not! It's the German genius to do what's necessary, no matter the cost. Do you understand, Wilson?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer, I do.'

Himmler nodded. 'Good!'

The sound of explosions reverbated around the valley as the jeep took a corkscrew bend, away from the Scharitzkehlalm ravine, then took the steep, winding road up the side of the Hoher Goll.

'They're dynamiting,' Himmler explained when Wilson glanced in the direction of the explosions. 'When war breaks out, as it must, Bormann intends having underground quarters for the Fuhrer and those most important to him.'

'Very wise,' Wilson murmured.

The five-mile road that ran up to Hitler's Teehaus had been hacked out of the side of the mountain by the sweat of slave labor. It stopped at an underground passage blasted out of the mountainside, just below the summit. Following the armed guard, Himmler climbed down from the jeep and led Wilson along the underground passage, until they arrived at a copper-lined elevator, its shaft, about four hundred feet deep, hacked out of the solid rock. That elevator took them down to an immense, high-walled gallery, supported by baroque Roman pillars. At the end of the gallery, also hacked out of the mountain, was a dazzling, glassed-in, circular hall.

Standing in that great hall, looking out through an exceptionally tall, wide window, Wilson saw only the other

snowcapped mountains and a vast, azure sky - an overwhelming experience.

The impossible made actual,' Himmler whispered proudly, indicating with a gentle nod of his head that extraordinary view. 'If our dreams are grandiose, our actual achievements are more so - the achievements of men who can make the impossible commonplace. Come! Follow me!'

He led Wilson across to the panoramic window, from where they could look down on the snow-covered earth, with Berchtesgaden and Salzburg clearly visible in a mosaic of brown and white.

Pointing at a distant mountain peak, Himmler asked Wilson if he knew what it was. When Wilson shook his head, he said, 'That mountain is the Untersberg. According to legend, the Emperor Charlemagne still sleeps there and will one day rise again to restore the past glory of the German Empire. I believe that day has come - that our Fiihrer is the reincarnation of Charlemagne and will return us to glory.'

He removed his gaze from the distant mountain and looked at Wilson through his glittering pince-nez. Wilson, who knew that he was mad, also knew not to smile.

'Now look down there,' Himmler said, pointing with his index finger, then sweeping his hand from east to west, to indicate the vast, snow-covered valley. 'Other than the villages and towns, what do you see?'

'Just the snow-covered earth,' Wilson said.

'Exactly,' Himmler said. 'And when war comes and we move underground, that is all you will still see - just the snow-covered earth.'

Wilson grasped instantly what the lunatic was driving at. ... The dream of the Thousand Year Reich had been born out of mysticism: the Cosmic Circle of Munich; the Anthroposophy of Rudolph Steiner; the Theosophy and Rosicrucianism of Vienna and Prague; a belief in Lemuria and Atlantis, ice and fire, Man as Superman ... Yes, he grasped what Himmler was thinking and now knew he could use him.

'You despise the weaknesses of mankind, don't you?'

Himmler said, staring steadily at him.

'Yes,' Wilson confessed.

'And like me, you believe in the evolution of the human race from Man into Superman.'

'Yes,' Wilson agreed, though he conceived of a superior race based on science, rather than a race of so-called Supermen based on the mystic strength of the Volk and other romantic, idiotic German theories.

'Do you know of the theories of the great Austrian cosmologist, Hans Horbiger?' Himmler asked, his gaze unnaturally steady behind the glittering pince-nez.

'I don't believe so,' Wilson lied. Actually he was fully cognizant of the fact that Himmler revered the so-called unorthodox, obviously mad, Austrian cosmologist's theories on the birth of the universe and the destiny of Nordic man, but he didn't want Himmler to realize that he had checked him out and now knew so much about him.

'A great man,' Himmler said reverently. 'A man despised by the scientific fraternity of his day for speaking the truth.'

'I'm sorry,' Wilson said hesitantly, carefully. 'I just don't know—'

'No,' Himmler said abruptly. 'Naturally not. They would not have taught you his theories in the United States of America where, as even you know, the truth is rarely respected.'

'He was a cosmologist?' Wilson asked, as if confused.

'Yes,' Himmler replied. 'Horbiger's theory is that the mass of free matter in the universe is in the form of frozen ice, that chunks of this ice periodically fall into stars and cause immense explosions, which in turn form planetary systems, and that since the world is formed from ice and the fiery explosions they cause - ice and fire, you understand? - it is the natural heritage of Nordic men.'

He glanced sideways, as if expecting a reply, and receiving none, continued melodramatically: 'Yes, Nordic men! German men! And Horbiger believed that a return to such a world would eventually lead to men who were gods...' Mercifully, at that moment Himmler turned away to survey the snow-

covered valley. 'A world of eternal ice,' he whispered portentously. 'A world under the earth!'

Quietly exalted by his vision, he turned away from the window, walked to the center of the vast room, then faced Wilson again.

'You are a man obsessed,' he said, 'so I know you will understand me. I do not envisage my SS as a commonplace police force, but as a religious order devoted to the creation of the Superman. Indeed, right from the start it's been my intention eventually to isolate the elite of the SS from the world of ordinary men for the rest of their lives. It is also my intention to create special colonies of this elite all over the world, answerable only to the administration and authority of this new order. My first step in the creation of this new elite was to create my special schools in the mountains of Bavaria, where the finest of the SS are indoctrinated in my ideals and convinced that they are men far finer and more valuable than the world has yet seen. My second step was the creation of the Ahnenerbe - the Institute for Research into Heredity - whose function is to finance and publish Germanic researches and to supervise the anthropological medical experiments on the inmates of the concentration camps. And my third and most important step is the Lebensborn - Spring of Life - which will, through the controlled mating of elite SS men and pure, Aryan women, breed out all imperfect traits from the German character and physique within one hundred years.'

He walked across the vast room, his footsteps echoing eerily, then stopped directly in front of Wilson, to stare calmly at him.

'And while all of this is happening,' he asked, 'where will I isolate the elite of my SS?'

Wilson turned to the side, to nod in the direction of the snow-covered valley below. 'In a world of eternal ice,' he said. 'A world under the earth.'

'Yes!' Himmler whispered. 'Correct! But not here. Not in Germany.' He walked to the window, pressed the palm of his hand against the glass, then turned back to Wilson. 'Our

beloved Fuhrer is anxious for a foothold in the Antarctic,' he said. 'For this reason, he is sending an expedition, commanded by Captain Alfred Richter, to the coast due south of South America. From there, seaplanes will be catapulted from the deck of our aircraft carrier Schwabenland with orders to fly back and forth across the territory that Norwegian explorers had arrogantly named Queen Maud Land. It is our intention to make a far more thorough study of the area than the Norwegians had done, to photograph as much of the area as possible, and to then claim the land for the Third Reich. When that is done, Herr Wilson, we will do there what we are about to do here and all over Germany - build underground quarters for the elite of my secret order and the slave labor necessary for our purposes.'

Wilson saw the insane grandeur of the concept - even though he knew it would not work. Then, even as he was formulating his own secret plans, Himmler approached him, took hold of his shoulders, and shook him with a rare display of passion.

'Do you now understand, Herr Wilson, why I am so interested in you? I will create the perfect man, you will create the perfect machine, and between us we can create a perfect society under the ice. Horbiger's world of ice and fire turned into a reality! My perfect men, your pitiless science, and all the slave labor we require. This is what you are here for?'

He turned away to wave his right hand, indicating the snow-white earth, the hazy horizon, and the unseen Antarctic... 'Your flying saucer will take us there and protect us and finally give us dominion. Now let us go back down.'

Wilson, seeing his dream forged by a madman, followed Himmler out of the Berghof and back down the mountainside.

Chapter Thirteen

After eight weeks at sea, with another seven to go, Ernst had a craving for dry land that made a mockery of reason. Anchored in the South Atlantic Ocean, near the South Sandwich Islands, the Schwabenland, the command ship of the expeditionary fleet, had become his prison and home, always swaying and creaking. For most of the three weeks they were at anchor, Ernst's sole view of Antartica was of distant white peaks in a constant, sunstreaked haze beneath an azure sky as, on behalf of Himmler, he supervised the ruthless takeover of Norway's Queen Maud Land.

Daily for three weeks, two seaplanes had been catapulted from the deck of the fleet's aircraft carrier, to fly back and forth across those frozen wastelands, photograph the area, and, as ordered, drops thousands of sharp-tipped steel poles, all weighted at the tip to make them dig into the ice, with small swastikas attached to the other end. The thought of covering a vast expanse of the Antarctic with swastikas attached to steel poles seemed slightly idiotic, even comical, to Ernst, but he had his duty to perform and did it commendably, keeping his face straight, keeping his eye on his men, and receiving the film they brought back after taking aerial photographs of that same vast, icy, largely uncharted wilderness.

Surprisingly, they had found many areas free of ice, which is what Himmler had told Ernst he was particularly interested in.

Hell be pleased, Ernst thought sourly.

Divorced from dry land and the world he had known so well,

with little to do other than keep his eye on the men, Ernst spent too much time thinking about what he had lost - his engineering career, then Ingrid's love and respect - and brooding bitterly about how he was being used as a disciplinarian when he should have been working on Projekt Saucer with that oddly unfeeling American genius, Wilson.

God, yes! The American and Projekt Saucer... Already, it all seemed so far away, beyond the ever-distant, always-changing horizon, first shrouded in mist, then azure blue and silver striations, then blood that boiled out of the sun and poured over the ocean.

Ernst recalled it with disbelief and undeniable pride, since it had been, after all, his first journey away from home: the eerily gray Baltic Sea and the sickening swells of the English Channel, then the grim coastline of France and white-walled houses on the cliffs of Portugal, giving way to the volcanic peaks of the Canary Islands and the yellow, sun-hazed ribbon of Morocco ... He had never been there, had not walked on foreign soil, and felt the loss more acutely, with a pain that surprised him, when the South Atlantic Ocean surrounded him, blue and green, its waves whitecapped, and offered a different light, more subtle colors, alien creatures, as the boat plowed through darkening waters into shadows cast by towers of gleaming ice.

He had seen all that and more, was disturbed and exalted by it, yet used it as his route of escape from the shame of his recent past... great blocks of rock and ice, flashing chasms of snow, a shroud made of dark, drifting cloud, a sudden, upthrusting glacier. Time passing and stopping. His gloved hands on the ship's railing. Then ice-encased mountains, seals and whales and pelagic birds, the air dazzlingly clear then the anchor being dropped in blue water where the sky was a mirror...

He had certainly left home far behind him.

Yet he wasn't made happy by it, because he was still unable to forget what he had lost in his private and public lives: the

career he had wanted since childhood and the woman he still loved.

He had wanted to be a rocket engineer and gain Ingrid's respect.

And had failed on both counts.

Instead, he had become a military policeman and jaded degenerate, living only for instant thrills with willing ladies ... or whores like Brigette.

Ah, yes, Brigette and Ingrid, his whore and his wife.

He thought about them night and day, but mostly at night, when he would toss and turn in his tiny cabin, on his uncomfortable bunk bed, listening to the splashing sea, the moaning wind outside the porthole, and drifting in and out of uneasy sleep punctuated by recollections and dreams of sensual experience. He thought of Ingrid with romantic longing, of Brigette with helpless lust, and spent himself shamefully in the darkness, with an adolescent's despair, hot-cheeked guilt, and irresistible self-pity.

The days were less tormenting, but certainly more boring, because all he could really do was patrol the creaking ship and check that his men were not up to mischief - which, given this particular location, was highly unlikely. He would never be a seaman and was easily confused and annoyed by the ship's bewildering array of hatches and bulkhead doors, steep steps and low-slung pipes, with its constant rumbling and groaning and creaking, its claustrophobic confines.

For this reason he could hardly endure even the common cabin, where he sometimes tried to read, and instead spent as much time as possible in the open air, watching the seaplanes being catapulted off the end of the nearest aircraft carrier, or coming in to land on that same, dangerously swaying deck, silhouetted in the sun's silvery striations or against the rippling, glassy sea.

If not the planes, a wandering albatross, flocks of prions, Cape pigeons... or the volcanic rock of the distant South Sandwich Islands, which, rising jaggedly on the horizon, looked like portals at the entrance to some awful world. The

purgatory to which he would be condemned for his recent debauchery.

'God help me,' he whispered more than once to the night's starlit darkness.

Luckily, he was often joined in his lonely vigils by Captain Alfred Richter, the commander of the expeditionary fleet, a grizzled, disheveled, gray-haired, pink-faced veteran who enjoyed conversation, did not mince his words, and was volubly contemptuous of the people Ernst had come to revere.

'Remarkable!' he had said with a sneer during their first conversation, over dinner, in his cramped, smoky cabin. The Bavarian window cleaner has finally returned home - driving back into Vienna in his Storm Trooper uniform, giving the fascist salute, and welcomed by pealing church bells and hysterically cheering crowds who appear to be delighted that he's made their country a mere province of Germany... But since, four days later, their beloved Fuhrer announced the so-called spring cleaning of Austrian Jews, I think we can assume that their cheering has tailed off into silence.'

Though shocked at such disrespect for the Fuhrer he so admired, Ernst offered no protest, instead letting Richter break the monotony by rambling on about the madness of the Third Reich and those who controlled it

'Drug addicts, sexual degenerates, occultists and mystics - the lunatics have taken over the asylum and called it the Third Reich. And who's in charge of the lunatics? Another two lunatics! Hitler and Himmler - two mild souls possessed by demons - one wanting to be God of a pure Aryan earth, the other hoping to create the Super Race with a bunch of blond morons. These are leaders of men?'

If Richter despised the Third Reich and all it aspired to, he was particularly venomous about the man who had dreamed up this Antarctic expedition - namely, the Reichsfuhrer, Heinrich Himmler.

'A madman!' Richter rasped. 'He belongs in an insane asylum! Unlike you, I don't know him personally, but I know what I've heard. He's a bureaucrat of demonology, an

administrator of inane dreams, a superficially cool customer who thrives on demented enthusiasms - mesmerism, reincarnation, clairvoyance, runes, the Thousand Year Reich, the possibility of turning mortal men into immortals, the search for Horbiger's world of ice and fire - and this lunatic shares his dreams with Hitler, who is equally mad!'

At first Ernst was outraged, as if hearing blasphemy, and he turned away, hiding his flushed cheeks, and looked out to sea. An immature albatross had been circling out there for hours, always close to the surface, supported by the updrafts of air produced by the whitecapped swells. It made Ernst remember the wonders of aerodynamics and the work going on in the hangars of Kummersdorf-with the American genius, Wilson, the German egomaniac, Schriever, the ailing Italian physicist, Belluzzo, and their engineering assistants, Habermohl and Miethe - and filled him with a healthy flush of resentment at what Himmler had done to him.

Instead of working as an engineer with Projekt Saucer at Kummersdorf, he was supervising the dropping of flagged poles into the Antarctic wilderness.

It wasn't even a joke.

'A world of ice and fire?' he asked Richter to distract himself. 'Is that why we're here?'

Richter laughed sardonically. 'What do you think?' he said. 'Has he not told you what he believes in? His mad dream of the Super Race?'

'No,' Ernst replied honestly, 'he hasn't. He only gives me his orders.'

So Richter told him about Himmler, about his bizarre faiths and dreams, pointing out that his SS was essentially a religious order, that his men were bound by blood and oath, and that he wanted to isolate them, to brainwash them and remold them, to mate them with the purest German women and produce blond perfection, then forge those already perfect men in the strengthening flames of eternal war.

'He used to process chickens,' Richter said with a sneer, 'and now he wants to process people. He has a dream of a

disciplined order of masters and slaves - the masters like human gods, the slaves to do their bidding - and he wants them in a world of ice and fire, which is where we are right now. The fire is the endless war that Himmler hopes to wage - he believes, after all, that war keeps a nation strong - and the ice is right here in the Antarctic, which he views as the natural home for Nordic man.'

They were now on the open deck, looking across the ice-filled sea, and Richter waved his hand to take in the distant peaks and glaciers, obscured in a white haze.

That's why he wants this place - as the secret base for his new order. He wants to finish here what he began in the Wewelsburg Castle - his secret society, a Black Jesuit order, with its Death's Head insignia, reversed swastika, and occult rites, dedicated to the re-creation of the Germanen Order, which he views as the Super Race. The man is mad - and unstoppable.'

Ernst cast his gaze southward, looking beyond the Antarctic Convergence, where dark clouds hovered over an oasis of light and frozen mountain peaks and ice falls, which, being dimly perceived, looked like part of a mirage. He tried to visualize that vast wasteland, the brown earth between ice and snow; then he pondered the possibility of the finest of his SS comrades being imprisoned and trained there and set free only when called upon by their leader, the Reichsfuhrer Heinrich Himmler, to set a torch to the world of normal men and turn history to ashes.

Himmler... and Wilson ... and Projekt Saucer... in a world of Eternal Ice.

'Areas free of ice,' he whispered to Richter, though really addressing himself. 'He specifically asked us to find areas free of ice. Places where we could land.'

'Of course!' Richter exclaimed. 'Why do you think he's claiming that land for the Third Reich? Photographing it? Having it mapped out?'

'I'm not sure. I—'

'Lebensraum - space! - German conquest and

expansionism. That madman wants to come here, to bring his Death's Head SS here. He wants to isolate them from the world as completely as possible - well beyond the reach of normal men - and what could be more removed and isolated than that hellhole of snow and ice? He'll create his new order there, beyond the influence of the human world, and those who're raised there will know nothing but what they're taught They'll be raised and trained for war, and nothing but war - the eternal conflict that Himmler thinks is necessary to an order of Supermen.'

Richter rubbed his frozen nose. 'Do you understand, Stoll? It's Horbiger's so-called cosmic world of ice and fire - and Himmler hopes to create it out there, in that frozen world, underground. That's why we're stealing Queen Maud Land.'

Ernst finally understood and was struck dumb with the knowledge - simultaneously overwhelmed by the grandeur of the concept and deeply shocked that he had learned about it only through this old naval captain, whose contempt was appalling.

Avoiding Richter after that, he stayed alone as much as possible, thinking of Wilson's flying saucer, potentially the world's most powerful aircraft, and relating it to this Antarctic expedition and the search for ice-free land. Himmler's world of fire and ice - the flying saucer and the Antarctic... The flying saucer was the machine of the future ... and that future was here.

Ernst was awed by the concept.

On the final day of the expedition, just before the fleet turned back, Ernst, as instructed by Himmler, took the rear seat in a seaplane and had the pilot fly him to the Antarctic and land on an ice-free area in Queen Maud Land.

It was not a long flight, but it seemed almost magical, transporting him abruptly from sunlit space to snow-filled wilderness, black shadow, blinding light, a great silence, the gleaming Nothing, and when the skis of his aircraft slid along the ice cap, he felt that he was on another planet - vast and desolate ... dead.

The Antarctic, spread out all around him, looked boundless and unreal.

Another world for the taking.

He made the pilot stay in the aircraft while he climbed down alone, glanced around that alien landscape of icefalls and glaciers and snowbanks and polar plateaus - all frighteningly empty and hauntingly silent - and then solemnly unraveled a larger swastika from its frozen steel pole. He hammered it into the ice-free soil, working awkwardly with his gloved hands; then, breathing steam, he stepped back to give the Nazi salute.

'I now claim this land for the Third Reich and name it Neuschwabenland.'

His embarrassed, whispered words were still echoing eerily around him when he climbed back up into the seaplane and let the pilot fly him away from what could be his future home.

That thought chilled his soul.

Chapter Fourteen

Bradley was relieved to step out of the sweltering June weather of the town of Des Moines, Iowa, and into the air-conditioned coolness of the immaculately clean, modern nursing home. When he told the white-uniformed receptionist behind the desk that he had an appointment with a resident, Abe Goldman, she smiled pleasantly, checked her register, said, 'Yep!' and hit the button of the bell on the desk with the palm of her hand. 'I'm calling someone to take you in there,' she explained. Then, when she saw him fingering his sweaty collar, she asked, 'Are you from out of state, Mr Bradley?'

'Yep,' he replied, amused by her air of amusement.

'Can't stand the humidity, eh?'

'No, not really. It can get pretty hot in Connecticut, but it's never this humid.'

'You know New York?'

'Yep.'

'I've only seen it in the movies.'

'It looks just like it does in the movies.'

'Gee, I'd just love to go there.' She was middle aged and attractive and reminded him of Gladys Kinder, so he was glad when a male attendant arrived and said, 'Someone for Abe?'

This nice gentleman from New York,' the receptionist said. The one sweating too much.'

'Can't stand the humidity, eh?' the male attendant said with a broad grin.

Bradley just shook his head.

'You'll soon cool down in here,' the attendant said. 'Okay sir, follow me.'

Bradley was in fact already cooling down in the air-conditioning when the attendant led him away from the lobby along a well-carpeted corridor, through an expansive community room filled with old people, many wearing dressing gowns, and out onto a patio overlooking a smooth green lawn.

'You a relative of Abe's?' the attendant asked, leading Bradley along the patio.

'No,' Bradley replied.

'He's one of our favorite residents,' the attendant said. 'A real old-time character - though not originally from here-abouts.'

'No, he was originally from New York.'

'That's right,' the attendant said, stopping when they reached the shaded end of the patio, where an old man was sitting in a wheelchair. He had lively, pugnacious, Jewish features and a mop of surprisingly thick gray hair. He was dressed in a vivid, sky-blue dressing gown and smoking a cigar. 'Abe,' the attendant said, 'here's your visitor. Mr—'

'Bradley. Mike Bradley.'

Abe Goldman removed the cigar from his pursed lips and squinted up through a cloud of smoke. The guy from Wall Street, eh?' he asked rhetorically, raising his hand.

'That's right,' Bradley said, shaking the old man's hand and surprised by the strength of his grip. 'It's good of you to see me.'

'Not at all,' Goldman replied, waving Bradley into the chair facing him. 'It's not often you meet a stranger in this asylum, so I'm happy to see you.'

'It's not an asylum,' the attendant corrected him.

'No,' Abe said, 'it's a nursing home. Only the people who run it are crazy; we're just old and decrepit.'

He quivered with soundless mirth as the attendant grinned at Bradley, shook his head in a rueful manner, then said, 'Enjoy!' and walked away. Bradley settled into his chair facing

the grinning old man, whose thick-lashed brown eyes were still bright

'So,' Goldman said, 'you said on the phone you wanted to talk about my old company.'

That's right. Goldman and Cohn. Based and registered in New York, back in the nineties. A finance company, I gather.'

'Yep.' Goldman shook his head emphatically. 'Old Jack and me, we made a goddamned fortune and retired at an early age. Of course, Jack,' he said, blowing a cloud of smoke, 'kicked off a few years back. He didn't smoke or drink, that was his problem - living clean isn't good for you.'

'I'll try to remember that,' Bradley said.

'You do that, son. Pearls of wisdom from the ancients. Now what did you want to know?'

'Is it true that your company was involved in the financing of airship designs?'

'It sure is, son. And it's what made us rich. There was a lot of loot in airship designs if you knew which hands to shake.'

'You built a secret research center here, in Iowa, didn't you?'

'Yep. That's why I'm retired here. Jack Cohn and I, we both came out here in the nineties, to supervise the research center - then, when we had to close it down, we decided to stay on. Our wives and kids loved it here.'

'I want to ask you about that - about why you closed the plant down - but first I want to know if your chief aeronautical engineer was a guy named John Wilson.'

'I do believe it was. I'm not good at remembering names, but I'm good at the faces and I'd never forget that engineer - he was a weird one, I tell you.'

'Weird?'

'He surely was - though he was also the most brilliant designer we'd ever used. Miles ahead of the others.'

'What do you mean by weird?'

Goldman inhaled and puffed, looking thoughtful. 'Not too sure,' he said. 'Such a long time ago. At my age, memory plays some awful tricks. Not reliable, son.'

'I don't mind,' Bradley said.

Goldman puffed out his cheeks and blew more smoke; he had a lot of it in there. 'Brilliant,' he reiterated. 'But cold. Cold as ice. Something almost inhuman about him there. Always well mannered and pleasant, but not really concerned. He saw people - he watched them like a hawk - but he never seemed to feel anything.'

'Obsessed with his work?'

'Christ, yes. It was bread and water to him. He had nothing except his work. I remember once asking him about his childhood - you know, I thought he might have been mistreated as a child or something - and he said no, that his parents had been fine, he just hadn't been interested, that's all. Life, he said, was too precious to waste on small things, or the ordinary, and his parents, while decent, had been ordinary, so he lost interest in them. He thought that people wasted their lives, that most of them were too emotional, and that the mind and what it could achieve were all that really mattered in life. Any human activity that didn't have a specific, evolutionary purpose was to him a complete waste of time, maybe even degenerate. You know - sports, games, romantic love, kids, reading for fun - you name it - if it wasn't somehow advancing science or evolution, it was pretty despicable.'

'Yet he was well mannered and polite.'

'Right. You couldn't even prod him to anger. I do remember him telling me that any emotion that blurred objective thought was an unhealthy emotion. He didn't involve himself with people - he worked with them or studied them - and although he had some women in his life, I think they were just there for the sex - a way of scratching at the one distracting itch he couldn't get rid of.'

'He wasn't married?'

'No - and never had been.'

'A real loner.'

'More like a recluse. I don't think we socialized once - we only met to discuss work - and even then, it was always at the research center.'

'How did you find him?'

'Me and my partner - Jack Cohn, God rest his soul - were looking for someone, preferably young, bright, and willing to work cheap, to design passenger-carrying airships, which we were convinced would revolutionize transport. So, we placed an ad in various newspapers, asking for aeronautical engineers, and Wilson called and we fixed up a meeting. He'd just graduated from Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York, which was convenient, since that's where we were based. Anyway, we met him and he impressed the hell out of us - he was so obviously brilliant - and we had no hesitation in putting him in charge of our airship development project'

'Why did you move it all the way from the East Coast to here?'

Wilson's idea. In those days, you know, there was an awful lot of experimentation going on - patents flying all over the place - and so all of us were obsessive about protecting what we were doing. Lots of secrecy, right? So we wanted our project to be kept under wraps and preferably located well away from the prying eyes of our competitors. Jack, I think, suggested California, but then Wilson said he knew of this great place near where he'd come from - in the wilds of Iowa, near the Illinois border - and when he also informed us that land and property there were cheap, we bought the idea. We sent Wilson out here to find us what we needed, and he came up with the plant in Mount Pleasant. We not only built the plant there, but took all our workers from the area - which meant there was no gossip back in New York.'

'When was that?'

'About 1896. Thereabouts. My memory's not all that good, you know. It's as flimsy as I am.'

Bradley grinned. 'And did you actually design some workable airships?'

The man inhaled more smoke, nearly choked and coughed it out, stubbed the butt of the cigar out in an ashtray, then wiped his watery eyes with his fingers.

'He sure did,' he confirmed, nodding emphatically. 'Five in all, with one uncompleted by the time the project closed.'

That figured, Bradley thought All the reports about Wilson during the Great Airship Scare had reported him as saying that five or six airships had been constructed in Iowa, near the Illinois border. So five had been completed, one left unfinished, in Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

'What were they like?' he asked.

'Dirigibles,' Goldman replied. The most advanced of their time. The hot-air balloon was contained inside a cigar-shaped aluminum structure and powered by Wilson's internal combustion engine and propellers, all of which were fixed ingeniously to the gondola. The five completed models were secretly test-flown throughout the second year of the project - I think, 1897 - but of course we couldn't keep 'em invisible, so they caused quite a stir.'

'The Great Airship Scare of 1897.'

The old man shook again with silent mirth. 'Right,' he said, when he had managed to control himself. Those test flights were made about three years before Zeppelin flew his first model and over six years before the first heavier-than-air flight of the Wright brothers - but they were undertaken in as much secrecy as was possible under the circumstances. Wilson nearly always took the airships up at night, but he often had to land to ask for water for his airship's engine - and in doing that he scared a helluva lot of people. Of course, some of his crewmen really enjoyed the whole thing - you know, reading about themselves as possible invaders from Mars and so on. It was all a bit of a joke to them.'

'Not a joke to the nation,' Bradley observed, remembering what he had read about the great scare.

'Right,' Goldman replied. 'Someone even managed to get some photographs when one of Wilson's airships flew over Rogers Park in Illinois. Those photographs were reproduced in a couple of newspapers - the Chicago Times-Herald and The New York Times, as I remember - and that really turned the airships into a sensation.'

'Yet they weren't seen after 1897. Why?'

'Wilson destroyed them.'

'Pardon?'

'You heard me. That mad bastard destroyed his own creations. He was utterly ruthless.'

Bradley was just starting to wonder if Goldman was insane when the old man glanced furtively left and right, then leaned forward with a sly grin on his face.

'You don't believe me, uh?'

'I'm beginning to believe this Wilson was capable of anything... but that seems a bit too much.'

'You want me to show you something really special, Mr Bradley?'

'Show me?'

'Yeah, show you. I could do with a day out of here - and it's still only morning. If you're willing to drive eighty miles and back I'll show you what he was up to.'

'Where would we be going?'

'Toward Mount Pleasant, of course, where my construction plant was located.'

'I've already checked it out,' Bradley said, 'and didn't find a damned thing. Your plant's long gone, Mr Goldman. Every last sign of it.'

Goldman grinned again and winked, then shook his head from side to side. 'No,' he said. 'Not there. You looked in the wrong place. Wilson had this other hangar, his secret place, that even I didn't know about until he was long gone. You want to see what Wilson was doing behind our backs? Then let's head for Mount Pleasant I could do with a day out'

'It's a deal,' Bradley said.

They had a pleasant drive, out of Des Moines and along a seemingly endless straight road, past the rambling farmsteads that dotted the green and brown hills, toward where an azure, white-clouded sky met a silvery horizon. Abe Goldman loved it, beamed with pleasure beside Bradley, and kept leaning sideways, to put his weathered face near the rolled-down window, all the better to receive the rushing wind, fresh air, and hot, burning sun.

'This is what I left New York for,' he explained, breathing deeply and gratefully.

Though Bradley was burning with impatience, he didn't press the old man to talk anymore about Wilson and his airship project, but instead let him engage in routine conversation about the weather, the changes in the country in general and New York in particular, and anything else that took the voluble Abe Goldman's fancy. They were on the highway to Iowa City, which made an easy drive, but turned off an hour later and took a road that ran as straight as an arrow between golden fields of wheat and corn, to Montezuma, where Wilson had been born.

As Abe Goldman now wanted lunch, Bradley stopped at a diner on the edge of town.

Helping Abe out of the car, Bradley recalled his visit to this town a few years back, when he had gone to the farm that had once belonged to Wilson's parents and found it still operating, its clapboard house recently repainted and gleaming white in the sunlight.

The man now running the Wilson farm,' he explained to Abe as they entered the diner, 'is the son of the people who bought it from Wilson's father shortly after his wife, Wilson's mother, died and he decided to move to Worcester, Massachusetts, where he had been born.'

'A lot of people need their roots,' Goldman replied.

'Not Wilson,' Bradley said.

'Even Wilson,' Goldman insisted. 'He may not have returned to his hometown, but he came back to the state. That's close enough, partner.'

Faced with the possibility that Wilson might, after all, have had some sentimental leanings, Bradley felt more confused when he entered the diner and sat down to lunch with Abe Goldman. They both had hamburgers and french fries, with lots of relish and salad on the side. For such a fragile old man, Abe had a surprisingly healthy appetite, enjoying his food.

'So are you going to tell me why Wilson destroyed his own airships?' Bradley finally asked him.

'Sure,' Abe said. 'Seems unbelievable, right? But that son of a bitch was the most ruthless guy I ever met' Abe munched on his burger, washed it down with Coca-Cola. The reason the airships spotted in 1897 weren't seen again is that the designs Wilson gave me and Jack Cohn to patent were for unworkable airships. He patented the real designs under a couple of pseudonyms. Of course, we didn't know about this - nor did we know that the son of a bitch was selling his genuine designs to some industrialist in Germany, almost certainly with an agreement to ensure that our airships were destroyed. We only figured this out later. First, the engines of our airships were blown up by an unknown demolition expert, obviously Wilson. Second, Wilson disappeared, leaving only his ingeniously faked drawings, from which we couldn't reconstruct his particular internal combustion engines and structural designs. Third: A couple of years later the first German airships took to the sky and were clearly based on Wilson's designs.' Abe grinned and shook his head in helpless admiration. 'By that time,' he continued, 'since we'd nothing to sell, Jack and me had gone bust and were too busy making our money back in other fields to pursue the son of a bitch through the courts.'

'But you knew what he was up to during that time?' 'Sure. He used the money from the sale of his patents to open his own research establishment across the state line, in Illinois. We could never verify what he was up to there, but there were certainly some odd rumors over the next few years, most notably that by 1903, just before the Wright brothers made their first successful flight at Kitty Hawk, Wilson had secretly produced even more advanced aircraft, reportedly turboprop biplanes, that had actually managed to cross the Atlantic Ocean.'

'He couldn't have done that without US government help.'

'Well,' Abe said, obviously enjoying his startling revelations, 'everything was wide open then - it was early days for aviation, with not too much legislation - so he could have done it with clandestine government aid. Then, of course, he went that little

bit too far and that led to his downfall.'

'A little bit too far?' Bradley was amused by the triumphant glint in old Abe's eyes, but he was also intrigued. He had never heard anything like this in his life, and it made Wilson seem almost diabolically ruthless and even, in a chilling way, awesome.

Having finished his large lunch, Goldman sat back, lit a cigar, and puffed a cloud of foul smoke.

'There were rumors,' he said, 'about highly advanced experiments with the problem of the boundary layer - and even dangerous experiments with atomic propulsion. Regarding this, there's one year I haven't forgotten and won't ever forget.'

'Yes?' Bradley inquired, his amusement tinged with growing impatience at the old man's teasing.

'In 1908,' Goldman said, 'shortly after the world celebrated Louis Bleriot's widely publicized flight across the English Channel, from Calais to Dover, there was a great explosion in the Tunguska region of Siberia - an explosion so big that some believed it had been caused by a crashing meteor or alien spacecraft. The reason for that mysterious explosion has never been found - but I can confirm that there were whispers in aeronautical and related circles that it'd been caused by the failure of one of Wilson's more dangerous experiments: when his mostly highly advanced experimental aircraft, reportedly powered by some primitive, faulty form of atomic propulsion, malfunctioned - possibly in conjunction with damage caused by the uncontrollable vibrations of the boundary layer - in an otherwise astonishingly successful flight from these here United States to goddamned Russia.'

Feeling chilled to the bone while hot sunlight poured through the window, Bradley was just about to express his disbelief when Goldman, finishing off his Coca-Cola, wiped his lips with the back of his hand and said: 'While that could either be the true explanation for the Tunguska explosion or pure science fiction, what is for sure is that shortly after the so-called most frightening, inexplicable phenomenon of the twentieth century, Wilson's plant in Illinois was closed down by the US

government, all of his designs - or at least those they found - were either classified as top secret or destroyed, and Wilson was offered work with the US government.'

'Which he didn't take.'

'No,' Goldman confirmed without hesitation. 'Apparently deeply embittered - can you imagine how we felt? - and with the Great War underway, he left Illinois for good and, according to occasional reports, spent the next decade drifting from one small aeronautical company to another, keeping his light under a bushel, but making a good living by selling his smaller, less important innovations to commercial airline companies and construction plants, and finally going to work for six months with another pioneering genius, Robert H. Goddard.'

Which is where I came in.'

'Pardon?'

'Nothing,' Bradley said. He was beginning to feel a bit unreal. He glanced at his wristwatch, noted that time was running out. 'Are you finished, Abe? I think we'll have to get going.'

'No sweat,' Goldman said.

Once back in the car, they drove for another hour, arrived at Sigourney, which seemed sleepy in the afternoon light, then passed the road signs for Washington and Wapeelo and eventually headed along an empty road that cut through a quiltwork of green and gold, lawns of finely mowed grass, more fields of corn and wheat beyond which, Bradley knew from his previous visits, lay the rolling green fields of Mount Pleasant.

Thinking of that place, and of the airships constructed and destroyed there, Bradley suddenly realized that he might be on a wild goose chase, led by a senile old man.

'If Wilson destroyed his airships,' he said, expressing his despairing thoughts, 'what can you possibly show me now, Abe?'

Goldman was unfazed. 'Remember me telling you about the rumors that Wilson had constructed a highly developed

aircraft that had actually managed to fly as far as Russia?'

'Yes,' Bradley said. The one with some primitive form of atomic propulsion.'

'Right,' Goldman said, pleased. 'Well, that aircraft certainly wasn't any kind of goddamned airship.'

'Naturally not,' Bradley said. 'Probably some kind of advanced airplane.'

'Exactly,' Goldman replied. 'When that son of a bitch was making airships for us, he had already superceded them and was secretly experimenting on his own project in another hangar, well away from our establishment at Mount Pleasant. It's my belief that that project was for the construction of an aircraft designed solely to conquer the boundary layer and be powered by some form of atomic propulsion. I think that a miniature version of such a craft, remote-controlled, was tried out in 1908, flew as far as Siberia, then malfunctioned and blew up over the Tunguska forest.'

'Jesus Christ,' Bradley whispered without thinking.

'You're impressed?' Goldman asked.

'Yeah.'

'Then stop being impatient and keep driving. You want proof? I'll give you proof!'

Shortly after they passed the sign indicating Mount Pleasant, Goldman coughed more cigar smoke from his lungs, hammered his chest with his fist, then jabbed a finger at a narrow side road and said, Turn up there, son.'

'We're not going to Montezuma?' Bradley asked, confused.

'You've already been there,' Goldman reminded him, 'and found nothing worth seeing. Now do as I tell you.'

Bradley kept driving until Goldman told him to stop, halfway along a narrow track that ran between two fenced-in fields of tall, untended grass. That was unusual. Untended fields were rare here. Then he looked across the field to the east and saw, in the distance, an enormous barn, probably once used for grain.

Goldman reached into his pocket, pulled out a bunch of keys, and held them up to him.

'Here,' he said. 'One of these is the key. Go take a look at what that son of a bitch was building when we thought he was only constructing airships. Have a good look, son.'

Bradley felt foolish and disbelieving, but he took the bunch of keys from the old man and started across the road. He parted the barbed wire, clambered awkwardly through the fence, then started the long walk across the field, through the waist-high, untended grass. The grass was like an endless sea, undulating in the breeze, whispering all around him, brushing at him, as if trying to suck him down. He felt nervous and unreal, adrift from himself, and was dazzled by the silvery-streaked azure sky, in which white clouds drifted.

Ahead of him, the immense barn loomed larger, isolated between land and sky, breaking up the horizon.

Beyond it was Illinois.

Bradley was breathing heavily and sweating by the time he reached the barn, and he stood there for a moment, getting his breath back. He glanced over his shoulder and saw his rented car sitting in the road beyond the fence, minute in that vast, undulating sea of grass. Shaking his head in wonderment, he turned back and studied the barn.

It was certainly huge, obviously once used for storing grain, and the single, steel lock on the door had turned red with rust

Not quite so breathless, but still sweating too much, Bradley tried one key after the other until he found the correct one. He turned the key once, slipped the lock off the chain, pulled the chain through its steel rings, and let it fall to the ground. Then he took hold of the edge of the large door and pulled it toward him, walking backward as he did so, until it was more than halfway open, letting sunlight pour into the barn's darkness.

That sunlight shone on something metallic, making Bradley's heart leap.

Feeling as nervous as someone entering a haunted house, he walked into the barn.

He didn't get very far.

Chapter Fifteen

The flying saucer prototype looked bigger than it really was where it rested, on a raised hydraulic platform, in the middle of the immense, cluttered hangar. Essentially a large ring plate with adjustable wing discs that rotated around its fixed, cupola-shaped cockpit, it had a diameter of forty-two meters and a height from base to canopy of thirty-two meters. Made of silvery-gray metal that reflected the overhead lights, it looked like a giant spinning top, and it made Wilson smile.

It would soon fly - but not much.

The only saucer that would fly in any real sense was the one Wilson was secretly designing in miniature and would use when he needed it

As long as he lived, he would not forget the awful devastation caused by the failure of the crude atomic propulsion system used in the otherwise surprisingly successful test flight of his first disc-shaped aircraft, which had actually managed to fly as far as Russia. However, since the catastrophe over the Tunguska region of Siberia in 1908, caused by the explosion of his pilotless aircraft, he had accepted that atomic propulsion was out of the question. Instead, he had concentrated all his efforts on conquering the boundary layer and trying to find less air-resistant material for his flying saucer's structure, so far using highly advanced but orthodox aircraft engines. He had not succeeded in America, though he was on the way to succeeding here - but he was carefully keeping his most important discoveries for his own use.

He fed Schriever only a little at a time ... never quite enough for his needs, but enough to make Schriever think he was making progress and to keep Himmler happy.

It was a delicate maneuver, which Wilson had practiced before - with the US government, before they had withdrawn their support and made him quietly drop out of sight, to eventually end up here in Nazi Germany.

He would always do what he had to do.

He placed his suitcase on the floor, tired from his week of relentless traveling all over Germany. Nevertheless he did not sit down but looked through the glass walls of his office at the men, some in coveralls, some in uniform, who were gathered by the hydraulic platform under the large flying saucer prototype. He recognized the lean and hungry Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, who was dangerous, and his engineers, Habermohl and Miethe, who were not, as well as that fat Italian fool, Belluzzo, who would soon have to go.

The four of them were obviously discussing some aspect of the construction while Schriever, who still thought he ran Projekt Saucer, studied the technical drawings in his hands and barked like a dog.

What an ass! Wilson thought.

Not that he had much time for any of them...

The two engineers, Klaus Habermohl and Otto Miethe, were uninspiringly efficient when merely turning nuts and bolts but embarrassingly inept when aspiring to the greater heights of design. So far, contrary to what Wilson had told Heinrich Himmler in Berchtesgaden, their so-called contributions for various parts of the flying saucer, including the outer steel casing, were relatively useless.

As for the ambitious flugkapitan, he was brighter than the others but remained, nevertheless, a mediocre engineer with pretensions to being a great aeronautical innovator. That was his machine out there, a crude saucer-shaped aircraft, and although he had based much of his design on Wilson's innovations - and then insinuated to Himmler that they were his own - Wilson had given him only those innovations that

already were obsolete. Schriever's saucer would fly in a crude manner eventually - when Wilson wanted it to do so - and until then, as Schriever was Himmler's spy, Wilson would give him just enough to keep him happy and full of himself.

Which just left that fat fool, Belluzzo, who, by his very lack of courage, was the most dangerous of all.

Wilson had to get rid of him.

Surprisingly, the aging Italian physicist, who had actually completed the first drawings for the saucer Schriever was now claiming as his own, had turned out to be the biggest thorn in Wilson's side. A basically timid man, he had been cowed by the aggressive, manipulating Schriever and, as a consequence, had tried to curry favor with him by repeatedly implying that Wilson could not be trusted. Ever since then, according to Habermohl, who revered Wilson and kept him informed of such intrigues, Belluzzo had become Schriever's spy and was supporting him in his attempts to take the credit for Wilson's ideas when talking to Himmler.

A nest of vipers, Wilson thought. Nevertheless, since he wanted to be rid of them all eventually, he would start by getting rid of Belluzzo, while simultaneously making Schriever less suspicious of him.

He would do it today.

Knowing that Schriever would be coming to see him at any moment, Wilson opened his briefcase, removed a selection of the technical papers he had collected during his week of traveling, and, as they were of no great significance, spread them out on his desk.

He knew that when Schriever entered the office, he would try, in his idiotically surreptitious manner, to see what they contained.

So he would actually give the fool these technical papers for innovations that were relatively useless.

No sooner had this thought made Wilson smile than Schriever walked in.

'Ah, Wilson, you're back!' he exclaimed in his friendly, false manner.

'Yes,' Wilson replied.

'You had a profitable trip?' Schriever asked, looking dashing in his flugkapitan's uniform, his forced smile slightly illuminating his lean, darkly handsome features.

'Very profitable,' Wilson said.

Schriever took the chair at the other side of Wilson's desk and gave his fullest attention.

'What did you find?' he asked breathlessly. 'Anything exciting or useful to us?'

Wilson had traveled far, talked to many, and learned a great deal. In factories hidden in the densely forested areas of the Schwarzwald he had been shown an experiment with a liquid gas that would, when blown with considerable force over an aircraft, catch fire from the exhaust and cause the aircraft to explode. In the R-Laboratory in Volkenrode he had been involved in heated discussions about electrostatic fields and gyroscopic controls and also discovered that by mixing a certain percentage of myrol with air, internal combustion engines would immediately begin to detonate irregularly or, depending on the mixture, stop completely. In the Henschel aircraft company he had examined a television component that would enable pilots to control bombs and rocket bombs after they had been launched, as well as a microtelevision camera that would be installed in the nose of an antiaircraft rocket and guide it precisely to its target. In the Luftwaffe experimental center at Oberammergau, in Bavaria, he had been given a demonstration of an apparatus capable of short-circuiting the ignition system of another aircraft engine from a great distance by producing an intense electrical field... and he had also learned about the development of radio-controlled interceptor weapons and planes, electromagnetic, electroacoustical, and photoelectric fuses, and even more advanced warheads that were sensitive to the natural electrostatic fields that surround aircraft in flight In the experimental center at Gottingen, he had been privileged to observe the test flight of a light-winged aircraft that had a slot running along the entire length of its wing span and an extra propellor in the fuselage to suck in the

boundary layer and increase the lift of the original airfoil by eight times. And finally, most important, at Berlin-Britz he had been shown a Kreiselgerat, the prototype of a new mechanism that had so far managed to reduce the oscillations of a violently shaking body to under one-tenth of a degree, thus paving the way for the conquest of the boundary layer.

He did not tell Schriever any of this.

Nor did he tell him that upon seeing the results of the oscillation tests in Gottengen, which had proved beyond doubt that the boundary layer could be conquered, he had suggested to Professors Ackeret and Betz that they concentrate on a revolutionary new structural design that would be devoid of all obstructing protuberances, such as wings and rudders, devoid even of the normal air intakes, and powered by a more advanced turbine engine - in other words, a more advanced version of the Horten brothers' tailless aircraft, or 'flying wing,' that would offer the least possible air resistance, suck in the dead air of the boundary layer, and then use that same air, expelling it at great force, to increase its momentum.

The eminent professors had agreed to do just this ... though Wilson didn't tell Schriever that.

'Naturally,' he said instead, 'the first thing I did was examine the Horten II, D-11-167, prior to its test flight in Rangsdorf, which turned out to be highly unsatisfactory. This so-called tailless aircraft possesses great static-longitudinal stability and complete safety in relation to the spin, but its control surfaces are so heavy that measurements of maneuvering stability couldn't be carried out. The unsatisfactory arrangement of its undercarriage necessitates too long a takeoff, the relation between its longitudinal, lateral, and directional controls is unsatisfactory, its turning flight and maneuverability are both fraught with difficulty, and side-slipping cannot be carried out With regard, then, to what we are doing, the Horten brothers are valueless.'

Wilson threw the drawings and technical summaries of the Horten brothers' flying wing across the desk as if they were dirt. Schriever picked them up as if he agreed ... but then, as

Wilson noted, let them rest on his lap and placed his hands protectively on top of them, no doubt to use later in his saucer designs.

'Anything else?' he asked.

Wilson nodded and tried to feign excitement. 'Yes,' he said. 'Some exciting innovations. The kind that could make your flying saucer even more powerful.'

'What?' Schriever asked. 'What?'

Knowing that Himmler's sole interest in a flying saucer was its potential as a weapon of war, Wilson told his devoted disciple, Rudolph Schriever, about such oddities as the proposed Windkanone - a cannon that shot gas instead of shells - and the Wirbelringkanone, or whirlwind annular vortex cannon, which was designed to shoot and then ignite a gas ring that would spin rapidly on its own axis and form a fierce ball of fire. Whether such weapons would work in practice was an issue of great doubt, but because Schriever wanted only news of weapons that would sound magical to his beloved Himmler, he lapped up what Wilson was telling him and snapped the relevant research papers from Wilson's hand as if wanting to eat them. Then, when Wilson offered him no more, he stood up to leave.

'One moment, Flugkapitan,' Wilson said.

'Yes?' Schriever responded impatiently, now wanting to leave. 'What is it now?'

'I feel I should warn you,' Wilson said as Schriever turned back to face him, 'that certain people are plotting against you.'

As most people in the Third Reich were already frightened of being plotted against or being reported for some damning misdemeanor, Schriever looked suitably shaken and sat down again.

'Plotting against me?' he said. 'Who would do that?'

'Belluzzo,' Wilson said without hesitation.

Schriever looked stunned. 'Belluzzo?' he repeated. 'But he's my most trusted colleague, Herr Wilson!' he blurted out, thus inadvertently confirming what Wilson had suspected.

Wilson sighed, as if saddened. 'I'm afraid your trust has been misplaced,' he said, leaning his elbows on his desk, resting his chin in his hands, and staring with concerned intensity at the clearly shocked Schriever. 'I have it on good authority - one of Himmler's aides, in fact - that Dr Belluzzo has been trying surreptitiously to steal credit for the great contributions you've so far made to Projekt Saucer and has even, in some of the reports, credited certain innovations to himself. He's doing this, I know, because he's so clearly jealous of your authority over the project, but I'm afraid he's being taken seriously by those around Himmler, which means that if he isn't stopped soon, those lies will soon reach Himmler himself and you'll have to defend yourself.'

Looking flushed, Schriever gazed through the glass wall at the flying saucer in the middle of the vast hangar, stared disbelieving at Dr Belluzzo, who was plump and gray-haired and wearing an oil-smeared white smock, then returned his stricken gaze to the front

'What will I do?' he asked, sounding frightened.

'You have to stop him,' Wilson said dryly.

'And how do I do that?'

'Get rid of him, Schriever.'

'And how do I do that?' Schriever asked.

Because Schriever did not know that Wilson was sixty-six years old, and because Wilson looked about fifteen years younger, he did not think he was in any way endangering himself when he said, 'Belluzzo is nearly seventy and beginning to show it, so why not put in an official report about his physical and mental condition, describing him as senile and progressively distracted and therefore an increasing threat to Projekt Saucer? Recommend that he be removed from the project and treated for his own good.'

'Treated?'

Wilson shrugged and sat back in his chair. 'Let's be honest,' he said. 'If you put in such a report, Belluzzo will be classified as mentally ill and incarcerated in a concentration camp as an undesirable. If there was another course of action I would

certainly recommend it, but there isn't, and under the circumstances...'

He didn't finish his sentence, but merely raised and lowered his hands as if it were in the lap of the gods. Schriever, released from moral responsibility in the matter, nodded his gratitude and stood up.

'Yes,' he said. 'Of course. It's the only thing to do. And thank you, Herr Wilson.'

'My pleasure,' Wilson said.

When Schriever had left, Wilson gathered the remaining technical notes together, placed them back in his already stuffed briefcase, then phoned through for his driver to come and collect him. When the uniformed SS driver arrived, he picked up Wilson's suitcase and walked ahead of him, merely glancing at the large flying saucer on the raised ramp, and led him out to the waiting car.

Wilson looked toward the firing range. He was on the proper side of it now. Wernher von Braun and his rocket teams had moved to Peenemunde on the island of Usedom, off the Baltic Coast, and Projekt Saucer had been moved to this side of the firing range, into the bigger, better-equipped hangars. As Wilson had felt increasing resentment at having regularly to pass on certain of his innovations to von Braun's A-2 and A-3 rocket projects, he had been relieved in more ways than one when they finally left.

He slipped into the car, sank into the rear seat, and relaxed during the fifteen-mile journey, through the cloudy, gray afternoon, to his new apartment in the Kurhessen district of Berlin. His former nurse, Greta, who'd been warned of his arrival, had prepared dinner for him.

Assigned to look after only him when he had been recuperating from the second of what he knew would be many operations designed to aid his longevity, Greta had also been instrumental in satisfying his old man's odd sexual whims, mostly of an oral and masturbatory nature. Then, when he had been awarded this spacious apartment by a satisfied Heinrich Himmler, Greta, obviously attracted by his authority and good

position in the Nazi hierarchy, had agreed to move in with him as his nurse, housekeeper, and mistress, with her duties in the latter category few and far between, as Wilson now noted without rancor.

Sexually abused as a child by her father, twice married, now widowed and a professional nurse, she was well-proportioned and auburn-haired with an attractive, worldly face, cold gray eyes, and a great deal of knowledge about the sexual needs of men, which was all Wilson needed. Greta had few illusions, was not blinded by emotionalism, and was probably even relieved to be receiving so much for doing so little. She kept a clean apartment, cooked only for herself since he never ate cooked foods, helped him produce the semen he needed for his continuing experiments, and had her occasional affairs on the side, about which he did not complain.

Sometimes she even gave him advice, as she now did over dinner.

'Did you visit the factory before you came home?' she asked him as she tucked into her Wiener schnitzel and he nibbled his dried vegetables and biscuits.

'Yes,' he replied. 'Everything was in order.'

'Did you see Rudolph Schriever?'

'Yes, of course. Why?'

'He came here yesterday,' Greta said, 'and feigned surprise when he didn't find you here. When I said you weren't returning until today, he made a great play of smacking his forehead with his hand and telling me what an idiot he was, that he'd simply forgotten.'

'You thought his visit was deliberate?'

'Yes,' Greta said, wise in the ways of men. 'In fact, I'm convinced of it. I think he just wanted an excuse to see how we lived - perhaps even look around.'

'Which you didn't let him do.'

'Of course not!'

Wilson smiled. 'I hope you invited him in for some tea, at least.'

'Yes, I did - and his eyes wandered all over the place. I could

see he wanted to check out the other rooms, but I kept him pinned to his chair.'

'Not physically, I hope.'

'No, he's not my type. I merely pinned him to the chair with my gaze and eventually let him go.'

'I hope the poor man at least enjoyed his tea.'

Greta didn't return his smile. 'Don't trust him,' she said.

'I don't.'

'Good. You can't trust anyone these days. But that kind, they're the worst'

'What kind?'

'The kind who are weak but have ambitions. They're always the worst.'

'I'll remember that,' Wilson said.

A few hours later, when he'd had a bath and was preparing for bed, he asked her to masturbate him and ensure that his semen wasn't lost She did it with practiced ease, making him come into a small dish, and when he saw it, he was reminded of his adolescence in Iowa, when he would hold his fresh semen in his hand and try to sniff out its properties.

He had been a scientist even then, always detached, investigating, and now, these many years later, nothing had changed. He was experimenting with himself, trying to find the secret of life, so this form of masturbation, while offering relief from his waning sexual agitation, was also serving a scientific purpose.

Greta transferred his semen from the small dish to a glass vial and put the latter into the refrigerator, to keep it cool until tomorrow, when she would deliver it to the experimental laboratory of the hospital where she worked. There the technicians, following Wilson's written instructions, would experiment with it. He was searching for a way to extend his life before his time ran out.

He slept soundly that night.

Three days later, two Gestapo agents wearing black greatcoats arrived at Kummersdorf to take Dr Belluzzo away. The old

man was shattered, not knowing why it was happening, and he protested in vain and collapsed into panic, and was staring entreatingly at Schriever and Wilson even as he was dragged away.

He was not seen again. He disappeared into the camps. A few months later Wilson heard that he had died of a heart attack, reportedly induced by increasing ill health, though more likely caused by maltreatment.

His original, unworkable designs for a flying saucer were locked up in Schriever's safe.

Clearly, Schriever thought he might find some use for them.

The thought of this amused Wilson who, no longer bothered by the old Italian physicist, was able to get on with his secret work with no spy looking over his shoulder and his conscience as clear as it always had been.

His Feuerball was taking shape.

Chapter Sixteen

Ingrid's mother answered the door, stared at Ernst in surprise, then looked embarrassed and tried to hide it by crying out, 'Ernst! You're back at last!' She took him into her arms to give him a hug, then stepped back and waved him inside. 'Come,' she said. The children will be so pleased to see you. They've missed you so much.'

Noting that she hadn't mentioned Ingrid's name and still looked embarrassed, Ernst picked up his suitcase and stepped into the apartment he had not seen for three months. It was late in the morning and both his children were in the living room, four-year-old Ula setting up blocks for baby Alfred, now fourteen months old. Alfred knocked the blocks down and giggled delightedly while Ula glanced sideways and saw Ernst, studied him with slowly dawning recognition, then shyly stood up to greet him.

'It's your father!' Ingrid's mother exclaimed, as if Ernst had been gone for three years instead of four months.

Realizing that he must seem like a stranger to his own daughter, and filling up with love for both children, Ernst set his suitcase down, fell to his knees, and swept the children into his arms, hugging them passionately.

'Don't be embarrassed,' he said, stroking Ula's flushed cheek and golden locks. 'I know I've been gone a long time and must seem like a stranger to you. But you'll get used to me again, my darling, before very long. And how pretty and grown-up you look. And Alfred!' He grasped the gurgling baby under the arms and held him up in the air.

'What a fine boy he is! Do you look after him, Ula?'

'Yes,' Ula replied, smiling.

'Good,' Ernst said. 'Very good!' He stood up and glanced around the room. 'Ingrid isn't here?' he asked, wondering why his mother-in-law was looking after the children.

'No,' his mother-in-law said too quickly, blushing again. 'She went to visit some friends.'

'Who?'

'I don't know,' she replied, avoiding his gaze. 'She told me, but I can't remember the name. I mean, she didn't know you were coming back today, so ...'

'When did she leave?' Ernst asked, feeling more disturbed.

'This morning.'

'Then you must have been here all night, Maria.'

'Yes - yes, I was!' And she nodded her head vigorously. 'I didn't want to have to get out of bed too early, so I decided to sleep here. But please, Ernst,' she added, changing the subject and waving toward the couch, 'sit down and take your boots off and let me fix you some tea. You must be exhausted.'

'I'm fine,' he replied, then knelt on the floor by his suitcase and proceeded to open it, determined to distract himself from his dark thoughts. 'I arrived in Berlin last night but had to report straight to barracks - and yes, I would like a tea. Here, Ula,' he said, opening the suitcase, 'I have some presents for you and Alfred. All wrapped up, just like Christmas!'

Already getting over her shyness, Ula unwrapped the doll that Ernst had, in fact, bought only this morning, right here in Berlin, along with Alfred's box of rattling toys. Nevertheless, she was delighted with it, and for the next half hour or so, Ernst enjoyed his tea, enjoyed watching his son and daughter playing with their presents, made desultory conversation with his normally pleasant but now clearly uneasy mother-in-law, and determined not to show the anger and suspicion he was feeling over Ingrid's unexpected absence.

After all, they had agreed to live separate lives, so he could not complain ...

The practice, however, was more difficult than the theory.

As he sat there, sipping tea, appreciating the feminine coziness of the apartment after the rigors of his sea voyage, he had to choke back his feelings of disappointment and loss. He had just returned from an epic journey, an historically important endeavor, and was not even being welcomed back by his wife... He filled up with self-pity, despised himself for it, and had managed to accept what he had wrought by the time Ingrid returned.

When she walked in and saw him, her face turned bright red. She was wearing a long gray coat and a broad black hat, but removed them first and composed herself. By the time she had crossed the room to kiss his cheek, her face had turned pale again and her vivid green eyes were cautious.

'Ernst!' she exclaimed, whispering into his ear. 'I didn't realize...'

Not having known the touch of a woman's body for a long time, he instantly filled up with longing when, for the brief duration of her chaste kiss, Ingrid could not prevent her body from touching his.

'I know,' he said as she stepped away from him, leaving only the intoxicating smell of her scent, the seductive warmth of her lips, and the bitter knowledge that she no longer desired him. They didn't tell us when we would be returning, so I couldn't tell you. Still, here I am.'

'Yes, Ernst' Her once-radiant smile was hesitant. 'Here you are!' Her gaze slipped away from him, fell on her mother, roamed the room, then finally, reluctantly, returned to him. 'So,' she said with forced gaiety, waving her hand to indicate the children. 'Have you noticed the change in them?'

The banality of the question almost amused him, and he did indeed smile. 'Remarkable,' he said. 'And Ula looks as lovely as her mother.'

At least Ula liked that remark, blushing and giggling.

'Tea!' Ingrid said, trying to be gay. 'At least mother's looked after you. Would you like something stronger?'

'A little schnapps would be nice.'

'You didn't ask me for that,' Ingrid's mother said too shrilly,

then, looking confused, added, 'Anyway, I have to be going now - and I'm sure you two have lots to talk about. My bag's packed already.'

'Mother, you don't have to—'

'No!' Ingrid's mother protested. 'I can't stay another minute! I promised to have chocolate with Fraulein Vogt at the Konditerei before I go home - and if I stay here any longer, I'll be late. I've already called for a taxi and packed my overnight bag.'

The repetition was a product of her embarrassment Clearly she was as relieved as Ernst was when the taxi came for her. When she had gone, after more oddly melodramatic hugging and kissing (which merely confirmed for Ernst that his suspicions about Ingrid were well founded), he felt the oppressive weight of the silence that filled up the cozy room.

Having poured two glasses of schnapps, Ingrid handed one to him and sat facing him. As he drank, feeling better with each sip, he studied his playing children, the golden girl and the giggling baby, glanced repeatedly around the room with its heavy, darkly varnished cupboards, lace tablecloths, doilies and curtains, Germanic bricabrac and paintings, and realized that no matter how homey it was, it was no longer his home.

He was a German soldier, an SS officer - the elite of Himmler's elite - and that made him different.

He no longer needed this.

'How was the trip?' Ingrid asked him.

'It wasn't a holiday, Ingrid.'

'I'm sorry. I didn't mean it to sound like that. I just thought it might have been exciting or glamorous. Was it?'

'No,' he said, offended at the very notion, 'but it was certainly worth doing.'

'Why?'

'I can't tell you that,' he said, though he wished that he could, now remembering with increasing pride how he had hammered the swastika into the snow-covered earth of Antarctica in that vast, haunting silence.

'Another vitally important secret of the Third Reich?'

'Your sarcasm is not required.'

He felt a touch of anger, but his sexual desire softened it. Ingrid had always been attractive - a prize catch, in fact - and right now, even trying to keep her distance, she glowed with an inner light, probably caused, as he bitterly realized, by the man she had come from. He tried to be objective about it, to keep their agreement in mind, but after four months at sea, faced with her sensual gratification, he surrendered to the very emotions he had been trained to despise.

'Where were you, Ingrid?'

She glanced at the children, then back at him. 'Do we have to discuss this now?'

'I've been away for four months,' he said, though he hadn't intended doing so, 'and you were gone when I came back.'

'I didn't know you were coming back,' she reminded him.

Tou know what I'm talking about, Ingrid. Why was your mother here?'

'I was visiting a friend.'

'All night?'

'Yes,' she said. 'All night' Before he could say anything else, perhaps frightened of his reaction, she told Ula to pick up their toys and take them into the bedroom. 'Your father and I have to talk,' she said, 'so you can play in there for a while.' When Ula had picked up the toys and started toward the bedroom, Ingrid, carrying Alfred, followed her daughter through the door; returning, she sat down, crossed her legs, and sipped some more schnapps.

'So,' she said, 'let's discuss it.'

'All night,' Ernst said, echoing her words with soft, deliberate malice.

'You knew before you left that I had a lover.'

'And you've just been with the same man?'

'Yes.'

'It's nice to know that if s lasting.'

'Yes, Ernst, it is.'

'Is he better than me in bed?'

'I don't think that question's relevant.'

'What is?'

'A lot of other things, Ernst. Sex isn't everything.'

'We both enjoyed it once.'

'I've never denied it.'

'But now you enjoy it more with him.'

'It's more than that, Ernst'

Tes,' he said, 'lots of other things. Such as?'

'Love and affection.'

Tou and I are married, Ingrid. Please remember that. Marriage isn't that easy.'

'No,' she said, 'it isn't that easy. Maybe that's why we failed.'

'I don't see how I failed you.'

'You gave me up for Adolf Hitler.'

'Be careful about what you say, Ingrid.'

'I want a divorce.'

He sighed, shook his head in disbelief, then finished his schnapps. 'We've discussed this before,' he reminded her, placing his glass on the table that separated them, 'and you know it's out of the question. I won't risk my career with a divorce. Who is this man anyway?'

'You don't need to know that'

'Not Jewish, I hope.'

'No.'

'Do I know him?'

'No.'

'If I discover that he's Jewish, I'll turn you in - for the good of the children.'

'How noble you are, Ernst' Ingrid lit a cigarette, blew the smoke toward the ceiling, then gazed obliquely at him through a blue haze. 'All right,' she said, 'for the good of the children, let's remain man and wife. I'll continue seeing my lover, you'll continue seeing your whores, and well both live happily ever after, while supporting the Third Reich.'

'Some day your tongue will get you into trouble.'

'At least it's still my tongue.'

The schnapps had helped to calm him down and now kept him in control. He stood up and straightened his jacket, feeling

very calm indeed, then walked around the low table and leaned down and slapped her face. Once. No more. A single, stinging blow. Then he straightened up and saw her look of shock and smiled thinly at her.

'Be a whore,' he said, 'but do it discreetly or you'll get worse than that' She didn't reply. She was rubbing her red cheek. He could hear the children playing in the bedroom and his heart went out to them. They were the new generation, the future, and he had to protect them. 'I'm going out,' he told Ingrid. 'I won't bother you with my attentions. Anything I want, I'll get from my favorite whore, who knows me better than you do. I anticipate being back for my supper, so please have it ready. When I'm on duty or at the barracks, you can do as you please; but when I'm here you will treat me as your husband. Is that understood?'

'Yes,' she said.

'Good.'

When he left, he closed the door without slamming it - like a dutiful husband.

With most of the day to kill before he had to report directly to Himmler, he took a packed, clattering tramcar to the city center, noted with grim pleasure that his newly laundered SS uniform encouraged people to lower their gaze nervously in his presence, disembarked in the Kurfurstendamm, and planned what to do while having his next glass of schnapps in a busy cafe. Realizing that his relationship with Ingrid was definitely finished and surprised at his lack of emotion about it, he thought of Brigette in the luxurious apartment on Tiergartenstrasse and knew instantly how he wanted to spend his afternoon.

'Darling!' Brigette exclaimed in that inimitably sensual, breathless manner when he phoned from the cafe. 'You're back at last from the high seas! Did you bring me a present?'

'Yes,' he lied, amused and excited by her husky-voiced, challenging mockery.

'Was it expensive, dear Ernst?'

'Yes, Brigette, it was.'

'Then come straight over, darling! I can't wait to see you!'

He bought her a diamond brooch in an expensive shop on Tauentzienstrasse, then walked to her apartment, still trying to adjust to the contrast between the isolation of sea and the energetic bustle of Berlin with its tramcars, buses, taxis, horsedrawn cabs, and growing number of army vehicles. An occasional mounted Storm Trooper made his way through the noisy traffic on his horse, the Nazi swastika and anti-Jewish signs were visible everywhere, and the green-uniformed, respected members of the Reichswehr mingled on the pavements with the feared Brownshirts, black-uniformed SS, and elegantly dressed shoppers and businessmen. All in all, on the surface, where the fear was not visible, the Third Reich seemed purposeful, energetic, and surprisingly prosperous.

Brigette also looked prosperous, even more so than usual. She came to the door wearing a shimmering lime-green bathrobe of pure silk, artfully opened at the top to expose her voluptuous, bare breasts, and her red hair, immaculately combed, fell around her calculating blue eyes and full, sensual lips. Her cigarette was in an ebony holder and her fingernails, Ernst noticed, were painted the same color as her hair.

'Ah!' she exclaimed with a throaty purr. 'My handsome lieutenant! I've missed you so much, cheri!'

She used the French endearment deliberately, making it sound deliriously decadent, and Ernst stepped quickly into the room and kicked the door closed behind him. He took her into his arms, pulling her to him, feeling her heat, and she just smiled, rubbing her belly lightly against him, then blew a cloud of smoke.

'Mmmm,' she murmured, letting her body sink against him. 'You greedy boy! You poor, famished hero. Did you miss me terribly, darling?'

'Yes,' he said, already breathless.

'And dream about me?'

'Yes, yes!'

'And remembered the things we had done together?'

'Yes, damn you! Yes!'

She chuckled, let him feel her heavy breasts, licked the side of his neck. 'And did pretty boy bring his expensive gift?'

'Yes', he said, almost bursting.

'You're so kind,' Brigette whispered, breathing into his ear, then chuckled throatily, jerked his hands off her and stepped away from him. The dressing gown had been tugged off one shoulder, exposing her breast. Ernst could feel his heart racing. Brigette held out her hand.

'I'm just a child at heart,' she explained. 'I can't wait to see it.'

She was smiling, but meant it, so he gave her the brooch, thinking of the many men who gave her presents, financial and otherwise. While she unwrapped his particular gift, he gazed into the bedroom behind her and noted that the bed was badly rumpled, as if used for more than sleep. Nothing had changed, which was fine by him. No more emotional entanglements: just gratification. Sensual pleasure and duty.

'Has my precious lieutenant been home yet?' Brigette asked as she unwrapped his gift.

'Yes,' he said.

'And how were your lovely wife and children?'

'Fine,' he said. 'In good health.'

'And you've come straight from there?' she asked with sly, exciting mockery as she pulled the wrapping paper off the box and let it fall carelessly to the carpet.

'Yes,' he said, unable to take his eyes off her bare skin, his senses in disarray.

She removed the lid from the gift box, studied the brooch with widening eyes, removed it and pinned it to her silk nightgown where it fell in shining folds and shadows over a perfect breast. She glanced down at it, her lips pouting greedily, then looked directly at him.

'Ravishing,' she said. Welcome back. Now what would you like to do?'

'Everything,' Ernst said, then stepped up to her, slid the dressing gown off her shoulders, and lowered his head.

'Nice,' Brigette said. 'Nice.'

When she was ready, she led him into the bedroom and let him share her unmade bed, where he finally felt at home.

Three days later, satiated by his loveless sexual exertions with the diabolically sensual Brigette, Ernst was walking with his beloved Reischsfuhrer, Himmler, through a long dark tunnel that had been carved out of the Kohnstein Mountain, near the town of Nordhausen in the southern Harz mountain range in Thuringia.

'I have a dream,' Himmler was saying quietly, academically, 'of an Atlantis reborn from the ashes of the forthcoming war: a society of masters and slaves, ruled by the elite of my SS. The new temples will be the factories, the laboratories and universities; the new religion will be knowledge and conquest the return of the Superman. And where will this new order be created? In the Antarctic, Lieutenant!'

The tunnel had only recently been hacked out of the interior of the mountain and was gloomily illuminated by the electric lights strung along its whole length. There were many people still working in it, mostly prisoners from the camps, few looking healthy, most covered in mud. All took great pains to keep their eyes lowered as Himmler and his entourage of assistants and bodyguards walked past them, watching them laying steel tracks and fortifying the walls that formed the great tunnel, as wide as a highway, at the end of which, as Ernst noticed with relief, there was a circle of light.

'You understand now, do you not, Lieutenant,' Himmler continued rhetorically as they tramped through the long tunnel, his normally soft voice even more difficult to hear because of the constant banging and clanging of the heavy work going on all around them, 'just how important your mission to the Antarctic was? The elite of my SS, the best of the best, will find a new home under the ice of the Antarctic, and there, uninterrupted and isolated from the imperfect world of normal men, will be forged into the first of the Supermen.

You have found the location for us, Lieutenant Stoll, and should be proud of yourself.'

As they walked deeper into the cold, dimly lit darkness of the tunnel, Ernst noticed that the slaving prisoners, most of whom looked underfed, were being guarded by immaculately uniformed SS officers, most armed with pistols or submachine guns, some carrying bullwhips. The clothes of many of the prisoners were in ribbons; some had skin that was freshly scarred.

A society of masters and slaves, he thought, and it all begins right here...

'I am not so sure, Reichsfuhrer,' he said, emboldened by the favor he had recently found with Himmler, 'that such an ambitious project, no matter how admirable, would actually be feasible.'

'I respect you for expressing your doubts,' Himmler said, feeling kindly disposed toward Stoll for his achievement in the Anatarctic, 'but what are they based on?'

'To create hidden colonies under the ice,' Ernst began, 'may not be that easy. The undertaking would have to be immense, and I do not think—'

'Look around you!' Himmler interjected with a rare display of excitement, waving his gloved hand to indicate those slaving along the length of the great tunnel. This is but one of two tunnels, eighteen thousand meters long. Leading off these tunnels will be fifty side chambers, a work area of one hundred and twenty-five thousand square meters, and twelve ventilation shafts, which already have been bored down to here from the peak of the mountain. As for these workers,' he continued, indicating with a careless wave of his hand the hundreds of unfortunates already working in the dimly lit gloom under the threat of bullwhip and bullet, 'they are merely the tip of the iceberg. Where they come from, there are thousands more - and thousands more after them - and we can obtain them whenever we need them and do what we will with them. Our supply of labor is endless.'

He stopped to study some prisoners who were laying down

the steel rails for the trains that would soon run through the tunnels, bringing in more workers, equipment, and, possibly, food. Ernst noticed, once more, that these particular workers were half starved, and understood that they would be worked to death and then casually replaced. A society of masters and slaves hidden under the earth ... He was moved by the grandeur of the concept and suddenly saw its potential.

When a bullwhip cracked behind them and someone screamed, Himmler twitched and walked on.

The slaves destined to work here,' he explained as they continued walking toward that expanding circle of light from the outside world, 'will come from a separate camp located in a hidden mountain valley, less than a kilometer from the entrance to this tunnel. And a new underground complex, to be linked to this one by another network of tunnels, is already being constructed sixteen kilometers under the ground around the town of Bleicherode, only twenty kilometers from Nordhausen. Between them, Nordhausen and Bleicherode will constitute the first of my SS underground factories - virtually living towns. And what we are doing here, Lieutenant, under the earth, we can also do under the ice of the Antarctic.'

At that moment, they stepped into the sunlight that was pouring into the end of the vast tunnel. Glancing down, Ernst saw a strip of ragged, bloodsoaked cloth in the mud, but he put it out of his mind as, walking beside Himmler, whose respect he had gained, he raised his face to let the sunlight warm it, then left the tunnel behind him.

The peaks and valleys of the densely forested mountains of Thuringia were spread out all around and below him in the sunlight of spring.

He breathed deeply of fresh air.

Himmler, also breathing the fresh air, again waved his hand - this time to take in the peaks and valleys spread out below and around them, under a radiant blue sky streaked with fat, snow-white clouds.

This whole area,' he said in his quietly grandiose manner,

'from the Harz Mountains to Thuringia, south of Prague and across to Mahren, is already littered with other tunnels and underground factories similar to this one - and soon they will be totally insular colonies, worked by masters and slaves, and unrestricted by commonplace, so-called moral thinking. And since the masters are the elite of my most trusted SS troops, the existence of these places is unknown to those who are not my most valued initiates. Unknown,' he added, lowering his voice even more and staring steadily at Ernst through his glittering pince-nez, 'even to those closest to our beloved Fuhrer. Do you understand what I'm saying?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst said.

Himmler nodded solemnly. 'And what we can do here,' he then repeated in his softly insistent manner, 'we can also do in the land you have claimed for us in the Antarctic. Yes, Lieutenant,' he said, nodding again, 'you have found the place for us.' Ernst swelled up with the pride he had almost lost through Ingrid.

The German genius,' Himmler said, 'has rendered the impossible the commonplace - and there, though invisible to the naked eye, my first colonies are taking shape underground.' He nodded, as if bowing to that sacred earth, then glanced sideways at Ernst 'It is my belief, Lieutenant, that these underground colonies, if created in the Antarctic, can, with the aid of the American's flying saucer, ensure the success of our forthcoming conquest of the whole Western world. By the time that has been completed - as surely it must - we will have moved the first of our men to the Antarctic to begin the Horbiger Projekt the creation of a society under the ice and the first steps toward the supremacy of Nordic man, who will, given time and Wilson's technology, evolve into the Superman.'

Aware that he had been selected and shaken by the honor, Ernst wanted Himmler to take hold of his shoulders and gently shake him like a beloved son; but he understood that his Reichsfuhrer, a true soldier, even a genius, could not stoop to the display of such emotions in front of his men. Under-

standing this, he tried to control his own emotions and instead simply nodded.

'Now that we have laid claim to Neuschwabenland in the Antarctic,' Himmler said, his pince-nez magnifying his mild eyes, 'it is my intention to ship specially trained SS troops, scientists, slave workers, and equipment there to first construct, then live in, an underground research establishment and its attendant accommodations, which will in time become a self-contained, living colony under the ice. And from there, with the aid of the products of Projekt Saucer, we will spread the rule of the Third Reich across the whole world. We will do this, Lieutenant!'

Ernst was taken aback by the sudden intensity of Himmler's words, then swept away on a wave of exultation by his Reichsfuhrer's unprecedented display of emotion. He had to look away from him to find the freedom of sky and light, but was drawn back when Himmler actually touched him, tugging the sleeve of his uniform.

Ernst looked down and saw the eyes behind the pince-nez as prisms reflecting light.

'You have done a wonderful thing,' Himmler said. 'You have planted our swastikas in the ice. I am now placing you in charge of this great operation: to create Horbiger's world of ice and fire under the Antarctic ice and, at the same time, keep a check on the vital progress of Projekt Saucer. This, Lieutenant Stoll, is your great mission on behalf of the Fatherland. Do not disappoint me.'

'No, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst replied, realizing in a flood of exhilarating emotion that he would be going back to Kummersdorf West and the world he belonged to. 'I will not disappoint you.'

Then he looked over the forested hills and valleys with the pride he had almost lost.

Chapter Seventeen

'I didn't get very far,' Bradley said, describing what he had seen in the immense barn in that desolate field near Mount Pleasant, Iowa. 'In fact, I'd barely walked past the door when the rim of that goddamned thing was in front of me.'

Recalling that eerie experience with vivid clarity, he wasn't comforted by the fact that the man to whom he was talking - retired US Army Air Force Wing Commander Dwight Nicholson - had insisted that they hold this conversation in a darkened room and was breathing like a man at death's door.

'It was shaped like a great steel saucer with a Perspex dome on top, taking up half the floor space of the barn and starting to rust. At first, I couldn't grasp what I was seeing, but it gradually dawned on me. It was the superstructure for some kind of flying machine - one shaped like a saucer.'

'A piloted machine,' Nicholson said, his voice sounding ghostlike.

'Yes. The Perspex dome turned out to be a circular cockpit, located at the center of the disc. The cockpit was fixed and the disc, in two parts, like one saucer placed upside-down on another, would have revolved around it.'

'And of course it was only a shell - there was no engine inside.'

'Right,' Bradley said. 'Even the goddamned control panel had been smashed to hell. He left nothing to chance.'

Wrong. He left the prototype. He could have blown it up. Why didn't he?'

'He didn't want to draw the attention of the neighboring farmers.'

'Or he wanted something to be found... to leave his mark.' Nicholson smiled, inhaled on his cigarette, and blew a couple of smoke rings toward the window overlooking the garden of his home in McLean, Virginia. The sun, shining brightly outside, was filtering through the drawn blinds and forming webs of light in the darkness around him, illuminating his dreadful face.

'Just what we found,' he said, his twisted smile displaying admiration. The superstructure for a saucer-shaped aircraft - but with nothing inside. Either that bastard had gutted his own machine, taking everything of value, or there'd been nothing inside it in the first place.'

'Which means?'

'We all believed then, and I believe now, that the craft that exploded over Tunguska, Siberia, wasn't piloted - it was some kind of missile - and that the superstructure we found later was a prototype for the first of his piloted craft. That's what we found - and what you found. Some smart cookie, that Wilson.' Nicholson shook his head from side to side, as if he couldn't believe it. 'We didn't know he'd left another one, that's for sure. In a barn in Iowa?'

'Right Up near the border of Illinois. Not far from Mount Pleasant, where Cohn and Goldman had their research establishment Apparently Wilson had been working in secret on the flying saucer in that barn while ostensibly producing airships for Cohn and Goldman.'

'In other words, he took them to the cleaners. They were financing his saucer project without knowing it.'

'Right,' Bradley said. 'It was Goldman's belief that Wilson had secretly been trying to solve the problem of the boundary layer and also working on a crude atomic propulsion system. This suggests that the propulsion system managed at a later date to fly some kind of object- as you say, some kind of missile - as far as Russia before it malfunctioned, blew up, devastated the forests of Tunguska, and led to the US government closing down Wilson's research establishment in Illinois and either classifying or destroying what they could find of his work.'

'Which is why you came to me?'

'Yes. After finding the remains of that saucer, I checked out what Abe had told me and learned that it was essentially correct - that after Cohn and Goldman had gone bust, the US Army Air Force had opened a file on a similar company located just across the state line, in Illinois. Unfortunately, in those records, the names of those involved had been erased. But then I saw, in other records in Washington, that you'd been in charge of that operation just before you retired. And since you're an old friend and all...'

Nicholson smiled. 'Yeah, Mike, I understand. Can I take it that this is all off the record?'

'You are retired, Dwight.'

'I still want it to be off the record. I don't want my name mentioned.'

'You have my word on it'

Nicholson nodded and grinned laconically. You could actually see the twisted grin in the semidarkness, but it didn't look real.

'Okay,' he said. This is all based purely on recollection; I don't have any backup.'

'I'll take what I can get, Dwight'

'Are you sure you don't want a drink?'

'It's only ten in the morning.'

Nicholson simply shrugged, sipped some whiskey, inhaled and blew more smoke, which made Bradley feel bad.

In 1918, when Bradley had just about turned twenty, he'd been a naval aviator under Nicholson's command, flying the old wood, wire, and canvas biplanes from their primitive carriers out at sea to the bloody battlefields of the western front. After the war, when Bradley had gone into law, Nicholson had returned to the intelligence work he'd been doing previously for the army air force. Then his wife, at fifty-eight, had died from a brain hemorrhage, and after that the spirit had gone right out of him. Still with the army air force's technical intelligence branch, he'd developed a drinking problem, then ulcers, and had then been retired prematurely, looking like

an old man. About a year ago, he had bought himself an old de Havilland two-seat Tiger Moth biplane and started to give flying lessons. Under the influence of alcohol, he'd crashed the plane, killing his passenger and seriously burning himself. Now his face was hideous, his skin livid and scarred, his lips practically burned off, along with his hair and eyelids, and he lived here alone, in this too-large house in McLean, Virginia, smoking and drinking most of the day and going out only rarely.

It was frightening to visit him.

'What Goldman told you was substantially correct,' he said in an unnatural tone of voice. 'I don't think I have to tell you that after the Great Airship Scare of 1896 to 1897, the army air force began taking a particular interest in anything new or novel in the aeronautical field.'

'That figures,' Bradley said.

'Well, since most of the major reports mentioned a man named Wilson - and since most of them also named either Iowa or Illinois as the origin of the mystery airships and their equally mysterious crew members - it wasn't too difficult to discover that a certain John Wilson, exceptional graduate of MIT and Cornell, was designing and constructing airships for the Cohn and Goldman Company in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. Since this was a perfectly legal occupation, we did nothing but surreptitiously keep our eye on his progress. We only became concerned when shortly after the end of the scare, we received a pretty startling report, stating that Cohn and Goldman's five airships had been destroyed by an unknown demolition expert, thus breaking the company, and that while no evidence could be found to prove that the deed had been done by Wilson, it had been ascertained that he'd mysteriously made a small fortune at approximately the same time and, shortly after, opened his own research establishment in Illinois. It was believed, but could not be proven, that he had made that money by illegally selling his airship designs to a German aircraft company, possibly Zeppelin - and according to Cohn and Goldman, the designs he had let them patent were actually

worthless. So, while Cohn and Goldman went bust, Wilson was opening his own research plant in Illinois...'

'And?'

'We paid him a visit in Illinois. We informed him of our suspicions, which he naturally denied, and when we asked him what his intentions were, he said he was moving on from airships to heavier-than-air manned flight but was being hampered by his limited financial resources. Clearly the money paid by the Germans would not last forever.'

'What did you think of him personally?' Bradley asked, still trying to fit a face to his mysterious quarry.

'I'll never forget him,' Nicholson replied without hesitation. 'He wasn't even thirty, but he seemed a lot older - though what burned itself into my memory was his coldness. A really strange kind of coldness. He wasn't arrogant, rude, unfriendly, or antagonistic - no, none of those things. He was just remarkably detached, inhumanly pragmatic, almost machinelike in the way he listened and responded ... He lacked normal emotions...'

Nicholson shivered, as if brushed by a cold breeze, then stubbed his cigarette out and slumped back in his soft chair.

'Did the air force get involved with him?' Bradley asked.

'Yes,' Nicholson said. 'Nervous about what he might do, but with no legal right to stop him, we decided to get some jurisdiction over him by offering the money he would need for his more ambitious projects. He accepted on the grounds that we didn't attempt to supervise him and content ourselves with monthly reports and regular inspection visits to his plant. We agreed, thinking that would be enough for us - but naturally, given Wilson's nature, it wasn't.'

'So you were involved with the saucer-shaped aircraft?'

'No. We didn't know a damned thing about them. Wilson conned us, just like he'd conned his previous financiers. What we got in our reports, and what we viewed in our many inspection visits to his plant in Illinois, was the prototype for a highly advanced turboprop biplane - and frankly, we were more than impressed. Clearly, we were dealing here with a

genius - and by 1903, even before the Wright brothers had made their first, widely publicized flight at Kitty Hawk, I was privileged to witness the secret test flight of Wilson's completed aircraft. That flight was more than successful - it was absolutely astonishing ... and that's when we got scared.'

'Why?'

Nicholson reached for the bottle of whiskey, filled his glass up to the brim, drank almost half of it, topped the glass up again. 'After the notorious Cohn and Goldman affair,' he said, his voice emanating from the semidarkness in a quavering, ghostlike manner, 'we knew that Wilson couldn't be trusted. For that reason, I'd planted one of my own engineers in his team with orders to keep his eyes and ears open for anything not mentioned in Wilson's reports or viewed by us during our visits. While this man never got too close to Wilson, he did pick up enough whispers to convince him that Wilson - just as he had done with Cohn and Goldman - was showing us only the tip of his particular iceberg; that even though his turboprop biplane was more advanced than anything else we knew about, he was reportedly working on some other project, involving the boundary layer and some unknown form of propulsion, in another hangar, located a mile or two from his main plant.

'Knowing how advanced the biplane was, we were naturally scared shitless at the very thought of boundary-layer experiments and an unknown propulsion system - then, when in 1908 our man reported whispers about the flight of a small, pilotless object that had actually managed to reach Russia, we naturally became very concerned indeed ... And we were preparing to take over Wilson's plant and demand the location of his secret hangar when that dreadful explosion occurred over Tunguska, in Russia. It occurred over Tunguska, you understand, and we knew what that meant.'

'Something exploded in the air.'

'Right.'

'And whatever it was, you don't think it was piloted.'

'No, we didn't then and I still don't. Bear in mind that Wilson's secret work was being conducted in what was no

more than a converted barn near the main plant. Given this, I think it's safe to assume that he wasn't designing something nearly as big as an airship or aircraft. In fact, our spy had heard from other engineers stories about a small, disc-shaped object - no more than a foot in diameter - which when test-flown looked like a fiery ball. It's my belief that that small, probably remote-controlled object was what exploded over Tunguska - and that the large, saucer-shaped superstructures since found were just that: empty superstructures for the larger, piloted craft that Wilson intended to construct along the same lines as the smaller object. Then, of course, when the smaller object exploded over Russia, we had to put a stop to it.'

'How did Wilson respond to that?'

'He blandly denied our charges as well as the existence of his secret hangar, or barn, so we closed down his plant in Illinois, confiscated everything we could find - which naturally didn't include anything we hadn't already known about - and told Wilson that if he wanted to continue working on research projects, he would have to do it under our supervision, in our own research establishments. Wilson said he would think about it... A few weeks later, we found that empty superstructure in a hangar a few miles from his plant in Illinois. We never found anything else ... and then, before we could interrogate Wilson about it, he fled Illinois and went underground. I never saw him again.'

He lit a cigarette, blew another cloud of smoke, then raised the glass to his twisted lips and drank it. Bradley stood.

'Thanks,' he said. 'And look after yourself, Dwight.'

'There's nothing left to look after,' his friend replied. 'It's just a matter of time now. A real glamorous business, being a pilot - right? We don't believe this can happen.'

'Right,' Bradley said.

He placed his hand on his friend's shoulder, squeezed it affectionately, then turned away and walked from that dark place without glancing back.

The sunshine was wonderful.

* * *

In the train back to Connecticut, he opened the latest letter from Gladys Kinder, this one dated October 5, 1938.

Dear Mike,

This morning the Germans marched into Czechoslovakia to ecstatic cheers, the pealing of bells, and the pronouncement by Adolf Hitler that this was the latest step in his glorious march into the great German future. God help Europe, I say.

Did you miss my letters, Mike? I hope so. Apart from my telegrammed communiques to the Roswell Daily Record, my letters to you, to your office high above Manhattan, are my only real contact with America. That reason for writing is important - it's my hold on where I came from - but I have to confess that I also write them out of girlish compulsion.

You were so charming, Mike.

Ah, ha! you're thinking. She's making fun of me again! Well, maybe so... But I hope you missed my letter, missed the letters, missed me. Not that you'd admit it if you did - you lamentably decent married man, who found me too bold by far. I think that's what I loved in you.

I also love the odd formality of your letters - written secretly, doubtless - God, yes, I enjoy that thought! Bradley scribbling in secret, his cheeks flushed, above the towers of Manhattan.

Your letters, which are filled with a lawyer's reticence, somehow manage to make me feel like a scarlet woman. That's quite an achievement, bud. You make me feel that I'm wallowing in iniquity without its actual pleasures - and that's another achievement!

Enough! Let's be serious...

I haven't written for the past eighteen months because I've been traveling. Spain, of course, with the International Brigade, meeting Orwell and Hemingway and all the other, less celebrated intellectuals who idealistically swopped their pens for rifles and often died for the privilege. I didn 't carry a rifle - my pen and notebook were too heavy - but I was in the market of Guernica, buying some groceries, when the German air force bombed it with high explosives, set it alight with

incendiary bombs, then strafed the men, women, and children with machine-gun fire. What I saw there is best not described, but it left its mark on me. It was all I could take.

I returned to London in time to describe, for the loyal readers of the Roswell Daily Record, how King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were crowned, with magnificent pomp and splendor, in Westminster Abbey. I loved it all, I do confess - it was like a Hollywood musical: the golden coach drawn by eight grays, with four postilions and six footmen, plus eight grooms and four yeomen of the Guard walking beside it. What with that and the royal outfits of deep red and snow-white ermine, not to mention the thousands thronging the Mall and Trafalgar Square, I doubt that Cecil B. De Mille could have done it better - and certainly, after Spain and some weeks in Nazi Germany, it all seemed so civilized.

I was reminded of you when, a week before the Coronation, the great German airship, the Hindenburg, exploded in New Jersey, after crossing the Atlantic from Frankfurt. Then Jean Harlow died and was followed by George Gershwin and I started to think of passing time and my age - and the fact that the last time I saw you, which was only the second time, was almost five years ago. I was going to write you, but I was packed off to Germany by my good friends in Roswell.

The first thing I reported from Germany was the reorganization of the concentration camps, most notably the new establishment opened at Buchenwald, in Thuringia, to house more enemies of the state, and the changes of administration in the camps at Dachau, Sachenshausen, and Lichtenburg, all of which are democratic enough to take women prisoners as well as other automatic enemies of the glorious Third Reich, including Jews and Communists, though gypsies, the mentally ill, and other so-called undesirables are certainly in line for consideration.

God help Europe, indeed!

Here in London, they're already building air raid shelters and providing local authorities with millions of sandbags. What can this mean, we ask? 'Peace for our time,' says Neville

Chamberlain. Pull the other one, Neville...

And so I think of you. I think of you when I think of America, which I did when Harlow and Gershwin died and my age started telling. And I thought of you and my age when the Hindenburg exploded and I was reminded of airships and aeronautics in general and my former lover, John Wilson, in particular because through him I met you.

Can you believe that we first met nearly eight years ago? Can you believe, also, that we've actually only met twice and that the last time was nearly five years ago? We met through John Wilson, are haunted by him, and are helplessly tied to one another by his ghost.

Three up for John Wilson.

You keep writing and asking me questions about Wilson and it makes me feel worthless. I've been married and divorced and I've known lots of men, but you, Mike Bradley, solid citizen and moral man, are only interested in what I knew about Wilson. I feel as if I'm invisible.

Okay, down to business...

I asked a pragmatic friend in the British Defence Department to check their report on the Tunguska explosion in Siberia and tell me what their assessment of it was. Frankly, given normal British skepticism, their assessment was almost weird in its conviction that something odd had occurred and that it had not been caused by a meteor or other extraterrestrial source. In fact, according to British intelligence: (1) nothing crashed into the Tunguska forest; (2) the angle of the trees bent by the blast proved that the explosion had occurred above them, not within them; (3) pieces of an unknown metallic compound were found at the scene of the devastation; and (4) just before the explosion, a lot of those living in the area reported seeing what appeared to be a small, fiery ball sweeping across the sky above the forest. Then it went down and - whammo!

A small fiery ball with a dark core, possibly metallic...

The public stance in Britain was that the explosion had been caused by a meteorite - but the private stance, at least

that of the Department of Defence and British intelligence, was that it had been caused by some kind of man-made object that did not - repeat: didnot- come from Russia, but from outside its borders. Also, the reported sightings seemed to suggest that the object, whatever it was, had not come down from the stratosphere, but had been completing a descending trajectory at the end of a flight from west to east. In other words, it could have come from Europe, the Atlantic Ocean, North America, Canada, Alaska, or even farther... Unless it originally left Russia, circled the globe and returned to its source, which seems too ridiculous. The Brits, then, decided that if a terrestrial object had been involved - and they certainly weren't too sure of that - then it probably emanated from Europe, possibly Germany.

So what do you think, bub?

I know what you think. You think it came from Wilson, from Iowa or Illinois, and that it flew from North America, across the Atlantic Ocean, across Europe, then on to Russia ... And having known Wilson, I think you might be right.

Is Wilson still in Germany? Yes, I think so - but I still can't confirm it. Asking questions there, I quickly found out, can be pretty dangerous. Nevertheless, I'm going back there, for the humble Roswell Daily Record, and if I find out anything at all, I'll certainly let you know.

I really enjoy writing these letters. It's like having a drink with you. I never loved John Wilson - he was too cold and remote for that - and when I met you, though you've never laid a hand on me, I understood why. I can write about Wilson now because he's everything you're not: a man whose lack of feeling reminds me of all the feelings you hide.

You wanted me so much, Bradley -you couldn 't hide it and I couldn't resist it. But what I loved you for (yes, I did and still do) was the knowledge that no matter how much you wanted me, you also loved your wife and kids too much to let me be a threat to them.

Which just made me love you more.

I can say that now - can't I, Mr Bradley? Because being

at the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, I'm no longer a threat to you.

That's why I'm bold with you.

I'll write again when I get back from Germany. Adios, mi amigo.

Yours from too great a distance,

Gladys

Hiding his emotions, as Gladys had known that he would, Bradley folded the letter neatly, placed it back in his billfold, and gratefully climbed off the train when it arrived in Bridgeport. Given the guilt he was feeling over what he had not done, though had certainly briefly contemplated, he was glad that Joan didn't know when he was coming back and so wasn't at the station to meet him. Instead, he caught a bus, which he had not done for years, and simply by doing that for a change, felt that he had stepped back in time and was returning from high school.

That journey home, through the greenery of Connecticut, certainly made him feel young again, if only for a short time. And feeling young, he thought of Gladys, who also made him feel young, and recalled all the letters she had sent him over the years, ever since leaving the United States to work in England and Europe. The letters were like the woman, at once laconic and suggestive, and as they had only met twice and hadn't seen one another for almost five years, Bradley couldn't quite work out just how sincere they were, let alone what his reaction to them was or should be.

He had certainly found her very attractive and, in truth, still did, but he found the addiction more disturbing because he could not believe in it. He thought of her too much, even dreamed erotically about her - and could only explain this lasting attraction as part and parcel of his growing obsession with the mysterious John Wilson.

If not for Wilson, whom ironically he had never seen, he would not have met Gladys Kinder in the first place.

Two obsessions in one.

Stepping down from the bus as the sun sank beyond the trees, he walked up the garden path of his ranch-style house, thinking guiltily of Gladys Kinder, whom he had loved only in dreams, and of her former lover, now his quarry, John Wilson, whose genius, being ruthless and amoral, was increasingly frightening.

God knows what Wilson was creating in Hitler's Third Reich.

Maybe only God knew.

The first thing Bradley saw when he entered the house was the partially eaten birthday cake on the table. He briefly froze where he stood, on the threshhold of the living room, burning up with guilt when he saw Joan, standing by the table in the brightly lit room, turning to face him, her lovely smile absent.

Welcome home,' she said quietly, venomously. You missed the party, unfortunately.'

'I'm sorry,' Bradley said. 'Dammit, I forgot I got involved with—'

'A man called Wilson. Yes, Mike, I guessed. You promised you wouldn't let it become an obsession. Dammit, you promisedV

'I'm sorry. Where's Miriam?'

'Here, Dad.' He glanced to the left and saw her sitting on the couch beside her fiancee, Ralph Beaker. 'Don't worry about being so late. I'm not bothered, honest.'

'I'm bothered,' her mother retorted, sipping sherry and looking pretty with her angrily flushed cheeks. 'He never remembers anything anymore. He hardly remembers he lives here.'

'He's not that bad,' Miriam said with an encouraging smile that made Bradley feel worse. 'And he's still my one and only dad - the best in the house.'

She was twenty-two today, taller than Bradley, slim and darkly attractive like her mother, and he could hardly believe she was that age and engaged to be married. No more than he could believe that his son, Mark, was now twenty-three, married, with a pleasant, pregnant wife, and living in New

Jersey, from where he commuted to Manhattan to help in the law office now that Bradley was otherwise engaged with his informal intelligence gathering.

'Dammit,' he said, shocked that time was passing so quickly and therefore feeling more guilty, 'I really am sorry, Miriam. It's just this job. I just—'

'Come and give me a kiss, Dad, and then have some cake. It's only my birthday, for God's sake!'

'Now if you forget to turn up on our wedding day,' Ralph said with a laconic grin, 'she just might—'

'Believe me, I won't forget' Grinning brighter than he felt and ignoring Joan's angry glance, he walked across the room, shook Ralph's hand, then leaned down to kiss his daughter on the cheek. 'Can I join you all in a drink at least?' he asked.

'Sure,' Miriam said. 'Why not?'

The evening progressed smoothly enough after that, with the liquor easing the tension for everyone, apparently, except Joan. Though she tried hard to be pleasant, she let him know with every glance that his increasing neglect of his family, caused by his obsession with John Wilson, would not be quickly forgiven. Bradley anesthetized himself with liquor, getting drunk without showing it, and when he spoke to his daughter's fiancee later that evening, he knew that at least the younger folk were unconcerned.

Not that it helped him much.

In bed, Joan lay as stiff as a plank and stared at the ceiling. When he reached out to her, she rolled onto her side and whispered, 'No! Not tonight! Don't think that being drunk will make it better. I'm not that easily swayed.'

'Dammit, Joan, I just forgot!'

'You forget too much too often these days. Our marriage nearly broke up before when you became obsessed with your legal work; now that you're becoming obsessed with intelligence gathering, we're going through the same thing. You're just a boy at heart, Mike, easily bored, wanting adventure; and when that particular itch gets a hold of you, God help us all. You even forgot your daughter's goddamned

birthday! Go to hell, Mike. Just let me sleep.'

He felt cut to the quick, flayed by the brutal truth, yet as he lay there beside her, his eyes closed, trying to sleep, his guilt gave way to fantasy, to visions based on speculations, some of which involved Gladys Kinder, whose face he knew so well, and others involving a man called Wilson, whose face was a blank wall.

His twin obsessions formed the roots of a tree whose branches spread through his sleep, drooping over a dark abyss.

A ball of fire with a spherical, silvery core arched through that vast, disturbing darkness and drew him into oblivion.

He slept the sleep of the haunted.

Chapter Eighteen

'It will work,' Wilson said emphatically, buttoning up his greatcoat and glancing at the relatively small, disc-shaped metal object that was resting on the raised platform in the work bay of the second most secret area of Kummersdorf. 'We still have a lot of work to complete, but I believe it will work.'

The dark, lean-faced Rudolph Schriever, wearing oil-smeared coveralls, smiled with scarcely concealed excitement. The Feuerball was about three feet in diameter, had the general shape of two plates placed one upon the other, and had no visible air intakes or other obstructing protuberances, such as wings and rudders. Thus it had a smooth, seamless appearance. It was, in fact, the first flying wing that Wilson had attempted to construct since his disaster over Tunguska, and he was using it as a prototype for the larger, piloted craft being constructed laboriously in the main hangar.

'What we have here, gentlemen,' he continued as Habermohl and Miethe began draping a protective canvas sheet over the saucer-shaped, metallic object, 'is a circular flying wing that will offer the least possible air resistance, suck in the dead air of the boundary layer, and then use that same air, expelling it at great force, to increase its momentum even more. However,' he added deliberately, looking directly at the excited Schriever, 'even with this design, the boundary layer, though dramatically reduced, will still be present - and until we find a means of defeating it, the capabilities of our Feuerball and larger saucer will be severely limited. This, gentlemen, is the problem we still face. Good night to you all.'

He turned away and walked out as the canvas sheet fell over the Feuerball and Schriever's look turned to one of frustration. Leaving the workshop and stepping into the freezing November winds that howled across the nearby firing range into the lamplit parking lot, Wilson glanced at the main hangar, its walls being swept by searchlights, then smiled to think of Schriever's frustration. He climbed into his car, given his own car at last, drove out through gates guarded by SS troops, and headed back to Berlin.

He was amused by Schriever's frustration. Knowing that the ambitious young flugkapitan was nominally in charge of Projekt Saucer and reporting directly to Himmler, usually with exaggerated declarations of his own contributions to the work in progress, Wilson had continued to massage his ego by helping him to believe in his own importance. But occasionally, as he had just done, he could not resist slapping him down with another, seemingly insurmountable problem.

What he had not told Schriever, and was not about to, was that he knew how to solve the problem of the boundary layer: by using a kind of porous metal similar to that which he had created so many years ago. Undeterred by the previous disaster and now with vast technical and human resources he had not had, he knew that he would soon meet with success.

Tentatively named Luftschwamm, or aero-sponge, and essentially a combination of magnesium and aluminum, his unique metal was being created under his personal guidance in the research plants of distant Gottingen and Volkenrode. When completed, it would be used only for the flying saucer that he intended to construct without Schriever's knowledge. As for Schriever's Feuerball and flying saucer, they would fly well enough to keep him and Himmler happy - but that's all they would do.

Approaching the outskirts of Berlin, he looked into the evening darkness and was surprised to see a red glow in the sky above the rooftops of different areas of the city. The glowing pulsated and shifted, here and there obscured by smoke, became a deepening, eerie crimson as he came closer

to it. The city's in flames, he thought, rolling his window down, smelling smoke. As he drove on toward home, he realized that it was the Kurhessen district, where he now lived, that was aflame.

Then he heard the breaking of glass, screams and shouts, then more glass breaking and raining upon stone, obviously the pavements.

Shop windows were being smashed.

Instantly alert, he drove into the Kurhessen district and was surprised, at this late hour, to see the streets packed with people. A nearby synagogue was on fire, and the crimson and yellow light of the flames illuminated a nightmare. Fashionable, middle-class people were clapping and cheering as roaming gangs of youths beat Jews senseless with lead piping, smashed the windows of their shops, and strewed their possessions along the gutters while Storm Troopers looked on smiling, when not actually joining in. Broken glass was everywhere, glittering in moonlight and crimson glare, splashed with the deeper crimson of human blood, spreading over the road. Another Jew screamed and was beaten down by swinging lead pipes as more women applauded.

Wilson kept driving.

It was a hellish, dangerous business, with violence and destruction all around him. He drove past more burning synagogues, more gangs of youths in pursuit of Jews, was waved on by exultant Storm Troopers. The air was filled with thickening black smoke, illuminated by flames, and rang with desperate cries. He heard gunshots, more smashing glass, screams and oaths. As he turned off the main road, away from a blazing shopfront, he passed a gang of youths who were beating a bearded old man with wooden poles. Women were wailing as their husbands and children were kicked and battered. Then eventually he found himself outside the apartment building where he lived quietly with Greta.

He climbed out, locked the door of the car, and noticed that a black SS car was parked a few doors farther along. He also noticed that a lot of neighbors were talking excitedly to one

another. He hurried inside as another gang of youths came running along the street, filled with blood lust and bawling excitedly.

Animals, Wilson thought. Civilization is a sham. We are still protecting our caves. Thank God, in whom I do not believe, that science will change all that.

When he let himself into his apartment, Greta was gazing down through the window.

Beside her was the recently promoted SS Captain Ernst Stall, also gazing down at the street below, his face handsome and solemn.

They both turned to look at Wilson, then Greta hurried forward, kissed him on the cheek, and stepped back again.

'Thank God you weren't hurt,' she said. 'We were worried about you.'

'No,' he replied. 'I'm fine... but what's going on?'

'I believe it was—'

The recent murder of Counselor Ernst von Rath,' Stall explained, 'has led to anti-Jewish riots here and in the Magdeburg-Anhalt district.'

Wilson was surprised to find Stall there, as he hadn't seen the captain for many months. Obviously the recent assassination of the German Foreign Office official in Paris by a demented young Jew, Herschel Grynszpan, had been used as yet another excuse to arouse more anti-Semitic feelings. Wilson said, 'I suspected that Rath's death would lead to trouble, but these riots seem...'

'Yes,' Stall said with a thin smile, 'organized. With the assistance of the Storm Troopers and SA - since our beloved Fuhrer has declared that the riots, now spreading throughout the country, should not be discouraged. Taking the Fuhrer at his word, Goebbels has ordered a pogrom, and right now, with the aid of the SD, SA, and SS, hundreds of Jewish shops, homes, and synagogues throughout Germany are being set to the torch and the Jews themselves, after public humiliation and abuse, are being rounded up and sent to concentration camps - a night to remember, yes?'

Ignoring Stall's dry mockery, Wilson went to the window and looked down on the street where, in the lamplight, an unfortunate Jew was being tugged by his beard along the street by a laughing Storm Trooper while a gang of youths spat upon him, kicked him, and took punches at him.

Wilson, though feeling nothing for the Jew, had no respect for the youths.

'Animals,' he said, putting his thoughts into words. 'We're still as mindless as savages.'

'You see cruelty down there, Herr Wilson?'

'I just see wasted energy.'

When he turned away from the window, Ernst was smiling sardonically. 'Ah, yes,' he said, 'you have no time for human emotions. You prefer the intellect, the calmly reasoning mind, the cold light of pure thought.'

'That's correct,' Wilson said, ignoring Stoll's soft sarcasm. 'Most human emotions are primitive impulses. I prefer science, unimpeded by human weakness.'

'You love science - and love is an emotion.'

'No, Captain Stoll, I don't love science. In fact, I respect it. Only science can lead us away from the caves and into our destiny.'

'Which is?'

'Knowledge for the sake of knowledge. The evolution of reason.'

'Naturally,' Ernst said. 'You're the most ruthless man I ever met - and I've met a few. You are made of ice, Wilson.'

So Stoll, though no longer shocked by the gross behavior of his military friends, nevertheless could still be shocked by his unyielding single-mindedness. Wilson recognized that far from being the cynic he pretended, Stoll was in fact a disillusioned romantic of the most impressionable kind.

This one I can use, he thought.

'I haven't seen you for a long time,' he said. 'Not since you were shipped to the Antarctic. What are you doing here?'

'Because of my services in the Antarctic, I have just been placed in charge of your research institute at Kummersdorf.

In future, then, you will report directly to me, since I, and not Flugkapitan Schriever, will act as your channel to Himmler.'

Secretly pleased to hear this, Wilson took care not to show it, and simply said, 'You didn't come here to tell me that, so why did you come?'

'I want to show you the state of Germany,' Ernst said. The country you work for. I want to know what you think of it. Are you willing to come with me?'

'Now?'

'Yes.'

'Is that an order?'

'This is the night of breaking glass, Mr Wilson, and I want you to see it. No, it's not an order - it's a suggestion. This is a night to remember.'

Wilson grinned, knowing he was being tested, then nodded his head. 'All right, I'll come.'

'I want to come as well,' Greta said. 'I don't want to be left here.'

There were screams and shouts from outside, then the sounds of more breaking glass. Wilson glanced at the window, then at Greta, and saw the excitement in her hard eyes.

'Of course,' he said. 'Why miss such an experience? Let's all go right now.'

The gang of violent youths had disappeared from the street, leaving the bloody man groaning in the gutter. Many stolid citizens stared on from their doorways without coming forward to assist him. As Ernst stepped out of the doorway, the black SS car that Wilson had noticed earlier pulled up to them and stopped to let them get inside. When they were seated, with Ernst up front beside the driver, the car moved off smoothly.

It was a journey through hell.

Ernst made the driver take them through the riot-torn city, first through their own district, which was burning and wreathed in smoke, then to the Magdeburg-Anhalt district where the broken glass glittered in the moonlight around a great many broken, bloody bodies and the debris from looted shops. The assaults were continuing. People ran to and fro,

some laughing, others screaming. Applause drowned out cries of terror, and the synagogues they passed were on fire and collapsing in showers of sparks. From there they drove to the train station and went inside. Ernst led them to the platforms where hundreds of frightened Jews were being herded onto the trains that would take them away.

'To where?' he asked rhetorically.

'The concentration camps,' Wilson said.

'Correct,' Ernst said. The concentration camps. Now let's see something else.'

He was like a man obsessed, wanting to plumb the depths of horror, but Wilson saw where the real horror lay - not outside, but within. He saw it in Greta's excitement when she watched the beatings and humiliations, in the revulsion that Stoll could not hide when he saw the same sights, in the dread that started filling Stoll's gaze when he saw Wilson's indifference.

Finally, in the SS hospital on the outskirts of Berlin, in the laboratories and operating theaters where the human experiments were conducted, Wilson saw Stoll looking at him, trying to search for a weakness. He merely nodded, quite deliberately, in his most thoughtful manner, and said, while casting his gaze over the tortured people on the tables, 'It's good that there are many more where these came from. The experiments on longevity and other matters will take lots of time.'

Ernst practically stepped away from him, as if touched by scorching heat. 'And that's all you see here, Wilson? This is nothing but meat?'

'We are merely the creatures of evolution,' Wilson said, 'and as such, we each have our part to play. Life is nature's experiment. The whole world is nature's laboratory. Those who will be used, will he used - and those, such as myself, who must use them, can do so without guilt. This human flesh is the material of evolution - like burnished steel and gunpowder. It is here to be used.'

Ernst didn't reply. He simply glanced at the silent Greta and

saw the excited gleam in her whore's eyes. Then he drove them back to Berlin, through the now eerily deserted and smoke-filled streets of Kurhessen, with its broken windows and looted shops and burned synagogues and crumpled, dead Jews. Only then, just before Wilson entered his apartment, did Ernst blurt out, 'You're a monster!'

'No,' Wilson replied, knowing that he had won and that he would be able to manipulate Stoll in the future. 'I'm just a man with a purpose.'

Then he closed the door and turned into Greta.

'More semen,' he whispered.

Chapter Nineteen

The three troop trucks rumbled through the streets of Cracow, Poland, just before midnight. Sitting up front in the second truck, watching its headlights illuminating the falling snow and the helmeted heads of the soldiers in the truck ahead, Ernst was suffering from his familiar mingling of excitement and angst. The white streets were deserted, like those in a troubling dream, and the headlights of the trucks were beaming off the closed doors and shuttered windows of the houses in this old part of the city. Ernst thought of the residents cowering inside, praying that the roaring trucks would not stop outside their own homes. The thought made him smile grimly.

'If this keeps up,' he said, 'Cracow will soon be like a ghost town.'

'I doubt it,' Lieutenant Franck Ritter replied, moving the automatic weapon propped up between his knees and adjusting his black SS jacket. The damned Jews breed like lice and replace themselves as fast as we can get rid of them. We could be doing this forever, Captain, and there'd still be too many left.'

'But we're not after the Jews tonight,' the more concerned Lieutenant Willi Brandt said behind them. This area we're cleaning out is inhabited by ordinary Poles.'

'They're all vermin to me,' Ritter replied with a humorless, wolfish grin, 'so I'll enjoy what I'm doing.'

'You always do,' Ernst said dryly.

Ritter was about to make a retort, but was distracted when

the trucks ground to a halt with a squealing of brakes. Familiar with the routine, Ernst's troops jumped out of the back without waiting for his command and were already spreading out along the lamplit street and hammering noisily on the doors of the houses with the butts of their rifles when Ernst jumped down to the road, followed immediately by the enthusiastic Ritter.

Ernst, shocked by the sudden cold, cursed softly to himself, then hurried along the road, barking orders at his men and reminding them that no violence was to be used unless resistance was offered. His men were bawling at those inside and still drumming on the doors with their rifle butts, then someone remembered to turn on the trucks' sirens. That ghastly noise, added to the rest of it, made the bedlam more frightening.

Lights came on behind many windows, the wooden doors creaked open, then wails of protest merged with the bawling of the troops as they entered the buildings.

When the door of his chosen apartment block had been opened, Ernst, with a reluctant Willi Brandt and grinning Franck Ritter, followed his troops into the building.

This raid was on a street located near the university and containing select residential buildings, so Ernst was not surprised to find himself in an elegant hallway, with deep carpeting on the floor and what looked like antique paintings on the walls. The door had been opened by the residents of the nearest ground-floor apartment - an elderly couple, both wearing expensive dressing gowns and looking frightened. When the soldiers had parted to let Ernst walk through, he stopped in front of the couple, gave the Nazi salute and 'Heil Hitler!' then said, 'We are requisitioning this building in the name of the Third Reich. Please pack whatever belongings you can fit into one suitcase each and then enter one of the trucks parked outside. The soldiers at the door will assign you to a truck and you'll come to no harm if you don't resist Now please do as you're told.'

The old woman burst into tears. Her husband looked

stunned. "You cannot—' he began, trying to rally his senses. 'I will not permit—'

Ritter stepped forward and smartly slapped the man across the face. 'You'll do as you're damned well told,' he said grimly, raising his submachine gun, 'or pay the price, you old goat. Now go and fetch your suitcases.'

The woman sobbed even louder, but tugged her husband back into the room while the soldiers, at a nod from Ernst, hurried up the stairs to get the other residents out. Hearing the drumming of rifle butts on doors, the soldiers bawling, women shrieking and sobbing, Ernst stepped up to Ritter, stared grimly at him, and said, 'Don't you ever dare do anything like that again without my permission!'

Ritter flushed with anger. About to make an angry retort, he glanced blindly at the embarrassed Willi Brandt, but then changed his mind and grinned crookedly instead..

'Yes, sir,' he said, clicking his boot heels in mock obedience.

Ernst turned away from him, went back outside, and saw that residents of the other two buildings were already being led out into the road. Most were carrying suitcases. The men looked shocked and confused, some women sobbed, the children seemed dazed, as all were urged up into the back of the trucks. Satisfied that the operation was proceeding in an orderly fashion, he went back inside just as Willi Brandt, who would never make a good soldier, walked into the first ground-floor apartment, looking pale and distraught. Ernst went to the doorway, looked in, and saw that Willi had stopped in front of the two old people. Instead of packing, they were holding one another on the sofa, the man trying to comfort his wife as she sobbed into his shoulder.

'You're not in danger,' Willi was saying. 'You won't be harmed, I promise you. You've committed no offense and are simply being rehoused. Wherever you go, you will not be harmed. It's unfortunate, but at least you're in no danger - I can promise you that Now, please, before you make someone angry, pack your suitcases.'

Ernst wanted to laugh at Willi's naive assertion that the old

people would not be harmed, for he knew that they were merely another two of the estimated one million Poles who had so far been expelled from their homes to make way for the Germans from the Baltic and outlying regions of Poland. True enough, they would not necessarily be killed outright; but it was from such unfortunates that Ernst would be selecting the men, women, and children who would be used as slave labor in the underground weapons research factories of the Third Reich, as guinea pigs in the so-called anthropological medical experiments that Himmler and the icy American, Wilson, were hoping would lead to the secrets of longevity, or as prisoners branded fit enough to be shipped secretly to Neuschwabenland in the Antarctic where, under the most appalling conditions, they would help construct Himmler's SS base under the ice and snow.

However, as this particular couple were too old to be of much use in any way, they would almost certainly end up in a concentration camp, which they would be unlikely to survive.

Still, Brandt's well-intentioned remarks did the trick. Upon hearing them, the old woman actually managed to stop sobbing long enough to whisper, Thank you, lieutenant,' and then lead her husband into the bedroom to start packing their suitcases.

'You're too kind for your own good, Lieutenant Brandt,' Ernst said laconically, thus making an embarrassed Brandt turn around to face him. 'Some day that kindness will be misconstrued as weakness - and you might pay the price for that.'

'I was merely—' Willi began.

'Yes, Willi, I know.' Ernst grinned and walked past him to glance into the bedroom. The old couple were indeed packing their two suitcases, both with tears on their pale cheeks. 'Hey, old man!' Ernst said. 'Does the owner of this building actually live in it?'

'Yes, sir,' the old man said, his voice trembling. 'Mrs Kosilewski, who lives in the attic.'

'Thank you. Auf Wiedersehen.' Ernst grinned and turned away. 'Keep your eye on them,' he said to Brandt, 'and make

sure they get into one of the trucks. It's either them or you, Willi.'

'Yes, sir,' Brandt replied.

Reminded, as he left the room, of the striking difference between Brandt's kindness and Ritter's growing cruelty, and convinced that the latter would profit more than the former in the Third Reich, Ernst started up the stairs, to ensure that everything was proceeding properly on the floors above. When he heard the bawling of his soldiers and saw those respectable, middle-class Polish citizens shuffling sobbing from their apartments, each carrying a single suitcase and otherwise leaving behind not only their possessions but their homes, he realized just how far from home he was ... far from Germany, far from Projekt Saucer, far from what he had been. Now, once more, he was a policeman instead of an engineer.

He was a party to genocide.

Someone on the second floor was slow to leave his apartment and Ernst saw a submachine gun, speedily reversed, its butt swinging, as Ritter struck the unfortunate man between his shoulder blades and made him lurch forward. The man cried out as he started falling, his wife quickly jerked him upright, then both of them hurried down the stairs, even as Ernst went up the next flight. When on the third floor he saw more adults and children leaving their homes forever in the belief that they would at least be rehoused somewhere decent, he thought again of the spread of Himmler's underground research factories, of the medical experiments that Wilson wanted, of their ultimate destination, Neuschwabenland, and felt bitter at the recollection of just how brief his return to Kummersdorf had been. He had no sooner settled back into the supervision of Projekt Saucer than the blitzkreig against Poland had commenced, the Polish air force had been destroyed, and Poland's ground forces routed. Then Himmler, having deprived him of his rightful place in that historic event, had sent him here to organize the rounding up of the human labor force required for the underground factories and the colonization of the Antarctic.

He tried to think of it as a great honor, his guarantee of a place in history; but sometimes, as right now, surrounded by sobbing women and shocked children and beaten men, he could not resist yearning to be back in Berlin, overseeing Wilson and the German engineers.

Sometimes, it had to be admitted, this work made him feel dirty.

Pushing his way through the harassed Poles milling about on the third-floor landing, he glanced through the window and saw his armed troops forming a pathway from the front door of the building to the trucks, their shadows elongated in the yellow lighting of the streetlamps and falling over the bowed heads and shoulders of the Poles who shuffled dispiritedly between them. Now viewing the Poles as mere numbers, his allotment for this evening, he climbed the last flight of stairs to the closed door of the attic. Because he knew that the cow of a landlady would be hiding inside, he hammered his clenched fist repeatedly on the wooden door.

'I know you're in there, Frau Kosilewski!' he shouted. 'So please open the door!'

'The door's not locked,' a surprisingly sensual voice replied. 'You have only to enter.'

Feeling foolish but also amused, Ernst opened the door and looked in. The attic was enormous and beautifully furnished, and when he stepped in, he saw the landlady sitting in an armchair, calmly smoking a cigarette. She was wearing a black silk dress, which clung closely to her luscious body, and her feet were in high-heeled shoes that emphasized the curves of her legs, one of which was crossed over the other, exposed from the knee down.

No cow at all, Ernst thought.

'I have packed, as you can see,' the woman said, indicating the suitcase nearby with a lazy wave of the hand holding the cigarette, 'but thought I would wait until I was called.'

Ernst walked farther into the attic and stopped close enough to the woman to observe that she had pitch-black hair that fell to her shoulders, as well as eyes as dark and deep as the ocean.

'You thought we'd forget you?' Ernst asked her, aware that he was becoming aroused by the sight of those elegantly crossed legs, the artfully arched foot, the high, full breasts under the tight black silk, that steady, measuring gaze.

Mrs Kosilewski smiled and shook her head. 'No, Kapitan,' she said. 'I didn't think that for a moment. We all know how efficient the Germans are. I merely decided to wait until the last moment - to avoid the crush and chaos.'

She pursed her brightly painted lips, sucked on her cigarette, pursed her lips again to blow some smoke rings. She knew just what she was doing.

'You live here alone?' Ernst asked, feeling hot and somnolent with desire, his thoughts slipping and sliding.

'Yes, Kapitan. I'm not married. I was married, but my husband died four years ago, which is why I now run this place.'

'Ran it,' Ernst corrected her. 'You run it no longer.'

She nodded, her gaze steady upon him. 'Yes, Kapitan, I know. May I ask whom you intend moving in here instead?'

'Germans from the Baltic and outlying regions of the country. No Jews. No Poles.'

'I am not a Jew, Kapitan.'

'But you are a Pole,' he reminded her.

She just smiled more knowingly. 'And will you be in charge of those Germans, Kapitan?'

'In a nominal sense, yes. I'll be visiting the building occasionally, if that's what you mean.'

Mrs Kosilewski uncrossed her long legs, crossed them the other way, rubbed her hand along her thigh to wipe ash off the tight dress, then pouted her painted lips to exhale more smoke rings. Ernst, now feeling dizzy with desire, could hardly take his eyes off her.

Then why send me away?' she asked, her voice shivering through him. 'Surely I would be of better use to you here - to attend to the house, which I've done so well so far, and look after the Germans when they arrive.'

'And why should I be concerned with that, Frau Kosilewski?'

'Because if I was here to look after the house, my dear Kapitan, then I could also look after you.'

Her dark gaze was steady, if obscured by the cigarette smoke, and he saw the painted pout of her lips turning into a broader smile. He hadn't possessed a woman for months and was reminded of that bitter fact as she leaned across her raised knee, drawing his gaze to her firm breasts. He felt breathless, almost choked by his rising lust, and knew he could not resist her.

'Your soldiers have cleared out the top floor,' she said, almost whispering. They'll soon be leaving, mein Kapitan.'

'We have at least five minutes,' Ernst replied. 'I think that should suffice for now.'

He walked across the attic, closed and bolted the door, and by the time he had turned back to Frau Kosilewski, she was already undressing.

The spoils of war, Ernst thought grimly.

He went back there a lot. When not on duty, he practically lived there. He had married Ingrid for love, then cheated on her and been cheated by her. Since then, having also betrayed the values he held most dear, he found that he could temporarily regain his lost pride in the bodies of hardened women. He assumed that Kryzystina was one of those, a woman seasoned by bad experiences, and he was thrilled by the knowledge that she was buying her freedom with her body, selling herself for salvation. She certainly knew how to do it well - she had the sexual repertoire of a whore - and it helped him pass the darkness of those nights that his frustrations made restless. 'No,' she told him, 'I'm not a whore, but I want to survive, and for a woman living alone in a city ruled by a conquering army, that isn't easy. I was bora on a farm near Dabrova, to barbarously ignorant peasants, and my father treated me like a beast of burden for all of my days there. I was beaten regularly, often starved as punishment, and eventually abused sexually by him, roughly and often. One day I stabbed him with a bread knife - not fatally, but in the stomach - then I fled for

good. I was sixteen years old and was soon taken in by a gang of gypsies. The man who picked me, who naturally took his pleasure with me, soon started selling me to other men - he was as primitive as my father. So, a year later, when we were camped in a village near Cracow, I fled to the city, obtained work in a garment factory, attracted the eye of my boss, a decent man, and became his wife when I was twenty. We had a good life for eight years, but he died four years ago. His family inherited all his wealth and I got this house. As I couldn't afford its upkeep, I moved into the attic, let out the rest of the rooms, and was just getting back on my feet when Germany invaded Poland and you, my handsome Kapitan, came to requisition it for your fellow countrymen. Don't call me a whore because I offered myself to you. You know what the alternative was.'

They were naked in bed, which was still in the grand attic, both sweat-slicked from the ardors of a love that had little love in it. Ernst was stirred by the sight of her heavy breasts, bruised lips, and disheveled hair, and so slid his hand back between her thighs to find her still wet 'Not all women would sell themselves for a house,' he said. 'Some have more sturdy principles.'

She glanced skeptically at him, then shook her head on the soaked pillow and chuckled deeply, sardonically. 'Just for my house?' she said. 'I think you know better than that, Ernst. I didn't just want to remain in this house: I also wanted to stay alive. And I think we both know, my pretty, that most of the people moved out of here were not destined for a very lengthy future.'

'I don't know what you mean.'

'I think you do, Ernst. You know as well as I do that Hitler is already transforming Poland into a massive killing ground and that the planned extermination of the Jews is an open secret among your high-ranking officers.'

Ernst grinned and slipped his fingers inside her, making her sigh. 'What a bright girl you are, Kryzystina,' he said. 'And how did you know all that?'

'I know because some of the high-ranking officers who shared my bed before you came here told me so. I also know because it's hard to keep secret the fact that at least once a week the Central Station is packed with Jews being moved out to an unknown destination, but one widely believed to be unpleasant.'

Ernst was arousing himself by playing with her. 'Very clever, my Polish pet.'

Kryzystina sighed and turned into him, to throw one long, smooth leg over him and let him have more of her. 'And don't we all live in terror,' she whispered into his ear, 'of the so-called house-cleaning, or murder, of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Polish intellectuals and those of a similar class? Could I risk that, my pretty one?' Her tongue slipped into his ear, her teeth nibbled his earlobe, and her hand slid down his sweating body to take hold of him and guide him into her. 'So why did you clear out this house?' she whispered. 'And all the other Polish houses? Not just to rehouse us, my savior, as you slyly suggest, but to move us to Majdanek or Auschwitz, from where we would not return. Can you call me a whore because I choose you instead of a camp? I think not, my sweet one.'

They made love like two animals - that day and many others - and Ernst dwelt on what she had said, thought of Himmler and Wilson, and realized that what they were doing had the grandeur of evil. In accepting that, he lost his shame and replaced it with pride, plunging himself into his work for Projekt Saucer with renewed vigor. He planned the roundups of Poles and Jews, led the raids on their streets and ghettoes, and divided them into groups on the platforms of Central Station, right or left, life or death. Those chosen for death would not die easily - they would first be experimental fodder - and those blessed with the gift of life would work as slaves for the Third Reich in the multiplying underground factories where Himmler, with the aid of the icy American, Wilson, was creating the weapons that would ensure that the New Order would eventually conquer the world.

Projekt Saucer was at the heart of this great endeavor - and

he, the once-rejected Ernst Stoll, was an important part of it.

Yet he still felt frustrated.

'I missed the blitzkreig,' he explained to Kryzystina. 'It was my life's great disappointment. When our army smashed through this damned country, when we destroyed your air force, when the Battle for the Corridor ended and your whole army was routed, I was still an administrator at Kummersdorf, south of Berlin. Now our troops are preparing to follow the panzer divisions into Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg, then on to France and Paris itself - and instead of going with them, I'm stuck here, in this Polish cesspit, a shepherd of jews and other subhumans, a man cleaning out vermin.'

'You're still a soldier,' Kryzystina reminded him.

'No, I'm not. I'm a policeman.'

'You take it all too seriously,' she told him. 'Come and take me instead!'

Ernst needed little encouragement

Because he did not like his work and detested Cracow and its inhabitants, he performed his duties mechanically, efficiently, not thinking too deeply about it, and otherwise vented his frustrations by confiding in Kryzystina. As there were few places to go in Cracow, he never saw her outside the attic, but he fed her hunger for expensive presents, brought her unauthorized food, wine and cigarettes, and when not trading sardonic putdowns with her, unburdened himself of his angst.

'I'm not a soldier,' he insisted, repeating his most common complaint. 'I should be on the road to Paris with the fighting troops, but instead I am here, in this miserable Polish city, arresting people by the hundreds and moving them on to the camps. It's my duty to do this and I do it well, but I was cut out for other things.'

'Engineering?'

'Rocket engineering. That's what I was going to do. Instead, I became a supervisor at the research center at Kummersdorf, spying on my fellow Germans, an old Italian and an illegal

American, whose genius put me to shame, though his ruthlessness shocked me. My God, what a monster!'

'An American?' Kryzystina asked him, surprised, as her nimble fingers played in his pubic hair. 'An American is working for the Third Reich?'

'Yes,' Ernst replied. 'In secret. He has a false passport. He cares for nothing but his work - the construction of a saucer-shaped aircraft - and since that project is also close to Himmler's heart, he was allowed to work for us. It's an unusual, maybe dangerous, situation, but Wilson is worth the risk. He's the coldest man I know, obsessed, slightly inhuman, but the advances he's made are extraordinary and fill me with envy. If not allowed to join the great advance on Paris, I should at least be back there, working with Wilson. But I'm not. I'm stuck here. Still taking part in Projekt Saucer, but not in the way I want.'

'And what way is that?'

To take part in the actual design, as an engineer, which I should have been, and not just collecting Jews and Poles for our labor force.'

Kryzystina stretched out beside him, now knowing him, fitting to him, and asked, breathing warmly in his ear: 'A labor force only for Projekt Saucer? Is that why you're rounding up those people? To work for Projekt Saucer in the camps?'

Ernst felt impatient, his thoughts scattered by his erection. 'No,' he said. 'Don't be ridiculous. There are no research plants in the camps. Those I select don't go to the camps; they're sent to our growing number of advanced weapons factories, scattered over Germany and Bavaria and hidden underground or inside mountains. There they'll perform the heavy labor required. They'll certainly be worked very hard, but at least they might live.'

He said it with confidence as he rolled between her spreading thighs and inserted himself into the velvet glove that could make his thoughts reel; but he knew, when he had finished, when his thoughts had scattered and returned intact, that he had not told the truth, as even those being used by

Projekt Saucer would not necessarily live very long. Recalling the tour that Himmler had given him through the immense tunnel being hacked out of the densely forested hills of Thuringia to contain the planned underground factories at Nordhausen and nearby Bleicherode, he remembered the armed SS guards and the cracking of their bullwhips, which then, as now, were an indication that the welfare of the labor force would not be considered. And that labor force was being sent out by train from most of the major cities of Poland, to the increasing number of factories hidden underground, from the Harz Mountains to Thuringia, south of Prague and across to Mahren ... a vast network of secret factories devoted to the design and construction of advanced weaponry and aircraft, including the rockets of Wernher von Braun and the flying saucer of the obsessed American, Wilson... factories in which the work force would, if necessary, be worked to death.

A brutal truth that appeared to have given Wilson no qualms at all.

'He has one other obsession,' Ernst confided to Kryzystina as they rested after their sexual exertions. 'An obsession with longevity - though that also is treated as part of his work. Wilson is old - in his mid-sixties, I think - but he looks and acts fifteen years younger than that, which he insists is due to a lifelong strict diet - no cigarettes or alcohol, no fatty foods; only fruit juice, cereals, fruit, and nuts - and, oddly, no exercise other than lots of walking. He also ascribed it to a lack of emotional entanglements, which he said were, apart from their well-known psychological effects, an inducement to quicker physical deterioration.'

'What about sex?' Kryzystina asked.

'I gather that it's fine,' Ernst replied, amused, 'as long as it's performed unemotionally - for the reasons I've already stated. Sex as pure exercise is healthy, but romantic love or sex used for emotional release are both damaging to physical as well as mental health.'

'You poor man,' Kryzystina crooned in his ear, reaching down for his penis. 'Let me arouse you sexually, therefore

emotionally, and thus ruin your health.'

Ernst slapped her hand away. He was grinning, but felt uneasy. There were times when you couldn't help wondering just how right or wrong Wilson was.

'What's so strange,' he said, hoping to talk out his troubled thoughts, 'is that that particular obsession has also been dragged into his work - as everything is with him, sooner or later. It's as if he's treating even his own life as material for research - and so the state of his health and the possibilities of longevity, while important to him on a personal level, are more important for what they can add to his envisaged Super Race. Which is why some of those sent to the camps will have a fate worse than death.'

'What fate?'

Realizing that he had already said more than he should, Ernst shook his head and said, 'Nothing. Forget it.'

He lit a cigarette - he had started smoking only recently - and realized that he could not forget it. Indeed, who could forget the hideous, 'anthropological' experiments already being conducted, with Wilson's sly encouragement and at Himmler's command, in the surgeries and operating theaters of certain concentration camps as well as in secret SS laboratories located all over Germany?

Even now Ernst was haunted by the memory of the infamous Crystal Night thirteen months ago, when, in a fit of perversity or perhaps overwhelming frustration, he had driven Wilson through Berlin's violent, blazing streets to a Nazi hospital on the outskirts of the city. There, in the laboratory, he'd shown him the contorted limbs, frozen anguish, and, in some cases, dismembered heads of those who had died on the operating table in some of his requested experiments. Wilson had remained unmoved, insisting that science was all that mattered. He wanted the secret of immortality, or at least longevity, and would do anything, no matter how cruel, to uncover it.

And he had insisted that he was not a monster, but just a man with a mission.

What kind of man?

Already depressed, Ernst suddenly felt crushed by fear, so he stubbed his cigarette out, rolled onto Kryzystina, and tried to lose himself in her body, where nothing could reach him.

Ernst snapped to attention in the office of his superior officer, Major Riedel, gave the Nazi salute, and said, 'Heil Hitler!' Riedel returned the salute with a weary wave of his hand, told Ernst to stand at ease, and gazed up from his desk in a thoughtful, searching manner.

Ernst's former friend, the sadistic lieutenant Franck Ritter, was standing at the other end of the desk, wearing his black SS uniform and trying hard not to smile. Major Riedel waved his hand again, this time indicating the many photographs pinned up on the wall behind him.

'You've seen these photographs before, Captain?' 'Yes, sir,' Ernst replied. 'Then you know what they are, do you not?' 'Yes, sir,' Ernst said, getting the distinct feeling that he was in trouble, but unable to guess why. They're photographs of Polish resistance fighters being hunted by the Gestapo. The SS also have orders to keep a watch out for them or anyone suspected of knowing or harboring them.'

'Correct' Major Riedel glanced at Ritter, then stood up and planted his finger on one of the photographs. 'Do you know this man, Captain Stoll?' 'No, sir.'

'Can you see him properly from where you're standing?' 'No, sir, but I don't know anyone on that list.' 'Please step forward and check the photograph properly.' Ernst did as he was told, walking around the far side of the desk and glaring at Ritter. He then stood beside Riedel to study the photograph up close. He saw a handsome young Pole with sensitive features and unusually bright, fearless eyes. When he had studied it, he shook his head and said, 'No, sir, I don't know him.' Then he marched back around the desk and stood stiffly in front of it.

He noticed Ritter's thin smile. Major Riedel nodded and glanced at Ritter, then sat in the chair behind his desk, where he clasped his hands under his chin and pursed his lips thoughtfully.

'The man is Andrzej Pialowicz,' he said. 'Does the name mean anything to you?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said, growing more confused and nervous. 'It's the name of a leading Polish resistance fighter, presently on a Gestapo and SS death list.'

'Correct again, Captain. I'm glad to note that you are, at least, reading the directives being sent out from here.'

Ernst did not reply, as there was no reply to give. He simply glanced at Ritter and noticed his smirk.

'Andrzej Pialowicz is indeed the most wanted man in Cracow. In compiling a dossier on his activities prior to the fall of Poland, we discovered that among his many other female conquests was a Jewish woman living right here in Cracow. Rather than arrest this woman, we placed her under surveillance in the hope that she would eventually lead us to Pialowicz - which she did. She was observed leading him out of the Wawel Cathedral - apparently where he had been hiding - and then driving him away in her car. Since it was our belief that Pialowicz was being taken to rejoin the other members of his resistance group, and since the overzealous oberleutnant in charge of the squad of SS troops took this as his opportunity to catch the whole gang, he did not arrest Pialowicz or his mistress, but instead followed them at a discreet distance - with two other SS men, in an ordinary Polish car with Cracow number plates. The journey ended at a warehouse in an industrial area south of the city. Pialowicz entered the warehouse alone and his girlfriend turned her car around and headed back to the city. Deliberately letting the woman go, since he knew where she lived, the overzealous young oberleutnant called up for support, then led an inept assault on the warehouse. In the ensuing fracas, some resistance men and SS troops were killed - but Pialowicz managed to elude us again and has not been seen since.'

'I'm sorry, sir,' Ernst began, 'but I'm not sure—'

'Why we called you here?'

'Yes, sir.'

Major Riedel smiled bleakly, then sighed as if in despair. 'Naturally, Captain Stoll, as we were keeping a watch on Pialowicz's girlfriend, we saw everyone entering or leaving the building in which she resided - and to our surprise, Captain, one of the most frequent visitors was you. Pialowicz's girlfriend, as you will have gathered by now, was also your mistress, Kryzystina Kosilewski.'

Ernst turned cold with shock, then felt himself burning. He glanced at the floor, felt nauseated, so looked up again.

'Do you wish to deny it, Captain Stoll?'

'No, sir.'

'Good,' Major Riedel said, 'since although we were aware that you are in charge of that building and therefore have good reason for going there, we were intrigued by both the frequency and lateness of your visits, so took the liberty of checking with the other, now mostly German, residents. lieutenant Ritter, here, was in charge of that particular task and can confirm that according to her neighbors, Frau Kosilewski was opening her door to you on a regular basis and that when you visited, you stayed there for a long time, indeed often all night. You were also observed taking her parcels of groceries and other contraband items. Do you wish to deny this?'

'No, sir,' Ernst said, wanting to die, but rescued by a hot wave of hatred when he saw Ritter's thin smile.

'I'm glad to hear it,' Major Riedel said, unclasping his hands and sitting back in his chair, looking more weary than outraged. 'You do know, of course, that it's an offense for a German soldier, much less an SS officer, to knowingly fraternize with a Jew.'

'I didn't know she was Jewish, sir. In fact, she categorically denied it the first time I met her.'

'But you knew she was Polish.'

'Yes, sir, I did.'

'Lucky for you, Captain, you're an exceptional officer with particularly close ties to our beloved Reichsfuhrer- otherwise I would have you shot for this.'

'Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.'

'Lucky for you, also, that stripping you of rank would necessitate a lengthy and potentially embarrassing report to our beloved Reichsfuhrer, which could rebound unpleasantly on me personally.'

Unable to break the ensuing silence, Ernst heard his own heartbeat, resounding like a gong in his head, tolling his doom. He glanced sideways at Ritter and caught his triumphant smirk.

'As you will have guessed,' Riedel said wearily, 'we will now be arresting your mistress, the Jew bitch Kosilewski.'

Yes, sir,' Ernst said, feeling as if his face had been slapped, his stomach kicked by a heavy boot.

'I would like to punish you by having you personally make the arrest, Captain, but since that could make matters more complicated than they are, I will instead insist that you accompany Lieutenant Ritter to your whore's house and stay by the van while the lieutenant and his men drag her out If nothing else, I want you to see that, Captain Stoll. Do you understand why?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said, already feeling the awful humiliation that the major wanted him to suffer.

'Good. Now get out.'

Shocked and shaking, feeling alternatively hot and cold, Ernst followed the gloating Ritter out of the office, then along the gloomy corridor of the building, down a flight of stairs, then out into the freezing, windblown courtyard, where a small, black, windowless van, used for collecting suspects, was waiting. While two armed SS soldiers climbed into the rear, Ernst sat up front beside Ritter and the driver, shaking even more with humiliation and dread as the van started off and headed through the narrow streets of Cracow in the afternoon's darkening light.

'What will happen to her?' he asked Ritter.

'She's all mine,' Ritter replied with a leer. 'I've been given twenty-four hours to make her talk, but I won't need that long.' His leer widened lasciviously over blackened teeth. 'She'll give me everything soon enough.'

Ernst closed his eyes, knowing exactly what Ritter meant. He shivered with revulsion and the shame he had thought was Jong dead in him, then protected himself from it with a rage at what Kryzystina had done to him. The whore. The Jewish whore. He opened his eyes again, saw the charcoal light of late afternoon, and sat up straight when the van braked to a halt in front of her house.

'Can't I just wait in here?' he asked.

'No,' Ritter said, grinning again. You have to come out and identify her.'

'You already know who she is.'

'That's not the point,' Ritter said. 'The point is that you identify her. That's your punishment, sir.' Ernst nodded and climbed out, determined to hide any weakness from Ritter, and let his rage against Kryzystina protect him from sentiment as the lieutenant and the two soldiers entered the building with theatrical urgency. They came back out soon enough, this time with Kryzystina, who was sobbing and protesting in vain as the two soldiers dragged her across the pavement and Ritter, bawling something that included 'Jew bitch whore!' slapped repeatedly at the back of her head. Then he grabbed her by the hair and jerked her head back to let Ernst get a look at her.

Already her face was bruised and her dark eyes tearful.

She saw Ernst and gasped.

'Yes,' Ernst said. 'This is the woman Kosilewski... The woman I know.'

'Oh, my God!' Kryzystina exclaimed in disbelief.

The soldiers dragged her away from Ernst and threw her into the van, then climbed in behind her and slammed the doors shut Ernst followed Ritter into the front and turned away from his gloating grin, but was forced to listen to Kryzystina sobbing in the back. The journey seemed interminable, all the way back to the grim, guarded entrance to the SS headquarters

and basement cellars where, he knew, Kryzystina would be tortured and interrogated by Ritter.

He tried to walk away then, but Ritter called him back. 'Excuse me, sir,' he said, forcing Ernst to turn around and see Kryzystina, no longer sobbing, but with pale, tear-streaked cheeks, staring at him with fierce hatred and condemnation from between the two soldiers. 'Don't you want to say goodbye to your Jewish whore?'

Ernst could not reply, but he didn't turn away. The soldiers dragged Kryzystina toward the entrance. She suddenly howled like a wild animal, and only when Ritter had kicked her into the building did Ernst make his escape.

Kryzystina did not talk in twenty-four hours - nor in twenty-four days. Three weeks later, she was, according to a frustrated Ritter, still in her basement cell, a bloody mess but unbroken, and waiting for the train that would take her to the living hell of Auschwitz.

During that time, Ernst managed to recover from his humiliation and shame by remembering Kryzystina only with hatred. He accepted that he had made a fool of himself, shed a tear when he learned that the German army had entered Paris, and threw himself more devotedly into his task of finding suitable candidates for forced labor in the underground factories or a worse fate in the concentration camps.

In doing this, he paid penance for his sins and regained his lost pride.

Because Kryzystina was one of those earmarked for the camps, there was no way of avoiding her at the station - nor, by this time, would he have attempted to do so if he could. Indeed, when he saw her bruised and scarred face in that hopeless queue of the damned, a cloud of steam blowing across brown eyes darkened even more by weeks of torture, he felt neither surprised nor shocked, only a quiver of suppressed rage. Then, on a perverse whim, he had an SS guard with a snarling dog drag her out of the queue, to be placed before him.

When she recognized him, her eyes brightened with the enduring strength of contempt, and her lips, which had been shivering with despair, formed a line of defiance.

'You're a terrible mess, Frau Kosilewski,' Ernst said sardonically, 'and where you're going, the treatment will be even worse than what you've already had. Would you like me to help you?'

'What's the price?' she replied.

Ernst pointed at the queue forming at the far side of the platform and said, The people in that queue have been selected to live, while these poor wretches' - he indicated the queue she had just left - 'have been selected for death. Tell me where your boyfriend, Andrzej Pialowicz, is hiding and I'll let you leave this queue and join that one over there.'

She stared at him with disbelieving eyes, too shocked to speak.

'This queue or that one,' Ernst said. 'Life or death, Kryzystina. Now, where's Andrzej Pialowicz?'

She spat in his face.

Ernst didn't have time to react before the SS guard stepped forward, struck Kryzystina with his bullwhip, then hurled her back through the snarling dogs, into the queue leading to certain death.

Kryzystina didn't look back at Ernst to see him wiping her spittle from his forehead. Instead, she stared straight ahead, as if he had never existed, and didn't even look back when she was herded into the carriage, dissolved behind a cloud of steam, and then became just another nameless face in a mosaic of the damned.

Then Ernst crossed the platform and boarded the other train - the one taking those destined to work in the underground factories in support of his Reichsfiihrer's Projekt Saucer.

That train, when it moved out of Cracow, took him back to Berlin.

Chapter Twenty

'Nostradamus,' Himmler said, sipping effetely at his tea, 'foretold the conquest of France by Germany. Did you know that, Herr Wilson?'

'No,' Wilson said. He had not known and did not wish to know, any more than he wanted to be reminded that Adolf Hitler based many of his most vital decisions on the advice of his Swiss astrologer, Karl Ernst Krafft; or that Hitler's deputy, Hermann Goring, ran his war with the aid of rainmakers and teams of clairvoyants; or that his deputy, Rudolf Hess, who had recently flown to England without permission in an insane attempt to establish peace with Britain, kept a pet lion, believed in astrology, and was known to have dabbled seriously in the occult; or that Himmler himself, now sipping his tea so sedately, was as mad as a hatter.

The world is being conquered by a gang of lunatics, dope addicts, sadists, occultists, and degenerates, Wilson thought, and I'm forced to use the scum.

'I believe that Nostradamus,' Himmler droned on, 'also prophesied the conquest of the West by a race of Aryans at approximately this time. Did you know that, Herr Wilson?'

'No,' Wilson said, though he knew what Himmler was driving at. Since he and the Reichsfuhrer had last met, the German forces had overrun Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece. They indeed seemed unstoppable, and the fall of the West had seemed guaranteed. However, Hitler had then become obsessed with his mystical notion of Lebesraum - German expansionism and

space - and was now preparing to invade Russia, even against the protests of his own generals. It was a two-front war that had defeated Germany in 1918 and would, Wilson reasoned, do so again - which is exactly why so many of Hitler's finest officers had protested the planned invasion in the first place. Yet even now, as he and Himmler were having their chat over tea, fighter planes, bombers, Panzer tanks, and three million foot soldiers were massing along a 930-mile front, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, prepared to advance into Russia and certain doom.

The beginning of the end is in sight, Wilson thought, which means that my time is running short, my situation becoming more tricky. I must be more careful now.

'You are an admirably concise conversationalist, Herr Wilson,' Himmler said, his eyes, magnified by the pince-nez, as dead as his smile.' "Yes" and "no." A curt nod of the head. A distinct lack of verbal elaboration. No more said than is absolutely necessary. A man of few words.'

'I'm sorry, Reichsfuhrer.'

'You have no need to be. Clearly it is in your nature. I think you're a man who trusts in his own nature and devoutly follows his chosen path.'

'That's true,' Wilson said.

They were having their tea in Wilson's glass-paneled office in the main hangar at Kummersdorf. After glancing at Himmler's immobile bodyguards, both granite-faced and wearing menacing black-leather overcoats, Wilson studied Captain Ernst Stoll who, in his SS uniform, was sitting silently beside his beloved Reichsfuhrer.

After returning about a year ago from Poland, where reportedly he had laid the groundwork for the regular movement of Jews and Poles to either the concentration camps or the secret underground and research establishments of the rapidly growing Third Reich, Stoll had been a changed man: a more fanatical Nazi, now devoted to Himmler, and untiring in his dedication to Projekt Saucer and its ultimate goal, which was to protect an underground colony of SS

masters and their slaves in Neuschwabenland.

Yet as Wilson knew, Stoll remained a frustrated romantic ... and Wilson could use him.

Indeed, he already had.

By the time Stoll had returned from Poland with his renewed dedication to Himmler's planned world of ice and fire, Wilson had come to understand something important: While it was true that German scientists as a whole were producing extraordinary innovations in weaponry and aeronautics, it was equally true that their separate projects were not being coordinated. So great were the rewards for success in Nazi Germany, but so terrible the penalties for failure, that even formerly cooperative scientists had been reduced to currying favor by competing ferociously with one another.

In this sense, the Peenemunde situation was typical.

While Himmler had the cream of his rocket engineers working on the V-l and V-2 rockets at Peenemunde, on the Baltic, the V-l was a Luftwaffe project, the V-2 was an army project, and both sides were competing instead of putting their heads together. Similarly, while various research establishments scattered throughout Germany and Austria were working separately on gas turbines and jet propulsion, heat-resistant and 'porous' metals, and gyroscopic mechanisms and boundary layer-defeating airfoils, only Wilson had had the sense to link their often startling innovations together, into the one, revolutionary aircraft.

That aircraft was not Schriever's flying saucer, about to be test-flown. It was the small, disc-shaped Feuerball, which Wilson was ostensibly creating as a flying antiradar device, but which in fact he was secretly using as an experimental prototype for a full-scale, vastly more advanced flying saucer, to be constructed and used only when he saw fit.

As Stoll did not know about the secret Feuerball experiments, he had been more than willing to arrange for Wilson to travel the length and breadth of the Third Reich on numerous visits to other research establishments.

Wilson had already used him, then, and would do so again

... for something much more important.

'You have that faraway look in your eyes, Herr Wilson. What are you thinking about?'

'Nothing, Reichsfuhrer.'

'You never think of nothing, Herr Wilson. You think all the time.'

'I was just thinking about the flying saucer,' Wilson lied, 'and wondering if we'll succeed.'

'I never thought you'd doubt yourself for a moment. I am truly surprised.'

'I have doubts occasionally,' Wilson lied again. 'All human beings do.'

'You are not as human as most, Herr Wilson. You think too much and feel too little.'

Wilson nodded. 'Perhaps.'

'And yet you have doubts.'

'Yes,' Wilson lied for the third time, not wanting Himmler to know and fear his invincible arrogance.

Himmler placed his empty cup on the small table beside him, then stared steadily through his glittering pince-nez. 'In the words of our beloved Fuhrer: "One must listen to an inner voice and believe in one's faith." Would you not agree, Herr Wilson?'

'If the inner voice is self-conviction, then, yes, I agree.'

'I do too,' Himmler said. 'Which is precisely why nothing can stop me.'

'You're a resolute man, Reichsfuhrer.'

'And you aren't?' Stoll asked.

'Only average, Captain Stoll.'

Stoll's smile showed a degree of dry amusement 'I think not, Wilson. In fact, you're a man so resolute, you'd stop at nothing to get what you want. Now isn't that so?'

Be careful, Wilson thought. 'No, I don't think so.'

There are rumors,' Himmler said, ostentatiously studying his immaculate fingernails, 'that the dearly departed Dr Belluzzo did not deserve the fate he received. What do you think, Herr Wilson?'

'I'm afraid I haven't thought about it,' Wilson said, 'apart from assuming that when the SS decided to arrest him, they had their reasons.'

'Are you aware of what those reasons were?'

'His superior officer, Flugkapitan Schriever, believed Belluzzo to be mentally incompetent and possibly dangerous.'

'Did you share that view?'

'I can't remember if I discussed it with Schriever or not, but I have to confess that if I'd been asked, I would have been bound to agree with him.'

'But you had no direct hand in Schriever's report?'

'No. None at all.'

Himmler spread his hands in the air and smiled frostily. 'Good,' he said. That's all right, then. After all, no one is going to miss Belluzzo, who was not even German.' He then clasped his hands together, stopped smiling, and added softly: 'It's just that one worries if one suspects that one's staff are becoming too ruthless in their ambitions.'

'Naturally, Reichsfuhrer.'

He stared steadily at Himmler, giving nothing away, but knew that the Reichsfuhrer was aware of what he had done and would not forget it.

'I like a man of initiative,' Himmler said, 'so long as it doesn't make him too ambitious.'

'I understand perfectly.'

'Good,' Himmler said.

Realizing that he had gained Himmler's wary admiration, Wilson stared across the broad expanse of the hangar, to where the Schriever flying saucer, about to be test-flown for the first time, was being prepared. It was resting on a large steel platform that could be wheeled out of the hangar. Forty-two meters wide and thirty-two meters high, it looked immense in the enclosed space. Indeed, raised up on the steel platform, it cast its shadow over the cover-ailed engineers working around it, including Habermohl and Miethe. Schriever himself was being helped into his flying suit, since he was the test pilot.

It was a completely circular aircraft, shaped like a gigantic,

inverted steel bowl and supported on four thick, hollow legs that housed the gas-turbine rotors which, it was hoped, would give it its vertical-rising capability. Another four gas-turbine rotors were positioned horizontally at equal distances around the rim of the circular body, for control of horizontal flight.

It was lamentably primitive, Wilson knew. It would fly enough to satisfy Himmler and keep Schriever pleased with himself, leaving Wilson free to get on with the design of the real, vastly more advanced machine.

Wilson's deception was necessary. There was no one he could trust. The Third Reich was filled with ambitious, frightened men who wished to make an impression. Wilson did not trust Rudolph Schriever. He saw the madness in Himmler's eyes. He remembered his troubles in America, the heavily guarded hangars in Iowa and Illinois, the businessmen and politicians and generals who had ruthlessly stolen his life's work. The same thing could happen again, because the war's end was beginning: When the battle for Russia commenced, the Third Reich would start to bleed. How long would Himmler last then? And how long could Wilson then keep his secret? He wanted to make real his secret masterplan, but what guarantee did he have that he could do it? The Nazis devoured their own kind, so they might devour even Himmler - either that or the Reichsfuhrer would turn on Wilson, destroying all he had gained.

Heinrich Himmler: the Reichsfuhrer. Wilson was not deceived by his mild gaze. His neat fingernails were polished with blood and his smile hid hysteria. No, Wilson didn't trust him, and so he gave Himmler only a little - the prototype for a flying saucer that was merely a crude airplane - while explaining repeatedly that his problems were many and he needed more time.

It was a delicate maneuver. A great cunning was required. The flying saucer had to fool Schriever and the other engineers; it had to be a considerable achievement by their standards though still lacking something. Thus Wilson had used obsolete technologies with slightly advanced ideas,

letting Schriever and his engineers take pride in what they imagined was their great achievement: a saucer-shaped aircraft. Gas turbines and liquid-fueled rockets were still the basis of their technology, but Wilson had already surpassed that The real achievement was his other, secret Feuerball, and most of that was in his head ... So he gave a little and took a great deal and listened always to Himmler.

'Your health is good?' he was asking.

'Yes,' Wilson replied.

'The recent operation was a success?'

'Completely, Reichsfuhrer.'

To experiment on yourself shows great courage - or, perhaps, faith. I have to admire that'

'I am nearly seventy, Reichsfuhrer. My time is running out. I am old and my body begins to fail me, and I have to prevent that if I'm to continue my life's work. Since the choices are otherwise nonexistent, it's certainly worth the risk; and while so far we've only managed to repair my stomach and do some minor skin grafts, given time, if we continue medical experients in the camps, I'm convinced that well eventually reach the stage where we can make flawless skin grafts, replace faulty hearts, develop mechanical limbs, and maybe even make great advances in human longevity... The possibilities are limitless.'

Himmler scratched his nose, adjusted his pince-nez, then nodded solemnly. 'I agree,' he said softly. 'We need that - and more than that. Let us sum up what we've achieved so far and see what we've got...'

His voice trailed off as he stared at Schriever's saucer. The doors of the hangar were being opened and sunlight was pouring in.

'We have our underground factories,' Himmler said. 'We have the location for our New Order. We have our masters, the SS, and our slave labor and your own crystal genius.'

'We have everything,' Stoll said.

Himmler smiled but shook his head. 'No, we still don't have enough. We need more than normal men. What we need is a

biological mutation that will lead to true greatness. We must learn to control our work force. Not with whips and not with guns. What we need is automatic control of their bodies and minds. The human brain must be examined, the body's secrets must be explored. We must try to steal their will and their physical strength and leave them just what we need. The so-called democracies cannot do this - their regressive morals would forbid it - but here, at the dawn of the new era, there is nothing to hinder us.'

He smiled at the listening Ernst Stoll, as if giving approval.

'We must use the Ahnenerbe, hand in hand with the Lebensborn, in order to study racial characteristics and breed only the finest. That will solve the first problem - and only in that way, will we be able to create the Superman. Nevertheless, that leaves the problems of the work force, and we must solve those also. Control of body and mind. We must find a brand-new method. I think of medical and psychological experiments of the most extreme kind. The camps are ours to command. The scum there is our base material. The New Order needs a wealth of mindless muscle and your genius must find it.'

Wilson did not reply, as there was nothing for him to say. What Himmler wanted, he also wanted, but for very different reasons; what Himmler wanted was an insane dream that he totally rejected. Yet he listened, because Himmler had the power, and he still needed that.

'Do you understand?' Himmler said. 'My New Order will come to be. It will be broken into colonies, each individual, each with its work, all divided into masters and slaves, existing just to support us. There's no problem in the Antarctic. It's just another Nordhausen. You ship the subhumans in to build your underground complex, you control them with brain implants and our Death's Head SS, and then you move in your scientists and technicians and administrators, and you bind them all together with fear of their all-seeing masters. And once there, where can they go? There is no way in or out They will live underground, seduced by power or cowed by fear, the masters bound by their blood oaths, by their religious conviction; the

subhumans by torture and the threat of death and their singular lack of a way out. Yes, American, it is possible. We are halfway there already. You must work, you must complete this great project, before we settle the matter. Now let us see this test flight.'

The hangar doors had been opened fully. The flying saucer was being wheeled out on the broad platform, its steel body now silvery. Wilson followed Himmler and Stoll, out of the office, across the sunny hangar, then into the summery afternoon. The collapsible legs let the platform be lowered to the ground, where the wheels were removed, and the platform became a glittering launching pad with the saucer resting upon it

Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever was standing in his flying suit directly in front of the saucer, his helmet under his arm. He stepped forward and gave the Nazi salute and looked uncommonly nervous.

'Good luck' were the only words spoken by Himmler.

'Thank you, Reichsfuhrer!' Schriever responded, visibly swelling with pride, then saluted again and turned away, to climb the stepladder that led up the gleaming, sloping body to the saucer's centralized cockpit.

The Perspex canopy had been removed. The saucer reflected the sunlight. After Schriever climbed carefully into the dome-shaped pilot's cabin, the canopy was replaced and locked in position. The engineers retreated and shielded their eyes. Himmler and Stoll hurried behind the sandbags with Wilson, then Himmler scratched nervously at his nose and adjusted his pince-nez. The saucer resembled a metallic mushroom - or, perhaps, a giant spider. Its four legs, which housed the gas turbine rotors, thrust down obliquely. There was a roar as the hollow legs spewed flames and filled the air with black, oily smoke. The saucer shuddered and shrieked. Yellow flames spat at the platform. The roaring changed and became a deafening sibilance as the machine started rising. Himmler covered his ears. His body appeared to be shrinking. The saucer shuddered and roared, lifted tentatively off the

ground, hovered briefly and swayed unevenly from side to side and was obscured by the swirling smoke. Himmler turned and stared at Wilson. His mild eyes were like the sun. The saucer roared and hovered just above the ground as Himmler gripped Wilson's wrist.

'A new era!' Himmler exclaimed as the ground shook beneath them.

Chapter Twenty-One

Bradley and Joan made love that afternoon more tenderly and satisfyingly than they had done in months.

They had flown to the island of Oahu, Hawaii, for a vacation in the hope of repairing the damage done by Bradley's increasing obsession with John Wilson's unheralded, innovative work on rocket research and what he might be creating in Nazi Germany. That obsession had grown dangerously over the years, encouraging Bradley to be more distracted, keeping him away from home too much on his many investigatory trips, and making him increasingly thoughtless when it came to his family. Consequently, the gulf between him and Joan had widened. She had even threatened divorce. Bradley, though desperate to be part of a proper intelligence agency, such as the British Secret Intelligence Service, and use its greater resources to track down Wilson and put a stop to his activities, had begun to see the error of his ways.

Well, not quite...

While he had continued to use his powerful Wall Street law firm and influential clients as his personal link to Washington, DC, and General Taylor's army air force intelligence unit, he had become increasing frustrated by the lack of progress regarding his proposals for a centralized intelligence-gathering organization. Earlier in the year he had been informed by Taylor that the beginnings of just such an organization had been made - an Office of the Coordinator of Information, or COI, with its headquarters established in the State, War, Navy

Building next to the White House. When another unofficial agent, William Donovan, had been appointed above Taylor as coordinator of information, Bradley had been crushed by disappointment and decided to turn his back completely on his intelligence ambitions.

A few months later he had suggested this vacation in Hawaii as a sort of second honeymoon, designed to bring him and Joan closer together and let them start all over again.

It appeared to have worked. Admiral Jeffrey Paris, an old friend of Bradley's buddy, General Taylor, and captain of one of the battleships anchored off Ford Island, had found them an attractive villa on the green hills overlooking Honolulu. Bradley and Joan had settled in with pleasantly surprising ease, gradually unwound, talked through their differences, and finally come together in bed like much younger lovers.

That afternoon Bradley had woken up from the nap they had taken to prepare them for the Saturday evening dance in the Pearl Harbor Naval Officer's Club, to which they had been invited by Admiral Paris, and found himself luxuriating in Joan's warmth as well as in his newfound peace of mind.

He felt younger than he had in years. Swelling with love when he thought of how close he had come to losing Joan, he reached out to her, ran his fingers lightly over her, stroked her raised hip and waist, then rolled into her spine, slid his hand around to her soft breast, and let his passion awaken her. She turned into him, almost purring, her smile sleepily radiant, and they pressed their naked bodies together and became one again.

'God, I love you!' he whispered.

Later, bathed and dressed - Bradley in a white dinner jacket and black bow tie; Joan in an elegant, off-the-shoulder evening dress - they had an aperitif out on the walled patio overlooking Honolulu. Bradley gazed through palm trees, palmettoes, and hibiscus toward the US Pacific Fleet, anchored in the vast bay. There were destroyers and minesweepers, oilers, tenders and submarines; and off Ford Island the battleships formed two lines, not far from the airfield where dozens of planes stood

side by side. The battleships looked magnificent, glinting gray in the brilliant sunlight. Beyond them, far away, where green sea met blue sky, were the flapping white sails and gleaming brass railings of private yachts and expensive motor cruisers.

'It sure as hell isn't New York,' he said, turning back to face Joan across the glass-topped wickerwork table and appreciating the warmth of her girlish smile, the sunlit sheen of her auburn hair.

'Don't even think about New York,' she said. 'We'll be back there soon enough. Let's enjoy what we've got while we've got it I'm blooming just sitting here.'

'You look it Making love must be therapy.'

'All men are disgustingly vain,' she said, 'and you're just praising yourself.'

He had to smile at that Touche, my sweet Nevertheless, it's nice to see you smile. I thought I'd lost that forever. I nearly did, didn't I?'

'I'll admit, I was worried.'

'You don't have to anymore. I've put it all firmly behind me. Not meaning to discuss New York, but I'm satisfied to be back in Manhattan, doing what I'm supposed to do.'

'You're such a good lawyer,' she told him. 'I hate to see that talent wasted. I really didn't mind you doing that unofficial snooping for General Taylor during your trips overseas, but the thought of you becoming involved in official intelligence gathering made me real scared.'

'You've read too many novels, Joan.'

She smiled at that. 'Yes, I suppose so... but I also know how involved you can become - and were becoming over Wilson - so I'm glad you changed your mind and went back to legal work.'

'I'll now settle into my respectable middle age and watch my married kids make mistakes with their kids.'

'There are worse ways of growing old.'

It was a wise remark that made him appreciate her all the more and count his lucky stars that their marriage hadn't been destroyed by that Wilson business.

Unfortunately, once he thought of Wilson, he also thought of Gladys Kinder, whose letters from London were still arriving at his Manhattan office, bringing him news of the war in Great Britain, along with plenty of teasing, oddly disconcerting sexual comments.

No longer could he doubt that he had been instantly attracted to the woman, maybe dangerously so. If that feeling normally would have faded with the passing years, her letters were resolutely keeping the memory of her alive. Now, though he certainly enjoyed reading the letters, his rapprochement with Joan made him wish that Gladys Kinder would stop writing and let him forget her. He hadn't laid a hand on her, nor even made a move toward her, but her letters, piling up over the years, made him feel that he had.

Suddenly realizing just how treacherous emotions could be, and frightened by how close he had come to hurting and losing Joan, he reached across the table to squeeze her hand.

'Right,' he said. There are worse ways of growing old. And we have such good kids to be concerned with. I want to thank you for that - it was your doing. I love you all the more for it.'

'Oh, God, Mike, shut up, you're making me blush. Finish your drink and let's go.'

He grinned. 'Yep, let's do that'

They drove down the steep, winding road, through lush tropical greenery, past pineapple plantations and rickety, makeshift stores run by Chinese, Japanese, and Hawaiian families, to the road that ran along the seafront of Honolulu, past the Pearl Harbor naval base and adjacent Hickam Field, home of the 17th Army Air Corps. Having decided to eat alone, before meeting Admiral Paris and his wife for drinks in Waikiki, they drove into the center of Honolulu, through narrow streets filled with bars, pawnshops, Chinese grocery shops, tattoo parlors, and photo galleries, and parked near the corner of Maunakea and Hotel Street, outside a window filled with the carcasses of smoked pigs and ducks hung on meat hooks.

'If what we eat looks like what's in that window,' Joan said,

'I don't think I'll get through my meal.'

'You're going to love it,' Bradley replied. 'You'll probably eat like a pig!'

'It's always so noisy here!' Joan exclaimed good-humoredly.

'That's why I love it, dear.'

They had dinner upstairs in Wu Fat's Chinese Restaurant, surrounded by gilded decorations and walls painted a garish red, under a very high ceiling and rotating fans. The food was delicious, the atmosphere exotic, and Joan, as if to prove Bradley right, ate like a pig.

'So many men in here!' she whispered, wiping sweet and sour sauce from her lips.

Bradley glanced around him and realized that she was right The place was filled with sailors, marines, and soldiers, some with Chinese, Japanese, or Hawaiian girlfriends, most on their own. Right now they were happy, eating and drinking, having a good time, but he knew that before the night was out there would be lots of fighting. Saturday night in Honolulu was never without its fair share of action, which is why he enjoyed it.

'God help them,' he said. They're the social pariahs of Hawaii. Serving your country doesn't exactly make you popular. Come on, luscious, let's go.'

'You just want to take me down there to sell me,' Joan said - in this area of Honolulu, close to the docks, servicemen actually queued up in the streets to get into the brothels located above the shops - 'but I don't think I'm worth that much.'

'It's a fluctuating market,' Bradley replied, 'so you might be surprised.'

Joan's laugh was surprisingly raucous, making Bradley feel terrific, and he put his arm around as they walked back down the stairs, joined the noisy throng in the street, and eventually drove to Waikiki, four miles farther on.

'We should retire here,' Joan said, as the taxi cruised along the palm-lined road and she studied the large houses in expansive gardens. 'For what we pay, you could buy a mansion here and have a really great life: lovely weather, golden

beaches, beautiful people. Why are we in New York?'

'We're not in New York; we're in Connecticut.'

'Same difference,' Joan said.

Surrounded by the pink walls and Moorish tiles of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, they had cocktails with Admiral Paris and his wife, Marisa, the former a silvery-haired, pink-faced, world-weary handsome man, the latter a raven-haired, good-humored woman whose features, though formed over fifty years, were those of a carefree woman ten years younger.

'I hope you like that villa we found for you,' Marisa Paris said as she stirred her exotic cocktail with a straw. 'Are you happy up there?'

'Blissful,' Joan replied. The villa is lovely and the view is stupendous.'

Marisa sighed melodramatically. 'Gee,' she said, 'I'm glad. I get so nervous finding places for friends of friends - you just never know, right?'

'Right,' Bradley said. 'But you picked right, so stop worrying.'

Taylor told us to take care of you,' Admiral Paris said. 'He described you as two very rare birds - friends worth any effort. You've obviously warmed his cold heart.'

Bradley chuckled at that. 'I've never seen his cold heart.'

Taylor isn't cold, but he's tough - and a good judge of people. A man like that I can trust.'

'You've known him a long time?'

'Yep. We've conducted a friendly rivalry for years: army against navy. I claim to sail the high seas, where the air is fresh and healthy, and I tell him he's just a soldier, a kind of policeman, his nose rubbed in intelligence muck.'

'It's necessary,' Bradley said with a nervous glance at Joan.

'Sure it is,' Paris replied. 'I know that. I just josh him to score the odd point. He isn't bothered at all. In fact, right now he's setting up a kind of centralized intelligence bureau. I'm not sure exactly what kind, but that's his latest obsession.'

'Marisa,' Joan said to Paris's wife, 'are you going to sit here and let them talk about their work?'

'No way,' Marisa said, placing her empty glass on the table and looking melodramatically determined. 'I'm going to insist we leave right this minute and have us some fun.'

'Right!' Joan said.

'Right!' Bradley added.

Yet when they left the hotel and drove back to Honolulu, he could not help but feel bitter disappointment at learning that a centralized intelligence agency was being set up and he, who had pushed so strongly for its formation, had not been called. Of course he understood why - he had told Taylor that he wanted out - but he still felt obscurely betrayed, as if, in some part of his subconscious, he had wanted Taylor to insist that he come in.

Dammit, he thought, I'm such a hypocrite. I should learn to grow up...

Then, as they entered the Naval Officers Club in Pearl Harbor, he looked at Joan's flushed face, saw the radiance of her smile, and realized that in every possible way he had done the right thing.

'Let's have the time of our lives,' he said.

The dance began late in the evening and went on until the early hours of the morning when the white-jacketed officers and women in flowing ballgowns, most more flushed than they had been six hours before, started drifting away, either back to their quarters on the base or, as the cacophony of revving cars indicated, to their homes in the lushly tropical hills above Waikiki and Diamond Head.

Because they had been drinking, Bradley and Joan, at the invitation of Admiral Paris, returned to their home in the officers' quarters, where they had a few hours' sleep. The next morning, after showering and changing into the less formal clothes they had brought with them, they joined Paris and Marisa for breakfast in their modest kitchen. Outside, in the base and in Honolulu, the church bells were ringing.

'I still feel drunk,' Marisa said.

'Go to church and confess,' her husband said.

'You look surprisingly fresh,' Bradley complimented her. 'It must all be in the mind.'

'It's in my mind,' Joan retorted. 'Or at least in my head. My head feels like it's stuffed in cotton wool. What on earth did we drink last night?'

Admiral Paris laughed and placed his coffee cup back on its saucer. 'Just a few little cocktails,' he said. The ones with flags sticking out of them.'

Then his cup rattled in its saucer and the coffee slopped out. 'What the hell...?'

The table shook again as Paris stared down at his cup. The other cups and saucers also rattled, then, even as Bradley heard a distant explosion, the floor beneath him shook more violently and the telephone rang shrilly on a table that was bouncing on the tiled floor.

Paris kicked his chair back, picked the telephone up, and was listening with widening eyes when the antiaircraft batteries outside started firing. 'Goddamn!' Paris exclaimed. 'Right!' Then he slammed the phone back down and stared at the three of them. 'We're being attacked by the goddamned Japanese,' he said. They've already attacked Wheeler Field and Schofield Barracks! Dammit, those sons of bitches caught us napping. Their planes are bombing us right now!'

Even as he spoke, a plane roared low overhead and away again, making the house shake. Bradley glanced at Joan, saw her wide, confused gaze, then he followed Paris out of the house, to stand on the porch.

A black pall of smoke was already billowing over Pearl Harbor and a frightening number of Japanese dive bombers, fighters, and torpedo planes were flying in from the sea, their wings glinting in brilliant sunlight, to swoop down in waves and bomb and strafe Ford Island and the harbor.

Bradley saw the bombs dropping, tumbling over like black birds, and heard the awesome blast of the explosions even as fierce balls of fire were lifted up on clouds of billowing, oily black smoke over what he knew were the battleships near Ford Island and the defenseless, parked planes on the airfield nearby.

'Oh, my God!' Joan exclaimed softly behind Bradley. He felt her fingers tugging at his shirt, as if to pull him back into her.

'Dammit!' Paris exclaimed. 'I've got to get back to my ship!' He glanced at his wife. 'You better get the hell off the base, Marisa. Go with Bradley and Joan. Go back to their place up in the hills and I'll call you later. Okay?'

However, even as he spoke, some Japanese Zeros roared in low overhead, through the black puffs of smoke from the American antiaircraft batteries, to pass on and strafe downtown Honolulu and the lush hills beyond. A series of explosions tore through the greenery, blowing palm trees apart, setting fire to the foliage, filling the air with flames and smoke between the houses dotting the hills, as the planes, their machine guns still chattering viciously, ascended gracefully and circled back toward the sea.

'No,' Marisa said. 'I'm staying right here.'

'And so am I,' Joan said.

Then stay indoors,' Admiral Paris said. 'And you better stay with them, Mike.'

'I'll drive you down to the fleet landing,' Bradley said, 'then come straight back. Marisa might need your car.'

'Right,' Paris replied. He hurried into the house and came back out with his naval jacket, still buttoning it even as he kissed his wife's cheek and slipped into the car. Bradley also kissed Joan, then got into the driver's seat, turned on the ignition, and screeched away from the house.

The Japanese planes were still attacking, whining above the explosions and gunfire. Bradley drove past men and women, sometimes even children, who were standing on their lawns or porches, wearing only pajamas, dressing gowns, or even underwear, gazing up in disbelief at the boiling, black, flame-filled smoke and diving Japanese planes.

'Christ!' Paris exclaimed. They even caught us with our aircraft on the ground. Ford Island must be a junkyard!'

Certainly the fleet landing was a nightmare.

Even before he had braked to a squealing halt, Bradley saw the columns of water geysering up between the boats and ships

of the fleet, many of which were on fire, pouring black oily smoke, breaking apart and sinking, while the barrels of the guns of the antiaircraft batteries and surviving ships spat yellow flames. Balls of fire ballooned brilliantly over sinking ships. Sailors in flames were jumping overboard. Japanese Zeroes were bursting into flames and falling into the sea between the ships and boats, where in a haze of gray-,black-, and crimson-tinged smoke more sailors were trying to clamber into lifeboats or swimming or drowning.

Admiral Paris jumped out of the car as it shuddered to a stop, slammed the door behind him, looked, appalled, at what was happening, then leaned back down to the window and said, Thanks, Mike. Now get the hell back to the house and look after our ladies.'

'Will do,' Bradley said.

As the admiral hurried off to find a boat to take him to Ford Island and Bradley reversed the car, sailors with blistered faces and limbs, their scorched, blackened flesh hanging in strips from blood-smeared bone, were being helped out of whaleboats and carried away on stretchers to the waiting ambulances and hospital trucks. Bradley drove off to a concerto of wailing sirens, blasting ships' horns, whining planes, dementedly chattering machine guns, pounding antiaircraft batteries, exploding bombs, and bawling or screaming men. Japanese Zeroes were still winging in low overhead, strafing the base, as he drove through the streets of the officers' quarters.

Hardly believing what was happening, Bradley was further shocked when he stopped in the driveway of Admiral Paris's house. Bullets had smashed the concrete paving and stitched a line up the front wall, broken the windows, and peppered the roof.

Mesmerized for a moment by the sight of the broken windows, finally Bradley raced into the house. Then stopped in his tracks when, just inside the living room, he saw Marisa rocking Joan in her arms and trying to wipe the blood from her soaked clothing as she wept over her.

'Oh, God!' Marisa choked out between her sobs. 'Oh, God, please! Oh, God, please!'

In one hideous moment Bradley took in the bullet-stitched walls, smashed picture frames and furniture, glass-strewn floor, and Joan in Marisa's arms, both covered in blood. Bradley knelt down, saw that the blood was Joan's, heard an anguished groan, realized it was his own, then reached out to touch his wife's forehead. It was icy cold.

'Oh, Jesus!' he said.

Her breast and stomach were covered in blood and her breathing was harsh.

'Call an ambulance!' he heard a hysterical woman screaming - then realized it was actually his own voice and shuddered convulsively.

'I've already called for an ambulance' - Marisa sobbed - 'but they're all so damned busy. But they're coming. They're coming!'

'Joan!' Bradley hissed. 'Joan!'

She opened her eyes. 'Oh, God,' she said, 'it hurts.' Her eyes were dazed, but she gradually recognized him and gave him a weak smile. 'My man,' she said. 'My ever-loving, handsome husband. What a fine face you have.'

'Thanks,' Bradley said.

'I'm all right,' Joan said. 'Aren't I?'

'Sure,' Bradley lied, 'you're okay. No problem at all. It's just a matter of—'

The children, Mike. Look after the children. And our grandchildren too.'

'Shut up,' Bradley said. 'Don't talk that way. Jesus, Joan. Oh, my God!'

'Hey, there, don't be—'

But her final words didn't make it - only blood escaped from her lips. Then she coughed and spluttered, choking on that blood, sighed, as if too weary to be bothered, and closed her eyes for the final time.

Bradley was stupefied. He couldn't believe that she was gone. He kept glancing around him, as if time would move

backward, and when it didn't, he just clung to her, holding her tightly, refusing to let go, and shedding all the tears he had held in since the days of his childhood.

The Japanese planes left and returned, then left for the final time. Bradley accompanied Joan's body to the morgue and held her hand in the silence.

The only sound was his sobbing.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Joan was flown home and buried back in Connecticut, near the house where she and Bradley had shared so much together. Mark and Miriam attended the funeral, bringing their children with them, and even though that made Bradley feel older, it also encouraged him.

Life went on and Joan still lived through her children and grandchildren, all of whom had loved her as much in life as they missed her in death.

Yet it wasn't enough.

He felt broken up inside. He had Christmas with his children and grandchildren and some friends, but the love that they showered upon him only made him hurt more. He saw the New Year in alone, in a house that now seemed too large, and shortly after, feeling lost in the house, he decided to sell it

Mark and Miriam didn't need it They now had their own homes and families. The house was only a morgue for his recollections of things won and lost, a graveyard for his past. Not a home any longer.

'I'm putting the house on the market,' he told Mark.

'Gee, Dad...'

'It's unbearable with your mother gone, Miriam.'

'Yes, Dad,' Miriam said. 'I can understand that.'

He sold it quickly enough, but the contents were a problem, because so much of what had seemed so necessary was now useless debris. He gave his children what they wanted, offered the rest to his friends, gave what was left to various charities,

and took only his personal things.

On the last day, when he was sorting through the papers in his desk drawers, he came across the letters from Gladys Kinder in Europe, tied together in chronological order and looking well thumbed.

He sat down, feeling breathless, filled with love and guilt and heartbreak - his love for both women; his guilt over a betrayal that had taken place only in his thoughts; his heartbreak over the loss of both women, one living, one dead. Then, feeling confused, he decided to burn the letters. But he couldn't bring himself to do it, so he packed them away with his other things and left his home for the final time.

Needing the bright lights of Manhattan, he took an apartment near his office, started working himself to exhaustion, drank too much, and started staying in at nights, wanting only the silence.

That silence was broken by General Taylor, who called uninvited.

'You look terrible,' he said.

'I guess I do,' Bradley replied.

'What you need is a real distraction,' Taylor said, 'and that's why I'm here. Do I at least get a drink?'

Bradley poured him a bourbon. Taylor carried it across the office, taking a seat under the window, in striations of gray light.

'I'm really sorry about Joan,' he said. 'I don't know what else to say.'

'Don't say anything, General.'

'We've counted the cost,' the general said. 'Apart from Joan, it was terrible. In the first attack, the Japs capsized one battleship and completely destroyed three others. In the second attack, they sank three destroyers and badly damaged two others. Everything on Ford Island was destroyed, including our airplanes, and we had nearly three thousand casualties, most of them fatal. Luckily, they missed the entire aircraft carrier fleet - which was out to sea at the time - but no doubt about the damage they inflicted ... and now the

United States is at war. We've lost our virginity.'

'Right,' Bradley said, feeling drugged.

'Our almost total lack of knowledge about Japanese intentions,' Taylor said, 'due to the fragmentation of our intelligence gathering and lack of cooperation between those involved in it, has compelled us to do what you've been suggesting for years: namely, form a centralized intelligence agency - the Office of Strategic Services, or OSS - which we hope to have running by the middle of next year. I want you to join the organization as an agent.'

'I don't want to,' Bradley said.

'Yes, you do,' Taylor insisted, sipping his bourbon and sounding determined. 'We've just been informed by British intelligence that according to various European resistance groups, remote-controlled bombs and flying rockets are being constructed at a Nazi research center in Peenemunde, in the Baltic. Based on that information, British intelligence conducted further research and can confirm that in 1936, work did in fact begin on the construction of a secret proving ground in the vicinity of a small fishing village called Peenemunde and that it's since become one of the Nazi's most advanced experimental stations. Analysis of aerial photography taken in the past few weeks shows that the proving ground exists, that the southern part contains workshops where, we believe, the missiles are constructed, and an extensive settlement that has since been verified as being occupied by the scientists. A little farther on, near the village of Karlshagen, are barracks for soldiers and workers, plus a prisoner-of-war camp and concentration camp.'

'Sounds very cozy,' Bradley said, not wanting to know.

But Taylor persisted. 'Since we'd already informed the Limeys about your old friend, John Wilson, they're now working on the theory that the new weapons, while ostensibly being made at Peenemunde, may in fact be the indirect products of Wilson's genius in that field, since the rocket team was originally based in Kummersdorf, Berlin, at the other side of a former firing range where Wilson and some other German

rocket scientists were working at the same time.'

That sounds logical,' Bradley said sourly.

Taylor was unmoved. 'So the British Secret Intelligence Service,' he continued doggedly, 'recently got in touch with us and asked us if we had any opinions about their latest theory. Naturally we agreed that in all probability their theory is substantially correct and that Wilson, the traitorous bastard, is largely responsible for the Peenemunde flying bombs and rockets. This has naturally led all of us to wonder just how advanced Wilson is and what other diabolical innovations he has up his sleeve. It has, in fact, convinced us that he has to be tracked down and taken off the stage - and that's why we want you. We want you to find that son of a bitch and terminate him.'

'I'm too old,' Bradley said.

'Bullshit,' Taylor replied. 'We need you because you were once an excellent pilot, have done unofficial intelligence work both for the US army and as a civilian lawyer, know a hell of a lot about aeronautics, speak French and German, know Europe like the back of your hand, and are obsessed with John Wilson and what he's up to.'

'True, but I'm still too old,' Bradley said, feeling only the pain of his loss and the lack of enthusiasm for life that Joan's death had engendered.

'No, you're not,' Taylor said. You're just in a state of shock. And that's exactly why you need this kind of distraction - and why you'll be good at it. As for your general fitness, if you join OSS, you'll be put through a tough retraining program, with a special emphasis on espionage, self-defense and undercover, or guerilla, operations. So when the time comes, you will be fit enough. And believe me, Mike, you need this job to help you forget Joan. You need it - so take it!'

Deeply moved by what his friend was trying to do for him, and aware, also, that he really did need something special to distract him from his anguish, Bradley said, 'And once I finish with the training... What happens then?'

'You'll be posted to London, to help the British Special

Operations Executive track down Wilson and put an end to his activities. Now do you want it or not?' Bradley leaned forward in his chair, covered his face with his hands, and knew he had to escape. 'I want it,' he said.

Chapter Twenty-Three

They are perfect specimens,' the white-smocked hospital surgeon informed Wilson and Ernst Stoll as he removed the guillotined human heads from the laboratory's refrigerator and placed them into tin cans.

'Jewish only?' Wilson asked.

'No', the orderly said, placing the last severed head in a can, then starting to place the lids back on. 'When we received a letter from Professor Hirt, the head of the Anatomical Institute of the University of Strasbourg, telling us that the number of skulls in the university's collection was too limited, we started obtaining them from captured Russian troops, and these heads are mostly those.'

'All undamaged?'

'Of course! Once the heads of the living specimens are measured and selected, death is induced by injection, then the head is severed from the body and shipped in these cans, which will be hermetically sealed, to the Anatomical Institute.'

'Good,' Wilson said. He turned to Stoll, who was looking distinctly queazy, and said, There is much we can learn from these heads. There are ways we can use them: the psychological and physical creation of the Superman and a work force that has no free will. Himmler's Institute for Research into Human Heredity, the Ahnenerbe, must not be wasted on quasi-mystical research, but utilized for a more practical purpose: medical and surgical experimentation of the most fearless kind. We must look at the human brain and learn how to control it, study the human body and learn how to change it.

In doing this, we can create a new kind of man - any kind that we want. This is what we are doing here.'

'Can we leave now?' Stoll asked.

'Yes,' Wilson said. After thanking the surgeon, he led Stoll out of the laboratory and back through the corridors of the SS hospital, taking note of the fact that the young kapitan was still looking queazy and understanding that he could use his moral qualms when the occasion called for it.

Right now, however, he was intent on preparing Stoll for the world he would inherit. To that end, as they passed the guarded doors of other laboratories and operating theaters, he said, 'Our experiments are wide-ranging and in fact know no bounds, which is why we're using human beings instead of just animals. It's through our ruthless experimentation on these human beings that we're learning about brain manipulation, limb and other bodily replacements, the causes, nature, control, and use of fear, even the effects of freezing and decompression - all of which will be useful when we move to our underground colony in the Antarctic.'

Ernst nodded thoughtfully, trying to accept the unpalatable. Wilson knew, as they walked out of the hospital, that he would in time do so.

The hospital entrance was heavily guarded by armed SS troops, and more troops were placed strategically at the far side of the road. Wilson glanced along the street of this suburb of Berlin, quiet and almost empty in the gray light of August, and thought of how the whole of Germany had become a huge armed camp in which fear, torture, and death were commonplace.

It was a prototype for the kind of colony he envisaged in the Antarctic; but the world he would create would be controlled by scientists and dedicated to the advancement of knowledge - it would not be controlled, as Himmler thought, by his blond young gods of war and dedicated to his mystical notions of a world of ice and fire.

'I haven't seen you much lately,' he said to Stoll, as the chauffeur-driven SS car carried them around the outskirts of

Berlin, through the outlying villages, past columns of troop trucks, and out toward the research center at Kummersdorf, south of the city. 'What have you been up to?'

'My work with the Lebensborn organization,' Ernst replied, rolling the window down to let air in, then lighting a cigarette.

'Which many Germans still think are maternity homes.'

'Yes.'

'And this work keeps you busy?'

Ernst sighed. 'It's all for Projekt Saucer, Wilson. As you know, the real aim of the institutions is the controlled breeding of the perfect Aryan, a Nordic superrace, through the disciplined mating of men and women selected in accordance with the racial principles defined by the Ahnenerbe.'

'Yes,' Wilson said, feeling impatient, 'I already know that. But are you exploiting the Lebensborns for our purposes?'

'Yes,' Ernst said, sounding weary. 'For the past eighteen months, when not actually at Kummersdorf, I've been organizing the kidnapping of thousands of racially valuable children from all over Europe, as well as the Soviet Union, and shipping them to the many Lebensborns now spread throughout the Reich, where they undergo special training to Germanize them. The past records of such children are erased and their parents, if not exterminated, are not told where they are. Within weeks of arriving at the Lebensborns, the children can remember little of their past, have been given new names - which also helps them to lose their former identity - and have been taught that they have not descended from the ape, but from the SS. Given their political indoctrination and total devotion to the Reich, these children, when they become of age, will voluntarily take part in our human stock breeding and go on to create the racially perfect, totally loyal, new breed of man, to be controlled by our Nazi elite in our SS colonies under the ice. You should be proud of me, Wilson.'

It was a small attempt at levity, so Wilson smiled at him, then glanced up at the bombers that were heading for England. 'How are things going in Neuschwabenland?'

'Progress is slow and painful, but at least it is being made.

Many workers have already been shipped out from the camps and are digging out their underground accommodations in terrible circumstances. The death rate is high - from cold, exhaustion, and sometimes hunger - but the first underground area will soon be cleared, more men and materials will then be shipped in, and by the end of next year, we should be able to start shipping in the scientists as well as the first children from the Lebensboms. It is your side of the work, Herr Wilson, that is now going slowly.'

'Time is of the essence, I know, but this thing can't be hurried.'

'You must understand,' Ernst said, 'that since the defeat in Russia, our beloved Reichsfiihrer is becoming even more concerned that we perfect your flying saucer -which he views as the ultimate weapon - and also ensure that the underground space in Neuschwabenland is completed and fully manned before the present war comes to an end.'

The present war?' Wilson asked, amused.

'As you know,' Ernst replied rather stiffly, almost offended, 'this war is merely the prelude to a thousand-year war - the one that will turn the German soldier into the Superman.'

'Ah, yes,' Wilson said, amused by Stoll's passionate sincerity, 'that war.'

'Yes,' Ernst echoed him, 'that war. And ever since Stalingrad, which marked the beginning of the end of this war, Himmler has become almost desperate to ensure that everything is prepared for our escape to Antarctica.'

'But everything is being prepared, as you've just so vividly demonstrated.'

'Not fast enough,' Ernst said. That's why he wants another test flight of the flying saucer. He views it as the most vital part of our operation - an undefeatable weapon as well as a means of flying in and out of there with impunity - and he's growing worried that it will not be completed in time.'

'I'm sure it will be,' Wilson said, 'though nothing under the sun is guaranteed.'

'It has to be,' Ernst replied, 'so let's hope that this test flight

is successful. Otherwise there'll be trouble.'

'From Himmler?'

'Yes.'

Wilson had to force himself not to smile. The car had reached Kummersdorf, and as the driver slowed down on the approach road to the research center, where high barbed-wire fences surrounded flat, windblown fields, he tried to imagine the expression on Rudolph Schriever's face when the flying saucer, which he was claiming as his own, failed to fly. Wilson knew it would not fly - he had ensured that it would not, because its failure would give him what he needed to get rid of Schriever and place Stoll on his side.

He had it all worked out.

When their papers had been checked at the heavily guarded gate, they were waved through. They proceeded along the road, past the old firing range, now overgrown, to the research center's collection of ugly, corrugated-iron and concrete hangars, which also were protected by heavily armed SS troops.

On Stoll's instructions, the driver took them between two of the hangars and parked at the far end. There, in an open space between the firing range and an overgrown hillock, the latest version of the so-called Schriever saucer was sitting on its lowered steel platform, prepared for takeoff. The gas turbine rotors that had been housed in the previous model's four hollow legs had been replaced with a series of variable jet nozzles arranged all around the outer rim, just below the saucer's center of gravity. Combined with the machine's lack of rudders, ailerons, or other protruding surfaces, this gave it a more graceful, seamless appearance.

Looking eerily beautiful in the fading mist of late morning, the saucer appeared to tower over the men who were either working around it or simply observing it from behind the concrete bunkers and heat shields placed across the hangar's open doors. Even as Wilson and Stoll climbed out of the car, Himmler was being led out of the hangar, his pince-nez reflecting the sunlight. He was accompanied by his usual

bodyguards. Schriever, again in his flying suit, walked proudly beside him. Himmler stopped walking when he saw Wilson and Stoll coming toward him.

'Ah!' he said softly. 'Captain Stoll, and our American genius! I thought we had lost you.'

'No, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst replied, stopping with Wilson in front of him. 'We were checking the progress of the medical and surgical experiments at one of the Ahnenerbe hospitals.'

'Impressive, are they not?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And many of them were suggested by Herr Wilson, here, who is nothing if not fecund in many fields.'

Thank you, Reichsfuhrer,' Wilson said, then nodded coolly at Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, whose darkly handsome, saturnine features were illuminated with the glow of his newly found arrogance. 'Are you looking forward to the test flight, Flugkapitan?'

'Yes, Herr Wilson, I am. I have the confidence that the saucer will fly this time.'

Wilson smiled. 'I hope so.'

'I am always a little confused,' Himmler said in his quietly probing, slightly sardonic manner, 'as to who is responsible for what regarding this saucer. According to certain sources, including yourself, Flugkapitan Schriever here is mostly responsible for the machine; according to others, the credit should go to you. Who, then, do I praise or blame should this machine fly or crash?'

'I am willing to take the blame if it crashes,' Schriever said too quickly, thus demonstrating an unexpected slyness at taking the credit for the machine. However, while Wilson had previously let him take most of the credit, in the hope that he would not attempt to bite the hand that fed him by bad-mouthing him to Himmler, he now had good reason for taking the blame for what was about to happen.

'No, Reichsfuhrer,' he said. 'I cannot let Schriever do that. I must confess that I'm responsible for the latest innovations in this model - particularly the multidirectional jet-propulsion

system - and if anything goes wrong, and I pray it won't, the blame is all mine.'

Convinced that the machine would work and that Wilson was trying to steal his credit, Schriever turned red and was just about to retort when Stoll, after giving Wilson a puzzled glance, said diplomatically, 'I think we better begin the test, gentlemen, while conditions are excellent.'

'Of course,' Himmler said.

Schriever saluted and marched off, very upright and determined. He was climbing the ladder up the side of the saucer even as Wilson retreated behind the concrete bunker with Ernst, Himmler, and the bulky SS bodyguards. Staring through the protective, reinforced glass viewing panel of the bunker's wall, Wilson watched Schriever lowering himself carefully into the raised, centrally located pilot's cockpit When he was strapped in, Habermohl and Miethe replaced the Perspex canopy, locked it into position, then climbed back down to the ground and pulled the ladder away. When they also were safely behind a concrete bunker and a waving flag had indicated that the test could begin, Schriever switched on the saucer's electrical system. Wilson heard the bass humming sound and saw the variable jet nozzles around the rim turning down toward the ground. When the jet nozzles were facing the earth, the engines roared into life.

The noise was extraordinary, an earth-shaking clamor, and the red and yellow flames spitting out of the downturned jets formed a circle of fire that was obscured and distorted by the smoke and dust billowing up from the scorched, hammered ground. The saucer vibrated violently, sank down on its collapsible legs, then bounced back up, swayed dangerously from side to side, and eventually lifted slightly off the steel platform, borne up on a bed of spitting flames, the smoke swirling around it.

It hovered tentatively in the air, its silvery body tinged with crimson, the yellow flames and black smoke forming a river of light around it. Then it rose even higher, thirty yards, then fifty, and hovered uncertainly again, tilting slightly from left

to right. Then the jet nozzles moved and the flames shot out horizontally. As they did so, half of the nozzles cut out and the saucer was thrust forward instead of upward, in a sudden brief, horizontal flight.

Very brief, indeed - as Wilson had known it would be - for just as it shot forward, heading toward the old firing range, the side not spitting flames tilted dramatically toward the earth and the flaming nozzles, now aiming at the sky, increased its downward momentum,

'Oh, my God!' Ernst exclaimed.

Schriever turned on the other jet nozzles in time to make the saucer level out just as it was about to hit the ground. It bounced along like a spinning top, out of control, turning wildly, shrieking and sending up great curving waves of earth and debris even as the engines cut out and the smoke streamed away from it.

'Get him out!' Ernst bellowed at the engineers.

Habermohl and Miethe ran like the wind, carrying the stepladder between them, and threw it on the sloping side of the saucer and climbed up to the cockpit. They unlocked the cover, let it fall to the ground, hurriedly helped a shocked Schriever out, and ran back to the bunker, practically dragging the pilot between them. They had just hurried behind the concrete wall when the saucer exploded.

It shuddered and collapsed, its legs giving way. Then it lay there, tilted on one side, some of its metal plates blown off, the flames shooting out from inside it and licking over the cockpit.

Himmler stared at Wilson, his cheeks pale, his lips tight, then he glared at Ernst and stalked off, saying nothing at all.

'We're in trouble,' Stoll said.

Chapter Twenty-Four

'We can no longer depend on the American genius or Projekt Saucer,' Himmler said in his quiet, chilling manner from behind his desk in SS headquarters in Berlin. 'Whether or not an actual workable saucer can be achieved is beside the point, since clearly this war won't last as long as we had hoped and the time required to complete the flying saucer will not be available.'

'With all due respect, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst said, relieved to have found Himmler so calm after the disastrous test flight but wondering why his throat was still dry, 'we must give Schriever and the American more time. If we wish to populate Neuschwabenland, we will need something more advanced than our finest airplanes.'

Himmler held up his hand in a rather lordly gesture of rejection. 'Yes, yes,' he said, 'I know that. I am not a fool, after all. But since the American's saucer has failed again - and he did admit that he was responsible for it - I'm convinced that we can no longer depend on it as our final weapon, but must instead turn our attentions to Wernher von Braun's V-l and V-2 rocket projects at Peenemiinde. All the tests there have been highly successful - indeed, I witnessed two tests myself, as well as others, at my own rocket center at Grossendorf. Given the excellent results, it is anticipated that remote-controlled rockets will soon fall on London. Since our beloved Fuhrer also believes in the rockets, that is where we should concentrate.'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said, not wishing to contradict his

increasingly distracted Reichsfuhrer, though he knew that Himmler's real reason for concentrating on the so-called secret weapon program was based on his desire to take control of the whole of Germany's military production.

Indeed, to this end, he had recently tried to talk Wernher von Braun into working under his command at Grossendorf After failing to do so, he had persuaded General Fromm into letting him reinforce the Abwehr security net around Peenemunde with his SS, which actually was his first step in removing the hated Abwehr from his path. His next move, then, as Ernst well knew, would be to gain total authority over the V-1 and V-2 rocket projects, despite the protests of the Abwehr's army generals and he would surely succeed.

'So, Kapitan,' he continued, 'I will leave you in charge of Projekt Saucer, for what it is worth, while I personally supervise the more successful activities of von Braun and his rocket team. I hope this makes sense to you.'

'Naturally, Reichsfuhrer.'

In fact, Ernst was secretly delighted. Ever since the humiliating surrender at Stalingrad, followed all too closely by the reverses in Africa and catastrophe in Italy, Himmler had shown increasing signs of emotional instability - finely suppressed hysteria, a slight quavering in his voice, the constant blinking and rubbing of weary, dazed eyes. Ernst, who sensed that he was growing mad, was more wary of him.

Not that Himmler was alone. Berlin was now filled with rumors that Adolf Hitler was going mad, or was at least in bad health and frequently doped with the drugs supplied by his quack, Dr Theo Morell. If that was true, it would do Himmler little good because, as Ernst knew, when Himmler gazed upon his beloved Fuhrer, he looked into a mirror.

Ernst still believed in the SS, in the promise of the New Order, but he could no longer trust his once-beloved Reichsfuhrer. Therefore he was pleased that Himmler had lost interest in him and Projekt Saucer and was, instead, going to turn his attentions elsewhere.

He almost sighed with relief.

'There is this other little problem,' Himmler said, clasping his hands under his babyish chin and looking severe.

Ernst suddenly felt nervous. 'A problem, Reichsfuhrer?'

'Yes, Captain, a problem. I believe you had a similar kind 'of problem in Poland - one concerning a woman.'

Suddenly remembering Kryzystina Kosilewski in Cracow, and shocked that Himmler should have found out about her, Ernst could only swallow with a dry throat and let his heart race.

'Poland, Reichsfuhrer? If you mean—'

Hirnmler waved his hand and smiled, like a father to his son. 'A Jew bitch, I believe,' he said.

'Yes, sir, but I assure you, I—'

Hirnmler waved his hand again and kept smiling, as if amused by Ernst's discomfiture. 'It's all right,' he said. That's all in the past now. We can but hope you've learned your lesson from it and will not repeat it.'

'Definitely not, sir!'

'How is it, then, Captain Stoll, that according to a report received this day from one of your fellow officers—'

Ritter, Ernst thought bitterly.

'—your wife has been seen to fraternize with a Wehrmacht officer whose sympathies, it is known, are no longer entirely with our beloved Fuhrer. Worse: Your wife has also been reported as drinking too much lately and, apparently, making loud, drunken pronouncements in public about what she deems to be the failings of our glorious Third Reich. Do you have an explanation for this, Captain Stoll?'

'I swear to you, Reichsfuhrer, I didn't know,' Ernst said, caught between humiliation and outrage to learn what Ingrid was doing behind his back. Of course, she had told him that she was quietly living a separate life and he had tried to deal with it by forgetting about it. Now he had not only been reminded of her other men, but been informed that her separate life was not lived so quietly. He felt like murdering the bitch.

'You didn't know she was seeing another man?' Himmler

asked in his oddly pedantic manner.

'No, sir,' Ernst lied.

'Are you having marital problems, Captain?'

'To be frank, Reichsfuhrer, yes - though I'd hoped they wouldn't interfere with my work.'

'Most admirable, Captain. Unfortunately, we cannot have the wife of one of our finest officers making a fool of herself in public, much less offering insulting remarks about our glorious Third Reich while cavorting with a potentially traitorous officer.'

'No, sir, of course not. What do you suggest, sir?'

'The officer in question is Wehrmacht Lieutenant Eberhard Tillmann. Formerly a fine officer, he took part in the blitzkreig against Poland and was also one of the first to enter Paris. Unfortunately, since the reversal of our fortunes at Stalingrad and in Africa, he has taken to making subversive comments to those who will listen. What do you suggest, Captain?'

Already incensed that the man was his wife's lover, Ernst was even more outraged to hear that the bastard had been given what he had been denied: a part in the blitzkreig against Poland and the subsequent, magnificent advance across Europe and right into Paris.

'With your kind permission, Reichsfuhrer, I will have this man transferred to the Eastern Front to take charge of a penal regiment. I will also ensure that my wife keeps her peace in the future.'

'Excellent,' Himmler said. 'I respect a man who knows when to place his duty before personal feelings. You are dismissed, Captain Stoll.'

Ernst saluted and left the office, choking up with fury, and marched toward the exit, not looking at his fellow SS men. He noticed only the usual collection of pale-faced, frightened people waiting to be interrogated, standing along the corridors, huddled pitifully on the wooden benches, ignored by the SS guards with the pistols and submachine guns who, in their black uniforms and leather boots, looked decidedly ominous.

A nation living in fear, Ernst thought, is a disciplined nation.

We will need that when we move underground to forge a strong, fearless Aryan race.

In the meantime, before that happened, he was being assailed by mundane problems, the main one being the wife he had once loved so dearly.

He walked out of the building, into rain and a cold wind, and waved at one of the SS cars parked in the road. The driver moved up to him, let him in, and then drove off. Ernst, sinking into the rear seat, looked out at the ruins that had been caused by the Allied bombing and thought of the night Hitler had become the Chancellor of Germany and he and Ingrid had gone to bed in the Adlon Hotel. They had loved one another then with the innocence of idealism, but now both of them were older than their years and had become bitter enemies.

Human relationships were treacherous, ephemeral, without substance, so he was glad to be involved with the SS and what it represented: an ideal state beyond petty, individual considerations; the subordination of the self to the whole in order to create a new, better man in an orderly world.

It was something to cherish.

He slapped Ingrid's face as soon as he walked into the apartment.

'Don't look so shocked,' he said quietly. 'You know what it's for.'

She covered her flushed cheek with her hand, staring at him through her fingers. 'No,' she said, 'I don't know what it's for. And you have no right to—'

'Eberhard Tillmann. A Wehrmacht lieutenant, I believe. Presumably as good in bed as he was on the march to Paris, but now joining my wife in publicly abusing the Fatherland. Now do you understand?'

Ingrid removed her hand from her face and stared defiantly at him. 'Yes, Ernst, now I understand. As I also understand why we won Paris - he is that good in bed!'

Ernst slapped her again and she fell against the sideboard, straightening up as some decorative plates fell off and smashed on the floor. The children's bedroom door opened and two faces

peered out - Ula, now nine years old, and Alfred, who was six. Ernst, who saw so little of them these days, was shocked by how mature they looked and how fast the time passed.

Ashamed that they should have heard him smacking their mother, he covered it with a display of cold anger.

'Stay in your room and close the door,' he said. 'Your mother and I are talking.'

'Yes, Papa,' Ula said, her azure eyes emphasized by the golden hair that fell on her blushing cheeks. Then she pushed the gawking Alfred back into the room and quietly closed the door.

'A nice thing for the children to see,' Ingrid said, rubbing her stinging cheek. Their father striking their mother.'

'Not as bad as eventually learning that their mother's been behaving like a whore.'

'I don't charge, Ernst. I do it for love.'

He wanted to strike her again, but refrained because of the children. 'Do you know how I learned about it?'

'No.'

'From Himmler! You understand, you stupid bitch? I learned about my wife's public infidelities from the Reichsfuhrer! Can you imagine my shame?'

'The Reichsfuhrer?' She at least had the decency to look shocked. 'How did he know about it?'

'Your damned boyfriend, this Lieutenant Eberhard Tillmann, is known to have made comments against the Third Reich in general and the Fuhrer in particular, so the SS had him placed under surveillance, which means they also watched you. Reportedly you're just like him now. You drink a lot and talk in public. Your own insulting remarks about the Reich- borrowed from him, no doubt - have been overheard by the SS officers doing the surveillence, one of whom, I'm sure, was Franck Ritter, who can't stand my guts. Do you know what you've done, you whore?'

He had hissed his last words with explosive, pent-up fury and grabbed her by the lapel of her blouse, jerking her face close to him.

'You could have ruined me,' he whispered heatedly. 'You could have had me stripped of rank. You could have had me transferred as a guard in one of the camps. Damn it, didn't you think of that?'

She jerked away from him, looking at him with frightened eyes. 'No,' she said, 'of course I didn't think of that! I'm in love. I just—'

He stepped up to her again, leaned over her, wanting to crush her. 'Don't tell me you're in love. I don't want to hear those words. You said you would live your own life quietly, and I agreed to let you do it, then you turned it into a public performance, for the whole world to see and hear. Drunk in public with your traitor! Parroting his traitorous words! And then I'm called into the office by the Reichsfuhrer - by Himmler! - and told to put my own house in order. Damn you, I could kill you!'

'Don't hit me again!'

He had raised his hand, but thought of the children and lowered it, then walked away from her, a safe distance, where his temper could cool. Studying her, he was startled by how little she had changed, by the realization that she looked almost as young today as she had the day he had proposed to her, ten years ago. God, how he had aged since then, yet this bitch had remained unchanged: still the same short-cropped blond hair, the same green eyes, the same pale-faced beauty. He realized then, with deep bitterness, that in some helpless, torturous manner he still loved her and wanted to have her.

She deserved to be punished.

'I won't hit you again,' he said. 'You won't make me stoop to that. But you must put an end to this affair and keep your mouth shut in public.'

'I promise to be more careful in public. I give you my word.'

'And your affair with Lieutenant Tillmann?'

She shook her head. 'I can't... I can't possibly stop seeing him. I don't think I can do that.'

'You must!'

'I'm sorry, but I can't. If I said I would, I'd be lying.'

Then, my dear, I'll have to make it easy for you - with my Reichsfuhrer's consent.' Her gaze turned from confusion to dread and he savored his words. 'As soon as I return to barracks, I'll arrange the transfer of your beloved Lieutenant Tillmann to a penal regiment on the Eastern Front. Do you know what that is, dear? A penal regiment is composed of soldiers who have been found guilty of some offense and given the choice between military prison or serving in a regiment used solely for the most dangerous missions. The chances of survival for the regiment's members are therefore slim - though they do have a chance. So Lieutenant Tillmann, your traitorous lover, will be gone within the week and is unlikely to ever return. Don't worry about trying to keep yourself away from him - you won't have a choice.'

Ingrid threw herself at him, beating at him. He grabbed her wrists and pinned them behind her back and forced her into the wall. She didn't look so pretty now, for her face was streaked with tears, and he held her until she stopped struggling and sagged in his arms. When he released her, she slid to the floor, breathed deeply, then calmed down.

'I'm leaving home,' she said, 'and I'm going to take the children with me. I'm going back to live with my parents in Wannsee, and if you want to see the children, you can visit them there - but that's all you can do. We'll be man and wife only in name. That should keep your superiors happy. Then as soon as this war ends, I'll apply for divorce. Believe me, I'll do it.'

'That's fine by me, Ingrid.'

He went in to see his children, embraced them passionately and kissed them, then quickly left the bedroom and walked to the front door. He passed Ingrid who remained kneeling on the floor with her head bowed, and left without looking back, not even slamming the door.

It was a dignified exit.

'My handsome kapitan!' Brigette exclaimed with throaty sensuality, tugging him into her embrace and pushing the door closed behind him. She was wearing only her dressing gown,

through which he felt her animal heat, and he was instantly aroused by her full breasts and sly, pressing loins. Yet even as he pressed his lips to her neck, she pushed him gently away from her. 'Greedy little boy,' she said with a mocking smile. 'Did you bring me a present?'

'Yes,' he said, his ardor dimmed a little as he handed the wrapped present to her. 'A diamond necklace - a very expensive necklace - from that shop on Tauentzienstrasse.'

'Ah!' Brigette exclaimed with a bright, greedy smile as her long, painted fingernails ripped open the paper. Then it must be expensive!' She threw the paper on the white carpet, held the diamond necklace up, letting it dangle from her fingers, turned it around and studied it in the winter's light falling in through the window. 'Wunderbar!' she said softly.

'Put it on,' Ernst said.

'You sound rather hoarse, my dear Ernst.'

'Put it on!' he repeated.

She stared thoughtfully at him, eventually gave a knowing smile, then placed the necklace between her breasts and clipped it behind her neck.

'What now, my love?'

'Take off the dressing gown.'

Brigette did as she was told - but slowly, seductively, like the professional stripper she was, and then stood in a lazily sensual pose before him, curvaceous and marble pale, naked except for the necklace glittering on her full breasts.

'Was I worth it?' she whispered.

'Yes,' he said.

Then come and take what you paid for.'

He had her right there on the floor, on a carpet as soft as eiderdown, not worrying about love or its loss, losing himself in pure lust. Brigette wrapped her legs around him, writhed under him, rolled above him, trailed her wet tongue down the length of his heaving body and then over his lips and eyes. He wanted that and nothing else - a loveless coupling, her expertise - and his pleasure was increased by the knowledge that she cost only money. She did not demand his loyalty or

arouse his emotions just to poison them; she gave him what he wanted for a price that he could easily afford. He wanted that now - his only commitment was to the Fatherland - and so he took it and reveled in his freedom and orgasmed with pleasure.

Later, when he had bathed and dressed, Brigette made him a meal that he washed down with wine and followed with half a bottle of cognac, after which, though it was still only afternoon, he felt drunk and self-pitying.

'Ingrid's leaving me,' he confessed, 'and she's taking the children with her. She had a lover and now she's leaving me! Such is feminine reasoning.'

Brigette licked at her glass of cognac. 'You have a lover,' she mocked him. 'You have a mistress - me.'

That's different I'm a man. And it wasn't until Ingrid and I were growing apart that I took up with you.'

Brigette chuckled. 'Such is male reasoning, my pet! And as I recall, Ingrid only took on a lover when she'd found out about you.'

'She's a whore,' Ernst said.

'No, darling, I'm a whore. Ingrid is only a wounded woman who's now taking revenge.'

'I don't care,' Ernst said. 'I'm not interested in her motives. I only know that our marriage has been poisonous on both sides and I don't want any more emotional involvements as long as I live. I have my work and it costs me no emotion while giving me great satisfaction. That's all I want now.'

Brigette smiled and drank some cognac. There speaks a true man,' she said. 'In the end, all men turn to their work for the satisfaction they lack at home. Soon you won't even need me - you'll make love to the SS.'

'You're being sarcastic,' Ernst said, 'but there's a certain truth in what you say. My allegiance to the SS, to the Fatherland, is now stronger than love or blood. The Reich towers above personal concerns and is founded on discipline. That's what I want now - discipline - not wasteful emotions. Yes, thank God for a man's work.'

He left shortly after, having sobered up sufficiently to drive, and went directly to the research center at Kummersdorf, to have words with Wilson.

It was growing dark when he arrived there, the buildings swept by restless spotlights, and he parked and hurried into the main hangar, past the stone-faced SS guards. Wilson was in his glass-walled office, studying drawings of a flying saucer, but he raised his head when Ernst entered, to look at him with that unblinking, disconcerting gaze.

He had been in the hospital recently for some mysterious operations, and certainly they seemed to have been successful, for now, though he was gray-haired and lined, he looked otherwise remarkably youthful. And his eyes, even though he was smiling faintly, had the brightness of ice.

'Captain Stoll!' he exclaimed softly in his oddly glacial, polite manner. 'This is a surprise! I was just about to finish and go home. What brings you here so late?'

'Some news,' Ernst replied.

'Regarding the failed test flight?'

'Yes.' Ernst glanced through the windows at the hangar beyond and saw the scorched, gutted saucer on the metal platform, some metal plates hanging loose. 'Himmler was most upset—'

'I gathered,' Wilson interjected dryly.

'—and claims that he now has more faith in the V-1 and V-2 rocket project at Peenemunde. He is going to switch his attention to that and leave us to struggle on without support, with me in charge, until he decides what to do about us.'

Ernst was startled when he saw what he thought was the beginning of a smile on Wilson's lips, but the American, as if realizing that fact, retreated instantly back into a solemnity that showed not the slightest trace of concern.

'And what's going to happen to me?' he asked in a surprisingly calm, almost academic manner.

'He didn't mention you personally,' Ernst said. 'I think he's just going to forget you. You're safe for the moment, but your

time here could be limited. We'll just have to wait and see.'

Wilson nodded. Yes, Kapitan.'

Ernst realized at that instant that Wilson was actually pleased with what he had heard.

He wanted to be left alone.

Perplexed, Ernst said, 'Good night, Wilson,' then turned away and walked out.

He had a miserable three weeks, living mostly in the SS barracks, which depressed him, and returning only occasionally to his apartment, which, having been vacated by Ingrid and the children, simply depressed him even more. However, his feeling of being in limbo regarding Projekt Saucer was resolved when, in early September, he was called back to the Reichsfuhrer's office. Himmler, trying to sound as casual as possible, said, You have heard, have you not, of the recent bombing of Peenemiinde by the RAF?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst replied.

'Exactly what have you heard, Captain?'

'That Peenemunde was seriously damaged,' Ernst said, deliberately understating the case, for he knew full well that on the night of August 17, Wernher von Braun's rocket research center on the Baltic had been bombed by a mass of RAF Lancasters and Halifaxes, which dropped thousands of tons of explosives and incendiary bombs, reportedly almost totally destroying the complex.

'And that's all you know, Captain Stoll? That Peenemunde was seriously damaged?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Then let me give you the full facts,' Himmler said in an unusual display of frankness. 'Fifty of the important development and test buildings were destroyed, including Wernher von Braun's laboratory. Not one of the hundred-odd buildings used to house the scientists was left standing. The foreign workers' settlement was a heap of rubble. The concentration camp suffered greatly. And, finally, included among the dead were several hundred German girls from the

women's auxiliary service, one hundred and seventy-eight scientific workers, Dr Walter Thiel, and senior engineer Helmut Walther. A total loss of seven hundred and thirty-five people, plus the destruction of sewage and power lines, water mains, railway tracks, and the road running down the middle of the complex. In short, Captain Stoll, it was for us an unprecedented disaster!'

'I'm sorry, Reichsfuhrer.'

'We will recover, Captain,' Himmler insisted, sounding unusually passionate. We will recover!'

'Of course, Reichsfuhrer. Naturally.'

As if satisfied with Ernst's confirmation of his own faith, Himmler nodded solemnly, adjusted the pince-nez on his nose, then became more relaxed.

'I'm sure I do not have to tell you,' he said, 'of my conviction that Peenemunde could not have been bombed had some disgusting traitor not betrayed us.'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst replied, despising himself for this groveling.

'So,' Himmler said, 'because of this conviction, and also because of the subsequent air raids on the Zeppelin and Henschel-Rax works, I insisted to our beloved Fuhrer that everything connected with the rockets should be put under the care of my SS.'

'And he agreed?'

'Naturally, Captain Stoll. And I have since decided that the experiments involving firing the rockets will be moved to central Poland; the development works to caves in the mountains near the Traunsee, in Austria; and mass production to our underground factories in Nordhausen, in the southern Harz Mountains. Meanwhile, the eastern side of Peenemunde will be rebuilt and camouflaged from the air in a way that makes it look like a deserted battlefield. You agree with this, yes?'

'It is brilliant, Reichsfuhrer. But if we move the development works to Nordhausen, we will need to expand the labor force there.'

'That has already been arranged,' Himmler replied, in the testy manner of a man whose judgment is being questioned Three thousand prisoners from Buchenwald will be used as slave labor and housed in a new subcamp named Dora, which also will be underground. We will then expand Dora until it has approximately fifteen thousand prisoners, which should be enough.'

'Excellent, Reichsfuhrer. I will be proud to take command of—'

But Himmler cut him short with an impatient wave of his hand, which was, as Ernst had long noted, rather effeminate. 'No,' he said. 'You will not be in command. Since I have already put you in charge of Projekt Saucer - which, I must confess, I now have grave doubts about - I am placing General Hans Kammler in charge of the transfer and, subsequently, the whole mass-production plant, which will now be known as the Nordhausen Central Works.'

'Yes, sir!' Ernst said, trying to hide his shock.

'Do you have any further questions, Captain?'

'No, sir.'

Then you may leave.'

Realizing that he had just been removed from his position of authority over the SS secret weapons program and relegated to what Himmler now viewed as a relatively minor Projekt Saucer, Ernst left the SS headquarters in a state of confusion.

He took the news straight to Wilson.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Arriving in London in February 1944 as an OSS colonel, Bradley was completely unprepared for the full extent of the city's devastation. Having remembered London from his many pre-war trips to Europe, he was shocked by the scorched, blackened ruins and debris-strewn rubble, the ugliness of the barrage balloons at the end of their steel cables, the gun emplacements in the parks, the sandbagged doorways, black-out curtains, and reinforced walls of even the city's most elegant buildings.

When he impulsively mentioned this observation to British Lieutenant-Colonel Mark Wentworth-King, shortly after meeting him in the headquarters of the Special Operations Executive at 64 Baker Street, the raffishly good-humored SOE officer told him that much of the devastation was fairly recent, because London was in fact suffering its heaviest air raids since the Blitz of May 1941.

The blighters are coming over practically every night,' the lieutenant-colonel told him, 'so keep your head down, old chap. Take a chair. Have some tea.'

Weary after his night flight from Washington but otherwise feeling unusually healthy because of his weeks of intensive OSS training in physical fitness, espionage, self-defense, and guerrilla operations, Bradley pulled up a chair at the other side of Wentworth-King's desk and appreciated the hot tea that was poured for him.

'I've never seen so many troops in my life,' he said, 'as I've seen in the streets of London today. And not only English. Also

Irish, Scottish, Welsh, French, Hungarian, Polish, Australian, Canadian, and American. They formed a regular flood out there. Just how soon do you expect the big push?'

'Fairly soon,' Wentworth-King said.

British reticence. Bradley knew it and was used to it. 'Just how soon is "fairly soon," Colonel?'

'In good time,' Wentworth-King said.

Bradley sighed. This is a pretty damned good cup of tea,' he said.

'Naturally,' Wentworth-King replied. 'It is English, after all.'

'Three cheers for the English.'

Wentworth-King smiled, lit a cigarette, then glanced down at the papers on his desk and turned some of them over. 'Mmmm ... quite a record.'

Thanks,' Bradley said.

The Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the Medal of Honor for exploits in the battlefields in France in 1918,' Wentworth-King insisted upon reading aloud, as if he hadn't read the documents before. 'Unlikely member of the Republican Party in New York—'

'Why unlikely?' Bradley interjected.

'One naturally assumes that those of Irish extraction will be Democrats.'

'I'm sorry I missed the boat.'

'On the contrary,' Wentworth-King continued with a slight, amused smile, 'you didn't miss the boat at all, but traveled far and wide on it... A successful lawyer with offices in Wall Street. Specialist in international law and used your knowledge to assess, on behalf of the US secretary of state, the military aims and capabilities of Europe, particularly Nazi Germany, before the outbreak of war. Encouraged by boredom and the fact that you were too old to take active part in this war to perform other unofficial services for General Dwight Taylor of US Army Air Force intelligence. Eventually through him, and with the blessing of President Roosevelt, were given the job of laying the groundwork for some kind of centralized intelligence agency, rather like our own. Worked at this in a

purely unofficial, civilian capacity whilst trying to establish a more formal intelligence organization to deal with the European situation. When OSS was finally established, based on the Office of the Coordinator of Information, or COI - which ironically was based on your unacknowledged recommendations - you were invited by General Taylor to join the new intelligence organization, did so, then underwent retraining, and, as a much fitter, hopefully more dangerous man, ended up at the other side of my desk. Why, Colonel Bradley?'

'Why what?'

'Why have you ended up at the other side of my desk? Our intelligence man in Washington requests that we bare our breasts to you, though does not tell us why. What are you after?'

'The benefit of your experience,' Bradley said diplomatically. 'OSS is a relatively new organization—'

'Established two years ago,' Wentworth-King interjected with the air of a man who likes to get his facts right and wants you to know it.

'—and while we're proud of our track record so far, we're willing to admit that compared to the British Secret Intelligence Service, we're pretty raw meat.'

'I beg your pardon?'

'Compared to your organization, lieutenant-Colonel, OSS is badly lacking in real know-how. I've therefore come here for two purposes: the first is to learn all you can teach me; the next is to make use of that learning for a particular mission.'

Pleased with the compliments, Wentworth-King smiled, inhaled on his cigarette, then blew a cloud of smoke. 'Exactly what would you like us to teach you that you don't know already?'

'I've already had basic intelligence training by your fellow Brits at a COI training school on a farm in Toronto. It was tough, but not enough. I'd now like to be trained in code-breaking by one of your signals intelligence units at Bletchley Park. I'd also like to be briefed on British propaganda and psychological warfare methods, including the so-called

Doublecross or XX system in which, I'm informed, you use captured German spies as counteragents and playbacks.'

'Informed by whom, Colonel Bradley?'

'By your intelligence man in the White House.'

'I am reassured to hear that. Anything else?'

Bradley shrugged and spread his hands in the air. 'Anything you can give me. I'm hoping to parachute into Europe, so obviously I'll need extensive training in that. I also need to perfect my otherwise excellent French and German - and I need to know what to watch out for when I'm in Nazi-occupied territory. You get the picture, I'm sure.'

'Aren't you a bit old for this, Colonel?'

'I'm an exceptionally fit forty-nine, Lieutenant-Colonel, recently trained by the US Marines and some of your own boys. I think I can handle it.'

Wentworth-King nodded and offered a half smile. 'And what exactly is your mission, Colonel Bradley? Do we help you with that as well?'

'You already have,' Bradley said. 'We're after an American rocket scientist named John Wilson who is, according to your reports, working under a false passport at a Nazi research establishment at Kummersdorf, near Berlin.'

'Ah, yes,' Wentworth-King said. 'I remember him well. An interesting chap, your Mr Wilson. Not exactly patriotic, but bright, and well looked after by Jerry.'

'We think he may be contributing more than rocket research to the Nazis.'

'Oh?'

'Yes. In the States, as far back as the early 1900s, Wilson was already experimenting with a crude form of atomic propulsion. When, after the Tunguska explosion of 1908, the US government attempted to take over his project, he ruthlessly destroyed most of the evidence of his work, then went underground. After working anonymously in America for a good thirty years, he fled the country and went to work just as ruthlessly for the Nazis. Since it's also believed that he's contributed to the Peenemunde rocket program, we're

seriously concerned about what else he's up to and think he has to be stopped. That's why I have to be parachuted in as soon as humanly possible.'

The lieutenant-colonel sighed, tapped his teeth with a pencil, and looked decidedly skeptical. 'Germany?' he queried. 'Berlin? You actually think that's possible, Colonel? And how far do you think you would get if you didn't get captured? Kummersdorf is an SS research establishment - top secret, well guarded. You wouldn't stand a hope in hell, old son. It's just not in the cards.'

'It has to be,' Bradley said.

The lieutenant-colonel sighed again, as if dealing with a child, then dropped the pencil and raised his hands in the air in mock defeat.

'I am here to serve,' he said. T will do all I can. In the meantime, let me take you to your lodgings and then, while you're waiting for decisions, I'll ensure that you learn all you need to know. Okay?'

'Okay,' Bradley said.

He was pleasantly surprised to find himself located nearby in a small but cozy private apartment in Shepherd Market, Mayfair. After unpacking, he lay fully clothed on the bed and tried to sleep, but instead, as he often did these days, fell in and out of troubled reveries, in which he vividly relived his happier days with Joan, then their mutual pleasures and triumphs, and finally that ghastly day at Pearl Harbor, when she had died in his arms.

He still cried at remembering that

Bradley wept. He felt the tears roll down his cheeks. Lying there on his back, he was consumed by a dreadful anguish, a grief that was mixed up with guilt because he, who had been with Joan at the time, had actually survived. He knew to think that way was senseless, an aberration of wounded emotions, but the thought that he hadn't deserved to live while Joan had died was one that never quite left him. It also brought back the memories, waves of love, pits of guilt, making him see the

good and bad in their marriage dreadfully magnified ... Yes, the two years since her death would have been hell had it not been for OSS.

General Taylor had rescued him, inviting him into the organization, ensuring that throughout the year immediately following Joan's death, Bradley was worked to exhaustion and distracted relentlessly. He'd been reacquainted with marine training, introduced to new weapons, taught espionage, self-defense, and guerilla operations, turned into the kind of fighting machine that murders quietly in darkness. He had become someone else, someone busy, never alone, and when it was finished, when he was fit and highly skilled, Taylor had put him to work. He had spent another year in America, tying up the loose ends on Wilson, and only then had he been shipped out to London... to find himself in this comfortable, private apartment, weeping tears for the dead.

Thank God, he had work to do.

He slept through the afternoon and awakened in darkness, when he remembered to pull his blackout curtains across before turning the lights on. Then he had a bath, put on his army uniform, poured a drink, and took Gladys Kinder's letters out of his suitcase. There were a great many of them - she was a prolific writer - and he spread them out in separate years on the bed and then started reading them.

She was part of his guilt.

Her letters formed a vivid picture of the life she had led over the past decade: the Spanish civil war, then Czechoslovakia and Italy, then the fearsome days of the Blitz and London as a city at war, at once defiant and tragic. The letters had told him about all that, but also about her private life - the numerous men she had known, her good and bad affairs, her fear of losing her independence combined with the fear of growing old alone - and they had told him, in racy jokes with a serious subtext, that she had fallen in love with him the minute she met him, had never quite forgotten him, and even now cherished the memory of him and wrote to him to touch him.

They were extraordinary letters.

It wasn't surprising that his throat became dry when he picked up the telephone. She answered immediately.

'In my letter I told you to call me at eight-thirty p.m.,' she said, 'and you called on the dot. It can only be Mike Bradley calling. Welcome to London, Mike.'

He was smiling already.

They agreed to meet an hour later in a famous pub in Soho, in the West End, and when Bradley left his apartment, he felt like a nervous schoolboy going on his first date.

The blackout was in force and he found himself in moonlit darkness, walking along with the aid of a flashlight beamed down at the pavement. He went along Half Moon Street, turned into Piccadilly, and walked toward the Circus, passing the Ritz Hotel and the elegant facade of Fortnum & Mason and inky black doorways surrounded by sandbags and often filled with the shadowy figures of men and women in intimate contact. He heard chuckling and ecstatic groaning, voices calling invitingly to him, and saw cigarettes glowing in that darkness where other women were waiting.

At first he was disbelieving, then shocked, then amused and touched, and soon accepted that a city at war was a place like no other.

This was more evident in Piccadilly Circus, where cars, taxis, tramcars, and buses, all with their headlights dimmed, crawled through a flood of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and their women, as they poured around Eros, mostly drunk and in good cheer, then swept along Shaftesbury Avenue, to tumble, with much shouting and laughing and giggling, between piled-up sandbags and through blackout curtains, into the countless pubs and clubs that were spread liberally, noisily, around the network of packed side streets that led into Soho.

Bradley too eventually slipped between piled-up sandbags and through blackout curtains to find himself in a smoky, old-fashioned pub jam-packed with servicemen of every nationality. Having been warned about this by Gladys, he tried

to find her in the jostling mass of noisy revelers, failed to recognize her, so fought his way through to the bar and tried to order a whiskey. He failed at that also, because the barman was too busy, but then a hand fell on his shoulder and squeezed it affectionately as a woman's voice called out to the barman 'John! Get my friend here a Scotch! And be quick about it!'

Mike turned and saw Gladys Kinder smiling at him in that vividly remembered, still laconic manner. She was ten years older and had gray in her auburn hair, but otherwise she seemed just the same and he was instantly drawn to her.

'Well, well,' he said, finding himself bereft of better words. Then, feeling ridiculously formal, he offered his hand.

Gladys looked down at his hand, grinned in amusement, then took hold of it and vigorously shook it.

'You're too much,' she said. 'You're more formal than the English. I didn't expect to find you tearing my clothes off, but to not even get a kiss on the cheek—'

'You're right,' Bradley said. 'Sorry.' He leaned forward and kissed her cheek, feeling childishly embarrassed. Then he was given his glass of whiskey by the barman and raised it to Gladys. She touched her glass to his and they both drank, then smiled at one another in a silence that was awkward only on Bradley's side.

'God,' Gladys finally said, 'it's good to see you again after all these years. You're still the most attractive man on earth, though I know you'll hate me for saying it.'

'No, I won't,' Bradley said, even though he was blushing. 'I'm embarrassed, but I can't help feeling pleased. All men are boys in the end.'

'How right you are, Mike.'

'You're looking good.'

'That's a pleasing white lie. I'm forty-eight this year and I don't like it, though I'm learning to live with it. In London, in this war, that's much easier to do, since there's nothing like the constant threat of death to make you appreciate life, regardless of age and a spinster's traumas.'

'I can't imagine you suffering such traumas.'

She grinned and shrugged. Well, not really. Reporting this war keeps me busy, as well as giving me the chance to meet a lot of people. As for men, since I'm always interviewing those fighting the war, I know more men than I can count, and in that sense have a pretty good time. Still, I needed to write to you, Mike. I only met you twice, but I really missed you and that's something I can't ignore. I hope you missed me a little bit!' 'Yes, Gladys, I did. And that took me by surprise. I didn't know how much I'd miss you until you'd left and then I couldn't believe it. I mean, after only two meetings...' He shrugged. 'It seemed stupid.'

'Romantic?'

Bradley blushed again. 'Yeah, I guess it was, in a way. And I really loved getting your letters, and that seemed odd as well.'

'Love at first sight, Mike.'

'I can't believe in that, Gladys. Some people, they just meet and hit it off - and I guess we were two of them. It's a rare kind of friendship.'

'Can men and women be friends that way?'

'Yes,' Mike said doubtfully, 'I think so.'

'Nothing sexual? Not even a little bit?'

'You're teasing me, Gladys.'

She roared with laughter at that, finished her drink, ordered two more. 'Anyway,' she said, 'I'm sorry about your wife. That must have been hard on you.'

'It was. I even stopped reading your letters for a while. They just made me feel guilty.'

'I teased you a lot in those letters.'

That's right, Gladys, you did.'

'And you never knew when I was joking or not?'

'No.'

She chuckled in a throaty, sensual manner. 'I'm a regular bitch that way.'

'I used to get disturbed.'

'And now?'

'We are here as two old friends.'

'Anything you say, pal.'

Yet her broad grin got to him, drawing him into her warmth, and he knew that he was lying and was not just her friend: that he had been attracted to her from the start and felt that way right now. It was ridiculous (they were too old for such nonsense) but there it was, plain as day. There was something lasting between him and Gladys Kinder, and he couldn't deny it.

He felt he'd known her forever.

'So what are you actually in London for?' she asked him as they sipped at their fresh drinks.

He glanced around the crowded pub, saw sweaty faces through clouds of smoke, the uniforms of many different nationalities; heard a piano pounding in the far corner, voices singing a bawdy song. 'Are you asking as a friend or as a journalist?'

'Take your pick,' she replied.

Bradley grinned at that 'It's too noisy to talk in here,' he said. 'Can we go for a walk?'

'Sure, Mike. Let's go.'

They finished their drinks and left the pub, walked through Soho, which was packed, then crossed Charing Cross Road, took some dark side streets, and ended up in Covent Garden Market. They kept their flashlights turned down, making their way through moonlit darkness, passing the empty vendors' carts, which were covered in canvas for the night, and then crossing the much busier Strand and on down to the Embankment, where the moonlight and stars shone on the river Thames and streaked the water with silver. There were whores along the Embankment as well, negotiating with the servicemen, and Bradley felt a little embarrassed when he passed them with Gladys.

'I love it,' she told him, as if sensing his embarrassment. The less violent, more human commerce of war - a pound of flesh for some silver. You can't keep human nature down. So,' she added, getting back to her last question, 'why are you in London?'

'I'm a member of OSS,' he said. 'Have you heard about it?'

'Of course, Mike. The Office of Strategic Services. A fairly new intelligence agency. Are you somehow linked up with the invasion?'

'No. I'm still after Wilson. That's what I'm here for.'

Taken by surprise, she stopped walking and stared at him, then she shook her head and gazed across the river, to where the warehouses of the docks were silhouetted against the clear, starlit sky.

'I'd forgotten all about him,' she said. That old man who was great in the sack. Good God, he must be over seventy by now! Is he still alive?'

'We think so,' Bradley said, standing beside her, shoulder to shoulder. 'We receive reports from European resistance groups and he still features in them. At least an American scientist does, so we assume that he's Wilson. We think he helped the rocket scientists and is working at a research establishment near Berlin. The Brits aren't concerned about him - they're willing to wait until the invasion - but our government still wants to talk to him about a few things, notably the Tunguska explosion that you told me about and, even more worrying, about what he's creating for the Nazis. We have reason to think he's making an extremely powerful weapon that could be turned against us when we attempt the invasion. That's why I want to go now.'

'Go now? You mean parachute into Germany?'

'Right.'

'Goddammit, Mike, that's crazy. It's plain suicidal.'

'I think I can make it.'

'You think wrong, believe me.'

'I still want to go.'

'Why not wait until the invasion and follow the troops into Germany?'

'They may not get there.'

'They will. And in the meantime you could have a good time in London, the world's finest city.'

'I can't wait that long.'

'It won't be long.'

'You don't know that.'

'I know it's going to be this year. Everybody knows that.'

'I don't care. I want to go as soon as possible. I'm frightened that he's going to create something unbeatable before we get there to stop him. If he can invent something more powerful than the rumored rockets, he could stop us winning the war.'

'The secret weapons are only rumors.'

'I'm not too sure about that'

'And that's why you can't wait to get to Wilson?'

'Yeah, right.'

'I'm sorry, Mike, but I don't believe that. I think it's something much more than that'

'What?'

You tell me.'

Bradley sighed. 'I've got a bee in my bonnet about this Wilson. He's haunted me for years. I have to meet him, face to face, and find out exactly what makes him tick. He appears to have few normal feelings - you confirmed that when we first met - but he's clearly a genius, he wants anonymity, and his ruthlessness appears to know no bounds. The man's like a ghost - he exists and yet he doesn't I dream about or imagine, the things he's invented and they keep me awake at night. I know all about him yet know nothing. I've got to study his face.'

'You'll see nothing but the face of pure logic - a void that transcends morality. You'll see the end of the world.'

'Maybe that's what I'm after.'

Gladys was just about to reply when a distant siren wailed, then another, and another, until the very air seemed to vibrate with that terrible sound - a high, nerve-shattering wailing.

'What the hell?'

'Those are the air-raid sirens,' Gladys said. That means the Germans are coming. Have you ever seen an air raid, Mike?'

'No.'

'Then let's stay right here.'

'Aren't we supposed to take shelter?'

'They come over nearly every night,' Gladys said, then

reached out for his hand. 'Let's just stay here and watch.'

Glancing left and right along the Embankment, Bradley saw men and women hurrying in every direction, heading, as Gladys explained to him, for the concrete and brick air-raid shelters, the platforms of the underground train stations, or the more comforting confines of pubs, clubs, hotels, or even the rooms of prostitutes. Even as he was watching them, he heard a distant, muffled rumbling emerging out of staccato explosions, and he looked along the river to where clouds of black smoke were bursting under the stars and being crisscrossed by phosphorescent lines of tracer bullets that formed a web around the rise and fall of shadowy shapes flying in from the sea.

He was looking at an immense fleet of German bombers - too many to count.

'God almighty!' he whispered.

Gladys squeezed his hand and the wind beat at his face as more ack-ack guns opened fire. The beams of searchlights swept the sky. He heard the distant explosions, felt the ground beneath him shaking, and saw clouds of black smoke billowing up from sheets of yellow flame and spreading out to cover the rooftops in the sky turning crimson.

'They're pounding the docks,' Gladys said. 'God help the poor bastards there.'

She squeezed his hand again and he appreciated the gesture, being almost overwhelmed by the spectacle along the river, by the knowledge that the fabulous mixture of fire and smoke and light was being created by destruction and death on a terrible scale. Over there, where the bombs were falling, people were dying in flame and smoke, being crushed and suffocated and incinerated and blown apart, while the buildings were collapsing into rubble and hot ash and choking dust.

Yet from here it was beautiful.

Bradley choked up with emotion, feeling torn by awe and shame, then raised Gladys's hand to his cheek and pressed her knuckles into his skin in mute affirmation. Then the

bombers were overhead, suddenly roaring like ravenous beasts, and he actually saw the bombs falling, turning lazily in the moonlight, and then the river erupted in a series of mighty explosions, the water geysering up and fanning out and raining down over the debris of the boats that had been hit and blown apart while he was blinking.

Icy water poured over him and he pulled Gladys down, held her tight behind the wall, and looked up to see the British fighter planes, the famous Spitfires, descending on the German bombers like birds of prey, their guns spitting fire as they dove and climbed and returned, until one of the bombers exploded, shuddered in midair, erupted in fire, and went down through a black pall of smoke that obscured its last seconds.

The rest of the bombers passed on, heading toward the East End, still dropping their bombs, their guns firing at the attacking Spitfires. Gladys tugged at Bradley's hand. He looked at her and saw her pointing toward the city. The dome of St Paul's Cathedral, majestic in its halo of crisscrossing searchlights, towered over the rubble that burned and smoked far below, protected, as if by a miracle, from the destruction surrounding it.

Bradley's heart was racing. He wanted to cry with joy. He felt Gladys's hand, her fingers slipping between his, then she raised his hand and kissed his fingers one by one as the ground shook and bellowed. Bradley took a deep breath, tasted smoke, heard more bombing. Then he saw Gladys's face, erratically illuminated in flickering crimson and white light, moving in toward him, her eyes wet, until her lips touched his.

They kissed there, on the Embankment, kneeling behind the protective wall, then clung to one another, exploring each other like children, and stood up only when the bombers had returned and flown back toward the sea, leaving silence and a pall of black smoke that was streaked with red flames.

'I love you,' Gladys Kinder said.

Bradley was speechless.

Of course, she laughed about it later. She had meant it, but

she laughed about it. She told Bradley that the expression on his face had just made her want him more. Yet they didn't go to bed together. They talked around it, but didn't do it. Bradley wanted to do it, but felt foolish, too old, and Gladys said that to do it would probably spoil a beautiful friendship.

'Right,' Bradley said. 'I agree.'

He loved being with her, loved her flirting and teasing, and was enthralled by her conversation, her stories of politics and war, and was jealous when she mentioned the many men she had known over the years. She showed him the city, always kissed him good night chastely, and in letting him know she loved him and simply wanted to be with him, she raised him out of the grave of his grief and turned him into a new man.

Yet he still wanted to complete his mission, to find Wilson before it was too late. After five unparalleled days with Gladys, he tried to get back to work.

'I'm sorry,' Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King said after pouring Bradley a cup of tea in his cramped office in the busy SOE headquarters, 'but your request to parachute into occupied Europe has been denied.'

'What?'

'I think you heard me.' Wentworth-King sat behind his desk and lit one of his awful British cigarettes. 'You will not be allowed into occupied Europe until after D-Day.'

'What the hell!'

But Bradley's intended protest was cut off by an airy wave of the hand and a rather chirpy, British public-school grin. 'Fear not,' he said, holding up a bulging, official envelope. 'You have not been forgotten. I have here, in this envelope, enough detailed instructions to keep you busy for the next year or so and certainly busy enough until the invasion.' Still grinning, he handed Bradley the envelope and asked, 'Did you know about this when you first came to see me?'

'No,' Bradley said, staring at the bulky envelope. 'Whatever it is, I didn't know a damned thing about it.'

'Operation Paperclip,' Wentworth-King explained. 'You were concerned with the Peenemunde scientists, I believe?'

'Yes,' Bradley said.

Well, OSS has decided to mount an operation - code-named Paperclip - to seize the German rocket teams and prevent them from falling to the hands of the Soviets, who will also be greatly interested in them.'

'And what about Wilson?' Bradley asked.

'According to reports recently received from the same European resistance groups that originally informed us about the Peenemiinde rocket project, the rocket teams have recently been moved from the Baltic to underground sites in Nordhausen, and possibly nearby Bleicherode, in the southern Harz mountain ranges of Thuringia. Since those establishments are top secret and under the control of Himmler's most trusted SS troops, and since we are no longer talking about an occupied country - where you might expect assistance -but about Germany itself, it is felt that a parachute drop into Thuringia would be suicidal. It has therefore been decided that your time would be spent more profitably in mounting, staffing, and planning the specific aims of Operation Paperclip, which will come into effect once Europe has been breached.'

That may be too late,' Bradley said in growing frustration. 'If Wilson's already helped the Nazis to build remote-controlled rockets, God knows what else he has in the pipeline. We have to stop him before the invasion starts, since he might come up with something even worse than the reported Peenemiinde rockets.'

Wentworth-King simply shrugged. 'Can't be helped, old chap,' he said. 'For a start, we simply can't have anyone parachuting into Germany at this particularly sensitive point in time. Second, it is believed that Wilson, whilst contributing to the V-1 and V-2 rocket projects, was never actually a member of von Braun's team and is therefore probably still at Kummersdorf - which makes it even more sensible for you to follow the invasion troops into Berlin, once the invasion is underway. Either way, you are staying here, old son, until Operation Overlord commences.'

'And when will that be?'

'It's all down to the tides, old man,' Wentworth-King said, 'and here in England they can be unpredictable. In the meantime, I suggest you collect who you want for Operation paperclip and otherwise enjoy your time in London. Anything else?' 'Go to hell,' Bradley said.

He walked out of the lieutenant-colonel's office with the bulky envelope under his arm, on the one hand bitterly disappointed and even outraged, on the other hand surprisingly, helplessly relieved that at least he could see more of Gladys Kinder, who had given him back the will to live.

She was a huge consolation.

Chapter Twenty-Six

'We must talk to them,' Wilson said as Ernst drove him from the BMW plant in the Berlin suburb of Spandau, back around the dreadful ruins caused by increasing Allied bombings, and then south toward the research complex at Kummersdorf. 'As you've just seen, the new multidirectional jet propulsion system for the flying saucer works beautifully and can be installed any day now. Once we do that, we can arrange a test flight of the saucer, but we must sort this business out first.'

'It's dangerous to go behind Himmler's back,' Ernst insisted, glancing out at the bombed suburbs, the skeletal houses and mountains of rubble, and deciding that he must persuade Ingrid, who was living with her parents in the nearby suburb of Wannsee, to move out of Berlin before it was too late. 'No one can be trusted these days. If they talk, we'll be shot'

'They won't talk,' Wilson replied, looking straight ahead, thinking, his eyes bright with that icy intelligence that seemed not to know fear. 'Like you, they're becoming wary of Himmler's state of mind and think he's becoming unpredictable. They're also worried about how he'll react when the end finally comes - and they now know that it's coming.'

'No one knows that,' Ernst insisted, clinging stubbornly to a vain dream. The Allies haven't yet launched their invasion and might never do so.'

'They will and you know it.'

'We can use the rockets against them.'

'The rockets won't be enough to stop them. Now nothing can stop them.'

'Don't sound so pleased,' Ernst said.

'I am pleased,' Wilson confessed. 'Not because of my countrymen, nor because of the British, but because I want to go where I can work without feeling threatened.'

'Does nothing else matter to you?' Ernst asked him.

'No,' Wilson said flatly.

Ernst glanced to the side as they passed some blackened ruins and saw a one-legged child hopping along on crutches, surrounded by other children, all of whom were looking for valuables in the high mounds of rubble in which broken glass and twisted metal glinted in the light of the sun. The ruins were extensive, surrounding him on all sides, and he thought of the awesome power of modern technology and then glanced at Wilson.

He was seventy-four years old but looked perhaps sixty. Ernst knew that it was due not only to a lifetime of strict dieting and the ruthless application of mind over matter - Wilson's will was unyielding and he used it to recharge his energy - but also to the surgical operations he had recently been having in various SS hospitals. Operations on the stomach, on his varicose veins and joints, reportedly even on the heart, perhaps more than that. The experimental work had been done on humans, on the inmates of the camps, and then Wilson, when he thought the risk reasonable, had had them performed on himself, so far with remarkable results. Indeed, at seventy-four years of age he was more vigorous than Ernst.

And Wilson was different from other men in more ways than one.

Exactly what was he?

Ernst thought of him as a mutant, a creature not quite human, someone who had transcended normal emotions and embraced the god of pure logic, beyond kindness or cruelty. Ernst had tried to find out why - what childhood trauma had perverted him - but every record indicated that he'd had a lonely childhood, his parents strict but decent, and that the

only explanation for his unique personality was his extraordinary intelligence. Such intelligence is beyond pity, feeding on logic, not emotion, and Ernst was now convinced that Wilson was an evolutionary accident, the product of pure reasoning, a human being for whom emotions were no more than unwelcome distractions. He was neither cruel or kind, good or bad, right or wrong: He was a creature impelled by the inhuman force of his mind - a mutant, without emotions, the personification of man's evolutionary drive toward mathematical absolutes.

His was the face of the future.

Ernst shivered involuntarily, gripped the steering wheel tighter, and was feeling decidedly uneasy when the ruins of Berlin gave way to open fields and eventually, as clouds covered the sun, to the barbed-wire fences and heavily guarded main gate of the research complex at Kummersdorf.

Waiting for them in Wilson's office in the main hangar were Hans Kammler, the blond, blue-eyed, former head of SS construction programs, now a brigadier and in charge of the Nordhausen Central Works in the Harz Mountains of Thuringia, and Artur Nebe, former commander of one of the notorious Action Groups in Russia, head of the dreaded Kriminal Polizei, or Kripo, the Prussian intelligence service, and now a full general of the SS, though his allegiances shifted with the wind and his actions were shadowy. Both men were wearing their SS uniforms and looking slightly annoyed.

'You're late,' Kammler said.

'I'm sorry, sir,' Ernst replied. 'We were observing a test at the BMW plant at Spandau and it took a little longer than expected.'

'I'm not interested in excuses,' Kammler said. 'My time is limited and I resent waiting for anyone, much less for an officer of lower rank.'

'Yes, sir, I understand, but—'

'How are things at Nordhausen?' Wilson asked in an unusual display of tact.

'Livelier than they are here,' Kammler said.

The rockets are still being produced?'

Kammler practically sneered. 'Of course, American,' he said. 'A total of one hundred and forty V-2s were produced in January and February alone. Another one hundred and seventy were produced in March, and a further three hundred in April. With luck, we will soon be aiming them at London, and then—'

They won't stop the invasion,' Wilson said. They'll just cause a nuisance.'

'And your flying saucer will do better?' Nebe asked skeptically.

'Yes,' Wilson said.

'So far it hasn't even flown,' Kammler said.

'The saucer we've been openly testing is Rudolph Schriever's adaptation of my work. The saucer I'm talking about, the Kugelblitz, is the one we've constructed at Spandau without Schriever's knowledge. We've just tested the new jet engines today and now know it will fly.'

General Nebe, who was a lover of intrigue, leaned forward in his chair and said, What's the difference between your saucer and Schriever's? And why haven't you told Schriever about yours?'

'Because I don't trust Himmler,' Wilson said boldly, 'and Schriever is Himmler's man.'

Ernst felt a tremor of fear, but willed himself to show nothing. He caught Kammler's searching glance and looked away, too nervous to meet it.

'We are all Himmler's men,' Nebe said softly.

'Himmler is not the man he once was,' Wilson replied. 'It's rumored that he sees the end in sight and is starting to crack up ... just like the Fuhrer.'

There was a long, dreadful silence, as if everyone was in shock, then Kammler, coughing into his fist, said, 'Continue, American.'

'As you know, it was Himmler's dream to create a colony of SS elite under the ice of Neuschwabenland in the Antarctic and protect it from the world with highly advanced weapons, including my saucer.'

'Yes,' Nebe said, Ve do know.'

'Then you must also know that the first of the underground accommodations has been constructed, that some of the finest SS troops, some scientists, and the necessary slave workers have already been shipped there, and that an escape route has been organized for those of us who wish to avoid imprisonment or death here in Germany.'

'Yes,' Nebe said. 'We do. And we also know that your flying saucer is supposed to be the ultimate weapon, but now you tell us these stories. I repeat: I want to know about you and Schriever. Why the deception?'

'Because it's my belief that Himmler has forgotten the Antarctic and thinks only of using the saucer to fight the Allied invasion, when it comes.'

'And if, as you say, your saucer works, what's wrong with that?'

Wilson turned his gaze on Kammler, who had spoken with icy sarcasm. 'Because to stop the invasion we'd need a great number of flying saucers and there's no way we can construct them in time. And that in turn means that if Himmler's paranoia keeps him in Germany, the war, the Antarctic colony, and the saucer will all be lost to the Allies - and all of us - me and Captain Stoll here, you, Brigadier Kammler, and you, General Nebe - will undoubtedly be tried as war criminals, found guilty, and hanged.'

There was another uneasy silence, a brief trading of questioning glances, then Kammler, his blue eyes clear beneath the blond hair, said, 'So we make our escape to the Antarctic... with your flying saucer... without Himmler... Which gets us to Schriever.'

'You're a clever man, Brigadier.'

'I don't need your compliments,' Kammler replied. 'Just tell us your plan.'

Awed by Wilson's icy control, but also terrified of where it was leading, Ernst glanced across the large hangar, saw Schriever's saucer on its platform, yearned for a cigarette but was frightened of lighting one, so returned his gaze to the men

in the small, spartan office. Kammler and Nebe were an odd couple - one blond and blue-eyed, the other dark and unreadable - and Wilson, with his silvery-gray hair and lined face, was as unfeeling as stone.

None of these men is truly human, Ernst thought, and I have sold myself to them.

It was a dreadful admission ...

'If Himmler gets any worse,' Wilson said, speaking softly, seductively, 'he'll change his mind completely about the Antarctic and refuse to let us go there. He'll want us to make a last stand in Germany - to go down with the Fuhrer.'

'Yes,' Nebe said. 'He will.'

'Our first job, then,' Wilson continued, 'is to make him forget Projekt Saucer and turn his attentions elsewhere.'

'Understood,' Kammler said.

Wilson nodded. 'Since for the past couple of years I've only been testing the Schriever saucer - which will fly, but not much - and letting Schriever take most of the credit for it, Himmler now trusts Schriever more than he trusts me. However, he's already turned away psychologically from the project and instead is pinning most of his hopes on the V-2 rocket program.'

'Which is exactly why he placed me in charge of it,' Kammler noted.

'Correct,' Wilson said. 'Which is all to the good. We can't trust Schriever, who knows nothing about the Antarctic, so we have to get rid of him while keeping Himmler happy and giving us the freedom to prepare our escape without interference.'

'We are listening,' Nebe said.

Ernst sucked his breath in, feeling tense, and saw Wilson's quick glance. Then, to his amazement, Wilson smiled, almost victoriously, before turning back to Kammler and Nebe.

The prototype for the real flying saucer,' he said, 'is a small, saucer-shaped, remote-controlled antiradar device, which I've dubbed the Feuerball because, when it flies, it turns white hot and becomes a ball of fire.'

'I know nothing about this,' Kammler said, looking upset.

'No,' Wilson said, 'you didn't, but now you do ... Because now is the right time.'

'Please explain,' Kammler ordered icily.

'The Feuerball is an armored object powered by a special turbojet engine that is radio-controlled at the moment of takeoff. Then, attracted by the enemy aircraft's exhaust fumes, it will automatically follow that aircraft, automatically avoid colliding with it, and automatically short-circuit its radar and ignition systems. During the day this device looks exactly like a shining disc spinning on its axis - or a silver ball - but by night it looks like a burning globe - actually a fiery halo around the armoured device, caused by the exceptionally rich chemical mixture that overionizes the atmosphere in the vicinity of the target and so subjects it to extremely damaging electromagnetic impulses.'

'And if this Feuerball is faced with the guns of the aircraft it's pursuing?' Kammler asked.

'It will fly away automatically,' Wilson replied.

'Why?'

'A thin sheet of aluminum has been inserted under the armored plating of the Feuerball, and this acts as an automatic defensive switch. A bullet piercing the armored plating will automatically establish contact with that switch, trip a maximum acceleration device, and cause the Feuerball to fly vertically out of range of the enemy aircraft's gunfire.'

'Sounds wonderful,' Kammler said. 'But what's the difference between the small so-called Feuerball and your large flying saucer, the Kugelblitz?'

'Schriever's saucer is in fact a crude form of flying saucer, constructed from ordinary metal and using primitive propulsion. The Kugelblitz, on the other hand, is a piloted version of the Feuerball. It has the advantage of being constructed from a special metal and also using the most advanced form of jet propulsion that's yet been invented.'

'I'm not an engineer,' Nebe complained.

'The Feuerball,' Ernst explained, directing his words to Kammler, who like him was an engineer, 'is a perfectly

symmetrical disc, devoid of all surface protuberances. Nevertheless, even with the Feuerball, the boundary layer limits its speed. In order to get rid of the boundary layer completely- and in order to make use of the dead air, not only for acceleration, but for maneuvering as well - what Wilson required was a porous metal that would act like a sponge, remove the need for air intakes altogether, and create what our famed engineer Schrenk called frictionless airflow. Such a metal was recently created by our scientists at Gottingen and Volkenrode - a compound of magnesium and aluminum, called Luftschwamm, or aerosponge. Wilson used it for the construction of all his flying saucers, thus solving the problem of the boundary layer and, thus, all previous limitations on speed and maneuverability. The Feuerball and the Kugelblitz, then, are extraordinary aircraft.'

'You've already described the Feuerball,' Kammler said, looking more interested. 'So apart from its size, why is the Kugelblitz even better?'

'The Feuerball,' Wilson said, 'not only spins around its vertical axis, but automatically follows its target, makes its target's radar and ignition malfunction by filling the immediate vicinity with a gas that, when burning, creates a damaging magnetic field, and also flies away automatically when attacked. Yes?'

'Yes,' Kammler said.

'Now let us enlarge this flying fireball,' Wilson said, as if giving a lecture in a classroom. The larger disc, the Kugelblitz, will also spin on its own axis, but with the addition of gyroscopic stabilization, a pilot's cabin can now be placed on that axis, with the main body - or engine - of the disc spinning around the steady cabin. We then add to the enlarged, pilot-carrying disc a form of radio that can cancel at the pilot's discretion the return signals, or blips, from the enemy's radarscope and so render our flying saucer undetectable. Next we have electromagnetically or electroacoustically controlled firing weapons, we have cannons that spit igition-damaging gas instead of shells, we possibly have various laser or pulse-beam

weapons - in development right now - and we have devices that ensure that our flying saucer will automatically retreat from enemy attacks. Add to all this the fact that the disc is made of an alloy - courtesy of the Riva del Garda complex - that can withstand enormous pressure and a temperature of one thousand degrees Centigrade and that, being porous, can take the air in like a sponge and then use it to increase its own propulsion to almost unbelievable speeds.'

Still an engineer and unable to hold in his excitement, Ernst found himself leaning forward in his chair to say excitedly: 'Add it all up and what have we got?'

'The Kugelblitz,' Nebe said quietly.

'Yes!' Ernst exclaimed. The enlarged and enhanced offspring of the Feuerball. A piloted machine in which a single mass of wing, tail, and fuselage has been formed into the one gyroscopically stabilized, vertical-rising, soon-to-be supersonic flying disc.'

'That's our strength,' Wilson said.

'So how do we protect it?' Kammler asked.

'We're back to Schriever,' Nebe said.

Yes, Nebe enjoyed intrigues - they were food and air to him - and Ernst looked into the dark light of his gaze and saw the blood that had formed it. Nebe would take new life from this conspiracy and become its strong arm.

'Yes,' Wilson said, 'we're back to Schriever. Now that Himmler trusts Schriever more than me, we must confirm him in his faith by telling him that I'm trying to impede Schriever's progress, that for that reason we should be parted, and that Schriever should be given his own research center elsewhere - somewhere less accessible either to me or to the Allies - to enable him to continue his work without interference.'

'Which in fact means that you'll be able to continue your work without interference,' Nebe said, enjoying this, 'and that the escape route to the Antarctic can be organized without Schriever's spying eyes.'

'Precisely,' Ernst said, surprised to hear himself sounding so enthusiastic, but unable to help himself.

He had wanted to be a scientist, after all, and this was pure science.

However, Kammler simply stared coldly at him, before turning to Wilson. 'I will do it,' he said. 'Clearly there is no choice. It will be your task, over the next few weeks, to let Schriever steal - for want of a better word - the credit for the Feuerball and to convince him that its basic principles can be used to enhance his own saucer. When you have done that, he will undoubtedly take the Feuerball to Himmler and I, being in charge of the project, will be informed. I will then do as you've suggested and recommend an area near Prague, in Bohem, as the new location for Schriever's project, which will ensure that he's not in Berlin when the Allies get here.'

'And if the Allies get here,' Wilson said, 'they will also get me.'

'Correct,' Kammler said. 'So, since I'm also in charge of the rocket program at Nordhausen, I will also request that your project be transferred to Kahla, a small village near there, where, as I will tell him, I can keep my eye on it, ensure that any innovations you may come up with are passed on to the more important rocket program, and protect both projects more easily from the Allies as they advance. I think he will fall for this.'

'So do I,' Wilson said.

'And from there, in the Harz Mountains,' Nebe said, 'we can make our escape when the time comes.'

'So be it,' Kammler said.

Ernst glanced at Wilson, saw the shadow of a smile, and knew in that instant, beyond doubt, that he would get what he wanted.

A few hours later, when darkness had fallen, as English bombs fell from the sky and Berlin blazed and crumbled, Ernst made loveless love to Brigette, burying himself in her slick thighs, and accepted that any future he might have would be mapped out by Wilson.

Berlin burned all around him.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Bradley awakened late in the morning to the familiar sound of broken glass being shoveled out of the gutters in the street below. Slightly hungover from the previous evening's pub crawl with the indefatigable Gladys Kinder, and not helped by a restless night in which new, disturbing sounds had been added to the German bombings, he groaned melodramatically, rubbed his eyes, then sat up on the bed.

It was nearly eleven o'clock. The sun was shining in between the curtains, illuminating the empty space beside him in the bed, where he wanted Gladys to be, though he sometimes said otherwise. She had been there for drinks and he had often walked her back to her room in the Savoy Hotel, but beyond good-night kisses and the silent touching of foreheads, he and the notoriously bold-tongued Gladys had done nothing at all.

It made him feel like an adolescent, which was not a bad feeling.

He climbed out of bed, pulled the curtains back, and looked down into the street just off Shepherd Market. A bomb had fallen nearby, a few streets away. While the buildings opposite had been untouched, the blast had shattered the windows and the broken glass was being shoveled up into a garbage truck by men in navy-blue coveralls.

That familiar sight made Bradley think of the previous night's air raid - which seemed to have lasted throughout the early morning - and reminded him that in his restless, drunken state of semiconsciousness, he'd been convinced that the

sounds of the raid were different from normal.

I'm hallucinating, he thought ruefully, shaking his head from side to side - and was about to go into the kitchen to make some coffee when the telephone rang.

'Hi,' Gladys said. 'It's me.'

'Who's me? he asked, teasing her.

'Don't even bother trying,' she replied. 'Are you at least out of bed?'

'Just about, Gladys. I don't think I can keep up with you. All those years mixing with hard-drinking service guys have made you immune to hangovers.'

'You have a hangover?'

'Yep. And that air raid didn't help me, either.'

'It wasn't an air raid,' she replied.

'What?'

'It wasn't an air raid. Not one German plane was seen. We were attacked by the long-rumored German secret weapons - pilotless planes or remote-controlled rocket bombs, depending on which report you accept. Either way, those pilotless things were buzzing down on London and the south of England all night and exploding all over the goddamned place.'

'Jesus Christ!' Bradley whispered, hardly believing his ears. His thoughts instantly turned to the rocket program at Peenemunde and Wilson's unofficial involvement with it and other unknown projects.

'A shock, eh?'

'Yeah,' Bradley replied. 'Right'

'Wanna join me for breakfast, Mr Bradley?'

'I'd love to, but I think I should go straight to Baker Street and have words with my stubborn British controller.'

'You think you can use this to make him send you to Europe?'

'I don't see how he can refuse now.'

'He's British - that's how he can refuse. They're very good at refusing. Very quietly... very politely... but not budging an inch.'

'He doesn't have a leg to stand on now.'

'The Brits are notoriously good at balancing acts.'

'You're such a goddamned pessimist'

'I don't want you to go, that's all.'

'That's nice to hear, Gladys, but you know I have to do this.'

'Yeah, Mike, I know. So what about lunch before you leave?'

He laughed at that. 'I won't be leaving today, that's for sure, so your idea sounds great.'

'There's a Lyons Corner House near Piccadilly Circus. Let's meet there.'

'Terrific. Twelve-thirty?'

'Don't get lost.'

'I'll try not to.'

'My day is made,' she said with a throaty chuckle, then the line went dead.

Putting the phone down, Bradley checked the calendar. It was June 13, 1944, exactly one week after D-Day, the invasion of Europe, which he had bitterly regretted having missed.

The thirteenth, he thought as he cast off his pajamas and hurried into the bathroom. Unlucky thirteenth. He ran the water in the old-fashioned bath, climbed in, and thought of the progress of the invasion as he hurriedly bathed himself.

He had wanted to go with the troops, to be one of the first to step onto the soil of Europe, but the urbane Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King had refused him permission, insisting that he remain in London until the Allies had overrun Germany. Bradley had been furious, but there was little he could do about it, other than keep track of the known movements of the German scientists, contact European resistance groups regarding Wilson's whereabouts, and, when not thus engaged, spend his time with Gladys Kinder, with whom he was now undoubtedly in love in a pleasantly gentle, middle-aged way that so far was devoid of angst.

Nevertheless, while he would dearly miss Gladys, he was becoming increasingly excited by his belief that now Wentworth-King would be unable to refuse him permission to travel to Europe and begin the real search for Wilson.

If remote-controlled rocket bombs were already falling on London, God knows what other secret weapons the Germans, doubtless with Wilson's help, were about to use against Britain and, possibly, the Allied troops in Europe.

After letting the water out of the bath, he dried himself, dressed quickly and carelessly, then hurried out of the apartment and headed for Baker Street By now he was used to the broken glass on the sidewalks, the fresh piles of smoldering rubble, and the scorched, jagged holes in the walls of the buildings, revealing the rooms inside, like stage sets, some untouched, some in chaos, all somehow naked and pitiful. The barrage balloons were still overhead, swaying like beached whales, and antiaircraft gun emplacements stood in the many small parks and squares, the gun barrels being polished by the crews while they waited for night to fall. Yet life continued - the roads were filled with buses and taxis - and as usual, the newspaper vendors shouted out the day's headlines, which today were about the 'miracle' weapons.

Bradley thought of Wilson, hidden somewhere in Germany, and wondered what he would spring next.

'Ah ha,' Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King said brightly when Bradley entered his cluttered office in SOE headquarters in Baker Street. 'My American friend!'

'Morning, Mark,' Bradley greeted him, then pulled up a chair and faced the soles of the lieutenant-colonel's boots, which were up on the desk.

'Can I order you up some tea?'

'No, thanks,' Bradley said.

'I don't suppose I have to ask why you're here,' Wentworth-King said with a slightly mocking smile.

'No, I don't suppose you do. What have you learned so far?'

'As we suspected, the rockets are V-1s, being flown, as far as we can ascertain at this point, from bases in the area of Pas de Calais. They're not pilotless aircraft but flying bombs, powered by petrol and compressed air, coming in at low altitude at an approximate speed of four hundred miles per hour, steered by a gyroscope and designed to explode on

impact. So far, our antiaircraft guns are proving to be fairly ineffective against them, though hundreds of ack-ack units are being rushed to the south coast, where even more buzz bombs, or doodle-bugs, as they're already being called by the populace, are falling.'

'Christ!' Bradley exclaimed.

'Here, in London, the flying bombs have scored direct hits on a church, a convent, a hospital, and a house in South London, with considerable loss of life. Outside of London, the situation is even worse, with a veritable deluge of bombs falling on Southampton, Kingston, Sevenoaks, and Bromley and, indeed, still falling this very minute. Apparently the ground of southern England is shaking as if in an earthquake, and whole areas are now covered in a pall of smoke. Are you sure you wouldn't like a cup of tea?'

'No, thanks,' Bradley said. 'It doesn't settle my nerves. Any comment on the bombs from across the water?'

'German radio is describing the flying bomb as a, quote, miracle weapon, whereas Dr Goebbels is repeatedly using the name "V-1," which suggests that other secret weapons are in the pipeline and about to be unleashed.'

'Wilson,' Bradley said.

'I beg your pardon, Colonel?'

'That son of a bitch Wilson's behind them.'

'I really don't think so. They're part of the Peenemunde project, headed by Wernher von Braun. Wilson has nothing to do with it. We're convinced he's still at Kummersdorf.'

'Wilson was working at Kummersdorf when von Braun's rocket project was also located there. I'm not saying the rockets are all his. What I'm saying is that he doubtless contributed to them - and God knows what he's working on right now. If Goebbels is hinting about other secret weapons, we should take him seriously.'

'Dr Goebbels is a genius at propaganda.'

'But I don't think he's lying. The V-1s are a sign of that. We also know that they wouldn't keep Wilson on at Kummersdorf if he wasn't working on something valuable. And if the V-1

rockets are going to be followed by something worse, it could come from him.'

Wentworth-King pulled his feet off the desk and began to tap his perfect teeth with a pencil while smiling knowingly at Bradley.

'I know what you're going for,' he said. You're going to use the flying bombs as leverage to force me to let you parachute into Germany.'

'Right. Even you'll have to accept that the flying bombs are a sign that our time may be running out. If they use those bombs, or something worse, against our troops, the tide could be turned against us.'

'If we survived the Blitz, we can survive the buzz bombs, I'm sure.'

'But what if they follow them up with something worse?'

Wentworth-King simply shrugged. 'Well take our chances,' he said. 'Meanwhile, since the invasion is still in its early stages, I'd rather not let you, or anyone else, parachute into Germany.'

Then let me go to France now, to at least follow the troops into Germany.'

'No, I can't do even that. I don't have the authorization. My only brief, regarding my own organization as well as OSS, is to wait until Germany is almost captured before moving over there.'

'Shit,' Bradley said.

'Orders, dear boy,' Wentworth-King responded. 'And unless you can come up with someone higher than me, I'm afraid you're doomed to remain here.'

'And what about the OSS project to track down the German scientists?'

That also has to wait until the troops get there first. I'm afraid I can't budge on this, old son.'

You're just keeping it all for your goddamned British Secret Intelligence Service buddies. You want it all for yourself, bud.'

You said it yourself, Bradley, we're more experienced, so please let us handle it.'

'I'm going to get around you somehow,' Bradley said, standing up and not hiding his frustration.

But Wentworth-King just sighed. 'Unless you get someone with more authority than myself, I'm afraid you'll be staying here.'

'You goddamned Brits!' Bradley exclaimed in disgust, then turned away and walked out

He heard Wentworth-King laughing.

'That son of a bitch,' he said to Gladys in the Lyons Corner House by Piccadilly Circus, where it was business as usual. 'He's gonna make sure his SOE buddies get all the glory and leave us out in the cold. So much for the OSS pursuit of the Nazi scientists - Wentworth-King has that tied up.'

Gladys lit a cigarette, inhaled, and blew a cloud of smoke.

'Why the hell should you care?' she said. 'You only want Wilson.'

'Yes,' he admitted, 'that's true enough; but I think Wilson's more important than the rocket scientists, if only because we don't know what he's up to.'

'And what do you think he's up to?'

'You know I can't tell you that, Gladys,' he said, thinking of the extraordinary, saucer-shaped machine he had found in that hangar near Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Gladys grinned laconically. 'No, of course not. All the officers say the same when I ask what's going on, though I often know more than they do.'

'How?'

'They all talk when they're drunk.'

'Or in bed?'

'Yes,' she said, blowing a cloud of smoke in his face and staring steadily at him. There as well, Mike.'

'Recently?'

He was shocked to hear himself say it, as he certainly hadn't planned to, but she responded with the same steady gaze and slight, mocking smile.

'Maybe,' she said. 'Maybe not. Why? Would it bother you?'

'Yes,' he said, taken aback by his sudden, fierce jealousy, and thinking of her life in war-torn London with a resentment he had not felt before. She had led a good life here, he knew, ever since she left New Mexico, first writing a European column for her old newspaper in Roswell, then becoming more well known when her work became syndicated nationwide. Her list of contacts, mostly high-ranking officers of the armed forces, had grown with her reputation, and she had certainly not been short of male company throughout the frantic, sexually liberated war years. She had told him all about it and he had previously enjoyed the stories, but today, for no reason at all, he felt quite the opposite.

'It didn't bother you before,' she reminded him.

'Maybe I just didn't show it. And besides, I had no reason to lay claims on you.'

'You still don't,' she said. 'We're just good friends, after all, as we constantly remind ourselves.'

He recalled his first air raid, when she had told him she loved him. He'd been too shaken to reply and hadn't reminded her of it since, but he knew that what he was feeling was more than friendship, though he was frightened of saying so.

'Yes,' he said, 'we're just good friends.'

She smiled and blew some smoke rings. 'Come on,' she said, 'you know it's more than that Why don't you admit it?'

He shrugged helplessly. 'I don't know. I'm not sure of what I feel. I feel foolish even talking like this, because I'm practically fifty.'

'That's not old.'

'It's not young.'

'It's young enough for adult relationships.'

Amused by that, he replied, 'Adult relationships can often be childish, and I don't trust myself.'

'You don't trust what you feel?'

'No - at least not always. I've spent a lot of years thinking about us - about your letters - and while I always enjoyed getting them and kept them and reread them, I felt guilty about it - before Joan's death and after - and also felt that we couldn't

possibly be in love after only two meetings. In other words, I sometimes felt that I was kidding myself- that maybe both of us were romancing. And having thought of myself as a mature man, that made me feel foolish. I know how I feel about you, Gladys - I'm just not sure why.'

Gladys propped an elbow up on the table, cupped her chin in her hand, blew a smoke ring in his direction, then shook her head ruefully.

'God, I love you,' she said. 'I've never doubted it for a second. And I knew it when we first met, inside about ten minutes. I knew I was in love with that wonderful combination of maturity, common sense, and inhibition. I knew it when I sensed that you were startled by what you were thinking.' She chuckled and shook her head again. 'And what were you thinking, Mike? You were thinking I was attractive and attracted to you - oh, yeah, you saw that! - and you were excited and scared all at once, as well as hopelessly guilty. A real married man, right? And one with morals and principles. Yeah, that's what I saw inside minutes when we first met - and I loved it and it made me love you - and I did - and I do. Now what do you say, Mike?'

He glanced around the crowded tea room, at all the women in their wide hats, the men in drab suits and hats, the waitresses hurrying to and fro in their black skirts and white aprons. He studied them too intently. It was something to do. His heart was racing and he was blushing like a kid, and that made him speechless. Then he looked out the window, at the statue of Eros, and had to smile. He lowered his gaze to the traffic crawling around the central island. There the bobby was blowing his whistle and waving his arms as the citizens of this beleagured, majestic, defiant city went about their daily business in a perfectly normal manner.

'The goddamned Brits,' he said, turning back to Gladys. 'You've really got to admire them.'

She raised a skeptical eyebrow. 'Is that your answer, Mike?'

'Dammit, Gladys, you know damned well I love you. I just can't say these things.'

'You've just said it.'

'Have I?'

'Yep. You've just said it I've certainly heard more passionate outbursts, but I've never felt happier.' She reached across for his hand, kissed the back of his wrist, squeezed his fingers, and refused to let go. There were tears in her eyes. 'You're going to leave me, aren't you?'

'I have to go, Gladys. I have to stop that son of a bitch Wilson before he goes too far.'

'What do you think he wants?'

'I don't know. You tell me.'

'I will,' she said, drying the tears from her eyes and gazing down at the table. 'I don't think he was after power. At least not for personal gain. I think he'd made science his god and worshipped it blindly. He didn't care about human beings and despised their most common feelings; he was convinced that our only purpose on earth is to serve evolution. Not mere procreation - no! even the animals can do that - but to form a bridge between our irrational past and a perfectly rational future. He hated irrationality and mistrusted all emotions. For him, what divides man from the beast is intelligence - not emotion, not feelings. He believed only the mind, the application of logic, the quest for absolute knowledge, which he seriously confused with truth.'

'I'm not sure I understand.'

'That's why you're frightened of loving me - which you do, God bless you! Because love is an emotion that flies in the face of logic - yet it endures while one scientific absolute after another is disproven and replaced with something new. Wilson didn't understand that. Not the Wilson I knew. He was convinced that what we value, our dreams and feelings, belong to the caves. He doesn't believe in human beings - he believes only in science - and because science is the sole road to truth, it's all that concerns him. What he wants, then, isn't power -at least not as we know it - but freedom to do what he wants without normal restrictions.'

'The son of a bitch is working for the Nazis,' Bradley said.

'Yes,' Gladys replied, unconcerned by his flash of anger. 'But not because he's a Nazi or believes in the Third Reich. Probably because they were the only ones willing to finance his work, whatever that is. Hell use them - as he used me and everyone else - and he may go down with them. But whatever it is he's doing with the Nazis, he's not doing it for them.'

'How could you be his mistress?' Bradley asked, before he could stop himself 'If he's that bad - if he's really as cold as ice - how could you sleep with him?'

'Does that thought hurt you?'

'Yes, dammit, it does!'

'Then you really do love me!' she exclaimed.

'That isn't an answer.'

She picked his hand up again, stroked his fingers, kissed his wrist 'Because I was wounded,' she explained. 'Because I'd recently lost my husband. Because I didn't want emotional entanglements and he was perfect that way. He wanted only my body and I wanted only to lose myself, so we literally climbed into bed together and had few disappointments. To be truthful, it was perfect - we both got what we needed - but in the end, like most women, I confused satisfaction with love, and was mortally wounded when he left me without looking back. That's in the nature of woman - it's in the nature of human beings -but it's nothing that Wilson would understand, which in the end made me loathe him more.' She kissed his hand again, stroked his fingers, and stared steadily at him. 'And now you loathe me, don't you? For confessing my sins. You loathe me for sleeping with the man who's taken over your life.'

'No,' he said without a moment's hesitation. 'I just love you more. But that Wilson - goddammit! he's like a man without a center. And he's brilliant and totally mysterious and I have to look in his eyes. Do you understand that?'

'Yes, I think so... And so you're going to Europe.'

Which brought Bradley back to the real world and plunged him into depression. 'Not according to Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King. As far as he's concerned, I'm here for the

duration - probably until the war ends.'

'Go around him,' Gladys said.

'I can't. That's not allowed.'

'What if someone with more authority approaches you?'

'That's allowed, but unlikely.'

'Do you love me?'

'Dammit, yes.'

'Without doubts?'

'You know that now.'

'I don't know why I'm doing this. I really don't. I don't want to lose you.'

'What the hell are you talking about, Gladys?'

'I'm going to get you to Europe.' She stubbed her cigarette out, waved at the waitress, then said, 'Okay, you pick up the check. It's the least you can do.' When he had done so, she led him out of the cafe and headed toward Leicester Square. 'Can you meet me in the bar in the Savoy this evening?' she asked.

'Yes,' he said. 'Sure.'

'About—?'

The question hung in the air, because at that moment they both heard an awful roaring, buzzing sound, a nerve-jangling sibilance that passed overhead and suddenly cut out, leaving an abrupt, unnatural, chilling silence.

Bradley saw everyone in the street looking up at the sky, as if frozen where they stood, then, in that fifteen seconds of eerie silence, they threw themselves to the ground.

The V-1 rocket, the buzz bomb, the doodle-bug, exploded in the next street just as Gladys pulled Bradley to the ground.

He felt the ground shake, heard the explosion, and rolled into Gladys. He clung to her as more rockets buzzed overhead and lay there as they went silent - the sound everyone already dreaded - then exploded fifteen seconds later, some nearby, some faraway. The attack didn't last long, but it seemed to take forever, and when it ended, Bradley helped Gladys up and then glanced about him.

A pall of black smoke was rising above the rooftops. When

Bradley heard the sirens of the fire brigade, he knew that more fires were burning and more people dying.

'About nine o'clock this evening?' Gladys asked him, as if nothing had happened.

'Sure,' he said. 'I'll be there.'

Gladys kissed him fully on the lips and gave him a hug. 'Right,' she said, then waved good-bye and hurried off, heading straight for the ominous pall of smoke that now hung over Soho, to remind him, as so many things did these days, that Wilson was still somewhere out there, being far too creative.

The buzz bombs continued to rain down all day on the southern parts of England and were still falling on London that evening when Bradley made his way to the Savoy Hotel. As he walked along the Strand, he saw a pall of black smoke hanging over St Paul's Cathedral and the rooftops of the city, and even as he turned into the hotel, more bombs exploded.

Though most of the servicemen were now fighting in France, the party in the American bar was in full swing and packed with army, navy, and air force personnel from Britain, America, Canada, France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and even Poland. Most of them were either working in operation centers in London or preparing to join the advance through France. The men and women, most in uniform, were spilling out of the bar and into the lobby in a haze of cigar and cigarette smoke, red-faced and in good cheer, while a large group near the bar, obviously drunk, was singing in ragged chorus, 'We're gonna hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line...'

Gladys was seated near the entrance, well away from the noisy singers, beside a US army major-general, and she waved Bradley over as soon as she saw him. Bradley wasn't going to kiss her in front of the unknown officer, but she jumped up and embraced him and kissed him full on the lips.

'You didn't get a doodle-bug on your head, then?' she asked jokingly, though with visible relief.

'No,' he replied. They're falling mostly over the City, so I was okay.'

'Here, pull up a chair,' Gladys said, then, when he had done so, said, This is a dear friend, Major General Ryan McArthur, who's about to take off for France and could be of help to you' Ryan, this is the guy I told you about, my fine man, OSS Colonel Mike Bradley.'

Bradley and the silver-haired, sophisticated McArthur shook hands.

'No relation, I take it,' Bradley said with a grin, 'to General... ?'

'No,' McArthur replied, anticipating the question. 'No relation at all. Can I get you a drink, Mike?'

'Scotch on the rocks.'

'Right'

When McArthur was at the crowded bar, Gladys, who was sitting beside Bradley, took hold of his hand. 'Still love me after all these hours?'

'Yes,' he said, 'I guess so.'

'Okay, Mike. If you truly love me, I'll put your mind at ease. While it's true that I've had a good time here in England, I haven't been involved with another man since you turned up in London. I've been faithful and living on hope - and you're my only man now.'

A lump came to his throat and he covered her hand with his own, then squeezed her fingers.

'You didn't have to tell me that,' he said.

'Yes, I did, Mike. As for McArthur, he's just an old friend and I do mean a friend, no more and no less.'

'Okay, Gladys. Thanks.'

'Do you love me just a little bit more for that?'

'I can't possibly love you more than I do.'

She grinned and winked. That's my man.'

Bradley released her hand when McArthur returned to the table, carrying three glasses of Scotch between his two hands. They took their drinks and he sat down, sipped some Scotch, grinned at Bradley.

'So,' he said, 'you're with OSS.'

'Right.'

'You're working here with the British Secret Intelligence Service?'

'I wouldn't exactly call it working. I'm supposed to be trying to track down a renegade American scientist—'

'Wilson.'

'Right How did you know that?'

'I work for General Groves, director of the Manhattan atomic bomb project, and since we're also keen to track down the German scientists, we got in touch with OSS and found out about Wilson. Naturally we then found out, through your filed records, that Gladys had also known him, which is how I came to know Gladys.'

Wilson appears to have a talent for introducing a lot of people to one another.'

McArthur grinned at that, then went serious again. 'You want Wilson in particular?'

'Yes.'

'Any special reason?'

'I have reason to believe he's been working on projects far more advanced than the German rocket program.'

'And you think he might be trying to complete it in time to use it against the Allies?'

'I'm not too sure what his intentions are, but I sure in hell want to find him.'

'So why aren't you in Europe?'

'According to my controller at SOE, I'm not allowed into Europe until the Germans have practically surrendered.'

'By which time Wilson, as well as a good many rocket scientists, might have disappeared or been captured by the Russians.'

'Or by SOE, which is what my controller wants.'

'Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King?'

'Right.'

McArthur was amused. 'A regular British public schoolboy - and very smart with it Yes, he'll want the Brits to get there first which is why he's holding you back.'

'Can you do anything for him, Ryan?' Gladys asked.

'Sure.' McArthur turned back to Bradley. 'On behalf of the director of the Manhattan atomic bomb project, I'm sending a bunch of ALSOS agents into Europe, to stick with the advancing Allied troops and go all the way with them into Germany. When I say stick with the advancing troops, I mean just that: The ALSOS agents will be with the fighting troops, right in the thick of it, to ensure that they're present when anyone of value to us - mainly scientists - is captured. Would you like to come with us?'

'Damn right, I would, Major General.'

'Okay. Because in this matter I happen to overrule the bright son of a bitch, I'll get in touch with Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King and tell him I'm grabbing you.'

Terrific. When do we leave?'

This Friday. Which gives you a couple of days to tidy up here. We'll be in touch before with details of our departure - but right now, since you two are obviously keen to be alone, I'm off in search of debauchery.' He stood up to take his leave. 'I'll see you on Friday, Bradley. As for you, Gladys, I'll see you when I see you.'

'In Paris.'

'Let's hope that's true,' he replied, then touched his fingers to his peaked cap in a mock salute, grinned, and made his way out of the bar, through the packed, noisy revelers.

The drunks near the bar were now singing the maudlin 'We'll Meet Again,' made famous by the British forces' favorite lady, Vera Lynn, who certainly sang it much better. Yet the words, which Bradley already knew, struck straight to his heart.

Another lump came to his throat when he turned back to Gladys.

Thanks,' he said.

'Not at all, Mike. I don't want you to go - I want you here - but I know how important it is to you.' She shrugged forlornly. 'So go.'

'We still have a couple of days,' he said.

'Tonight and tomorrow night,' she corrected him. 'You'll be

leaving on Friday. Goddammit, I think I'm gonna cry. Goddamn you, Mike Bradley!'

She pushed her chair back, stood up, and rushed out. Bradley followed her, forcing his way through a sea of bobbing heads and flushed faces, all of which were hazed in smoke and exuding aromas of alcohol. Gladys didn't look back, but instead hurried across the lobby and straight up the stairs. Bradley went in hot pursuit, thinking of how familiar this great hotel must seem to her, as she had now lived in it for so long. It was an odd thing to think, but it was based on pure jealousy, for he also thought of all the men she had met here throughout the war years. He felt a spasm of pain, a flash of resentment for all those men, then he raced up the stairs. He eventually caught her in the corridor, right outside her room, and tugged her around and into his arms as she was opening the door.

Gladys Kinder was crying.

Bradley kissed her tears away, surprised to find himself doing so, and rocked her trembling body in his arms and eased her into the room. He kicked the door closed behind him, licked her eyelids, kissed her cheeks, stroked her spine as he kissed her on the lips, and then held her away from him. She was shaking and the tears had streaked her cheeks and made her look a lot younger.

It was a small room and the bed was right behind her, but he didn't know what to do.

'It's been so long,' he said. 'I don't know where to begin. I'm too old for this. I don't have the knack. I hardly know where to start.'

Gladys smiled through her tears, wiped the tears away with one hand, tried to control her heavy breathing, and said, 'You've already started, Mike, and you did it well. For God's sake, don't stop now.' And she put her hands on his shoulders and pulled him to her and kissed him, then let him press her back onto the bed where it would happen or not.

Bradley lost his senses then. That was God's blessing upon him. He somehow managed to strip Gladys and remove his own clothes and get under the sheets of the bed without

thinking about it. When they made love, which came naturally as well, they were tuned into the cosmos - and Bradley, nearly fifty years old, was returned to his youth. Her bed felt like home to him.

The next day, satiated with love, Bradley reported to SOE headquarters on Baker Street, where Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King frostily informed him that orders from above had removed him from the jurisdiction of SOE and were placing him under the command of the director of the Manhattan atomic bomb project, for which he would implement Operation Paperclip immediately.

'Here are your marching orders,' Wentworth-King said, pushing across a thick envelope. 'Good-bye and good luck.'

That night, all night, Bradley made love to Gladys in his bed in the small apartment in Shepherd Market while doodle-bugs rained from the sky and exploded all over the city. He found new life in the midst of death, saw the light of hope in darkness, slept the sleep of the blessed, and awakened just after dawn.

The space beside him was empty. Gladys was gone. When he went into the bathroom, he saw her message on the mirror, scrawled in lipstick in a shaky, emotional hand.

'I can't bear the thought of seeing your eyes when we have to say good-bye, so I'm saying it now. I love you. I...' But the writing ended there, tapering off in a jagged line, and he knew that she had then started crying and hurried out of the room.

He put his hand out, touched the lipstick, traced the words with his fingers.

Take care,' he said.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Wilson awakened, as he had planned, at six o'clock in the evening and found himself thinking about himself

He had slept through the afternoon because the journey to Thuringia was going to be made under cover of darkness. Now, as he lay in bed, rubbing the sleep from his eyes and hearing the news on the radio in the living room, doubtless turned on by Greta, he wondered if this thinking about himself, which was unusual, had been caused by the temporary change in his sleeping habits.

He hadn't thought about himself in many years and was very surprised. He had always looked outward, not inward, and this introspection was troubling.

He was remembering Iowa, the days of his childhood, the parents whose goodness he had always viewed strictly as weakness. Now, when he closed his eyes, he saw himself as a blond-haired boy, his skin golden from the sun, and the sun itself an immense, silvery orb in a dazzling blue sky. He had stood alone in the field of wheat, the stalks shoulder high around him, and looked across that yellow sea to where green fields met blue sky, then squinted into the sun's striations, which were silvery and ravishing. He had looked but not been ravished, been blinded but not dazzled, and responded to it, even at ten years old, with one simple question:

When would the sun die?

That question turned him into a scientist. His religion became the pursuit of knowledge. He realized that the sun would die eventually, taking with it the earth's heat and light,

and that long before it happened every form of life on earth would be extinguished. Man's time on earth, then, would be short if he simply followed nature's course. Still an animal, he would die off like the dinosaurs as his life-giving sun died.

Something had to be done.

Thus Wilson, at ten years of age, had found something to live for: the changing of man's destiny through science and, incidentally, the creation of a new kind of man as a means of continuance.

He had never strayed from that path.

Even then, as a boy and adolescent in Iowa, born of religious parents but unable to accept God, he had been convinced that mankind would eventually have to leave earth and inhabit another, less endangered planet. To do so, he would have to create an extraordinary technology; he would also have to transcend his still-primitive nature and escape the physical limitations of his weak, mortal body.

Man would have to turn himself into a Superman and then reach for the stars.

Now, sixty-five years later, as he sat up in the bed in his apartment in Berlin, Wilson was made aware of his own frustrating mortality, but also reminded that he had at least begun the process of turning Man into Superman.

He had the beginnings of the technology in the shape of his flying saucer, a protected base from which to operate in Neuschwabenland, Antarctica, and a demented ideology that, if not to his personal taste, could be used to give him the work force necessary for survival in an inhospitable terrain, isolated under the ground from the rest of mankind.

He would use Himmler's disillusioned followers to get him to the Antarctic and there, over the years, let science gradually transform them into his kind of people: neither dedicated soldiers nor fanatical mystics, but men ruled by the desire for knowledge as an end in itself, supported by a docile work force deprived of freedom and will, and all living together in perfect, enforced harmony, well away from the corrupting influences of a still-primitive, self-destructive mankind.

And eventually, when the technology used for the Kugelblitz saucer had advanced enough, his successors would leave the dying earth behind and fly to the stars.

Those chosen to make that epic voyage would have to be Supermen - but he, who had made it all possible, would not be one of them.

He would die before that came to be.

Mortality was what prevented men from becoming Supermen - life was too short for real achievement. Although Wilson had begun experiments on organ replacement, prosthetics, and general longevity, and had already delayed his own death with the recent operations on his heart and stomach, he knew that the medical and surgical experimentation begun in the camps would not be advanced far enough, soon enough, to prevent him from dying of old age. Nevertheless, his successor, whomever he might be, would benefit from the experiments, and eventually the more valued members of his Antarctic colony would have a much longer life span. Because of that, they would gain the time needed for their biological and mental transformation into Supermen.

In that sense, Wilson thought as he stood up and stretched himself, my life will not have been wasted and my death will have meaning.

From here he could hear the radio announcer blandly informing the citizens of the Third Reich that the Allied invasion of Europe, initiated sixteen days ago with a bloody assault along more than a hundred miles of the French coast, was being successfully resisted by the valiant soldiers of the Thousand Year Reich.

The announcer did not mention the Allied liberation of Rome, the US bombing of the Japanese mainland, the loss of the Cotentin peninsula, the increasingly hopeless position of General von Schlieben's surrounded troops, General de Gaulle's triumphant return to the liberated areas of France after the capture of Bayeux, General Montgomery's inexorable advance on Caen, or the fact that only yesterday the Allies had seized two German V-1 launch sites on the Cherbourg

peninsula and were closing in on the historic town itself. Nor did he mention that Berlin, suffering Allied bombing raids every night, was being razed to the ground.

He was carefully silent on those facts.

It will soon be over, Wilson thought, no matter what we're told. No wonder we're fleeing to the Harz Mountains. It's just a matter of months now...

Not wishing to face Greta until he was ready to leave, he went straight from the bedroom to the bathroom, had his bath, dried himself and put on his civilian clothing, then returned to the bedroom. He had packed his suitcase the previous evening, when Greta was out with friends; now he pulled it out from where he had hidden it under the bed. Then, feeling little emotion, he walked into the main room.

Greta was anxiously turning the dial on the radio, trying to pick up a British station. She was smoking a cigarette, scratching her auburn hair with her free hand, and looking as worldly as ever, though she had aged greatly recently.

Since the bombs had started dropping on Berlin she had not been the same.

Looking up when he entered the room, she saw the suitcase. The news on the radio was replaced by Wagner as her eyes started widening.

'I'm leaving,' Wilson said, anticipating her question, 'and I probably won't be coming back. The apartment is yours to keep.'

'What?'

He knew she had heard him but did not want to believe him. The average person's unwillingness to face facts had never ceased to depress him.

'You heard me,' he said, setting the suitcase on the floor and noting the shocked light in her eyes. 'I said I'm leaving and probably won't be coming back. However, the SS always look after their own and in this case are treating you like my wife. In other words, you can keep the apartment and they'll provide you with a decent monthly income. They'll soon be in touch with you.'

She was smoking a cigarette, a habit he despised, and this time, when she sucked in the smoke, she did so as if drowning, 'I'm not sure I understand,' she said, glancing at his suitcase and letting the smoke drift out between her lips. 'I mean, we've been living together for so long, and now you just...'

'You always knew this would come,' he said, as he had said to so many. 'Our arrangement was always based on the knowledge that it would end sooner or later - and now the time's come.'

'Just like that? Without warning?'

'I couldn't give you any warning. The SS swore me to secrecy. I wasn't allowed to tell you until I was leaving - and that's just what I'm doing.'

'I don't believe that for a second.'

'Believe it - it's true.'

'You're going to leave me here all alone?'

'I'm being moved out, with the other scientists and engineers, but I can't tell you where.'

'Why can't I come with you?'

'It's not permitted, that's why.'

'You mean, the others are all going without their wives? Is that what you're telling me?'

'No, I'm not saying that. The others are taking their wives and children. But the others are Germans married to Germans - whereas I happen to be a foreigner here by their good graces and living with a woman not my wife. I asked if I could take you along, but they refused absolutely.'

'I don't believe that'

'It's true. And who knows their motives? This war's coming to an end, the Third Reich is going to fall, and when that happens, they may decide to execute me - maybe that's why you can't come.'

It was a deliberate lie, offered simply to keep her calm, but he knew, when he saw her brightening gaze, that she hadn't believed him. She was an experienced woman, after all, particularly wise in the ways of men, and what he now saw in her normally hard eyes was a mixture of rage and fear.

'So I'm just being left here?'

'You have the apartment and will get an allowance. Believe me, you'll be better off than most. I'd count my blessings, if I were you.'

'Blessings?' she retorted. 'Being left here in Berlin? A city being bombed night and day, and soon to be conquered! What good's this apartment if it's bombed? What good's the allowance when the war is lost? What happens to me if I manage to survive the bombings, but the Russians get here first?'

'I'm sure you'll do okay,' he said. 'You're not a child, after all.'

He had said something similar to that other woman - Gladys Kinder? - about twelve years ago and now, as the memory of her passed briefly through his thoughts, thus reminding him of Goddard and those early rockets in the desert, Greta's mounting fear and rage set fire to her eyes.

'You can't do this,' she said, sounding strangled and shaky. 'You owe me more than this! You just can't pack up and walk out and leave me here in this hell. You've got to take me with you. You've got to! For God's sake, don't leave me here!'

'You're an experienced woman,' Wilson replied, taking note of her rising hysteria and therefore picking up his suitcase. Tou should manage okay.'

But she jumped to her feet, grabbed his shoulders, shook him violently, crying, 'No, Wilson! For the love of God! I'm too old now! The Russians might - Don't leave me, Wilson!'

Suddenly she looked old, her face ravaged by shock and dread, and he felt disgusted by her naked, primal emotions and pushed her away from him. She stumbled back into the fireplace, shaking her head, her gaze dazed. He left without saying another word, not looking back.

An SS car had been assigned to take him to Kummersdorf, and the driver was waiting for him when he emerged. Darkness had fallen and when the car had moved off he gazed out the window, saw the dreadful ruins and hillocks of rubble

silhouetted against a starlit sky, and knew, given the clarity of the night, that the Allied planes would soon be flying overhead to drop more bombs on the city.

He closed his eyes, recalled Greta's outburst, and considered once more, as he had done so often, how the glory of man's mind could be perverted with primitive emotions. He had never felt such emotions, though he knew that most people did, as he also knew that there were many who thought his lack of so-called normal feelings was inhuman.

Was this so? He didn't think so. Instead, he took it for a sign of genius. He had always felt himself to be different from his own kind - even from his good parents, other children, his women - and had viewed the blatant emotions of others as the aberrations of weakness. Man's emotions belonged to the cave; his mind was his glory.

And he, this individual named John Wilson, was ruled by his brilliant mind.

It had always been so. Behind his closed eyes, he relived it He saw his parents in the fields, their backs bent under the sun, then himself, a mere stripling, kneeling beside them in the church of Montezuma, where he kept his eyes open. They were decent, simple folk, introverted, even distant, and although they had always treated him well, he viewed their virtue as weakness. They made him read the Bible, but he thought it a book of myths. When they prayed, either at home or in church, he translated their worship as a form of awe no more rational than the primal fears and superstitions of the cavemen.

He felt that man was not made to worship gods, but to attain godlike stature.

He was not like his parents. Nor was he like other children. His parents didn't notice the difference, for they were too involved with themselves, but at school he was considered odd, because he didn't like playing games and was ferocious at studying. He always wanted to be alone, to live through his books, and that made him different

Then he decided to become a scientist and devoted himself

to that. At twelve, he was practicing vivisection and was caught by his parents. They were shocked by his cruelty, which he viewed as pure research, and they punished him by sending him to his room for a whole week, which merely gave him more time for his reading and intense contemplation. It didn't stop his experiments - he just continued them in secret - and by the age of fifteen, when at high school in Des Moines, he knew more about biology and science than his teachers could teach him.

He was also convinced, by then, that the only thing dividing man from the beast was his ability to think - not the heart, but the mind; not emotions, but reasoning. Once he had accepted that as truth, he learned to distrust what were widely regarded as man's 'finer' feelings.

Man was but a tool of evolution; the human mind was its instrument. And because most human emotions were dead weight, Wilson, from an early age, took pride in not having them.

He was a genius, a completely rational being, and that made him unique.

Nothing else mattered.

When the SS car slowed down, he opened his eyes again and saw the beams of the searchlights crisscrossing one another as they swept over Kummersdorf, erratically illuminating the tall hangars, prefabricated offices, wooden huts, barbed-wire fences, and high, ugly watch towers, where the helmeted troops sat behind machine guns and kept guard all night. Though normally empty, the compound in front of the experimental center was now filled with troop trucks, all bathed in the steady glare of overhead lamps. A lot of the troops were carrying equipment and papers from the hangar to the parked vehicles, while other trucks roared into life and headed toward the main gate.

After leaving the car and entering the hangar, Wilson saw the Schriever saucer still sitting on its raised steel platform. It looked enormous in that enclosed space, its smooth surface giving off a silvery glint in the overhead lighting. Looking in

vain for Flugkapitan Schriever, he crossed the floor and entered his own office, which was now bare of its filing cabinets and wall charts. There he found Ernst Stoll, SS Brigadier Hans Kammler, and the dark-eyed, dangerous SS General Artur Nebe sitting up in hardbacked wooden chairs, all smoking, drinking what looked like brandy, and clearly waiting for him.

'So,' Wilson said, 'the move's begun already.'

'Yes,' Kammler said. The first trucks are already at the station and you can leave any minute now.'

'What are the arrangements?'

'I have to remain here to oversee the V-1 and forthcoming V-2 rocket launchings against England. However, General Nebe and his finest troops will accompany you throughout the journey, for protection, and Captain Stoll will also go along, to ensure that you settle into Kahla without problems. Once things are running smoothly at Kahla, which will be administered jointly with the nearby Nordhausen Central Works under the jurisdiction of Captain Stoll, General Nebe will return to Berlin to organize the eventual time and means of escape from Germany; while Stoll will divide his time between Thuringia and Berlin, which will enable him to look after your project and keep his eye on our increasingly unpredictable Reichsfuhrer.'

'What about Rudolph Schriever and that' - Wilson paused to glance through the window at the flying saucer in the middle of the hangar - 'that thing out there?'

'A week from today,' Ernst Stoll solemnly informed him, 'the remaining staff of Kummersdorf, with Schriever in charge, will be moved, with the saucer, to a secret location near Prague. Thus, while Schriever's progress will be watched closely by Himmler, you will be able to complete your Feuerball and Kugelblitz, protected by General Kammler, under my jurisdiction.'

'And what reason have you given Schriever for the move?'

'The same as we gave Himmler. Namely, that your work has become erratic, you can no longer be trusted, and so you're being moved to Nordhausen, to be placed under our

supervision, now that Wernher von Braun has been moved back to the rebuilt factories in the development works, on the old site of Peenemiinde East.'

'Excellent,' Wilson said.

'And now we better go,' General Nebe said softly, his face as unemotional as a rock, which gave Wilson comfort. 'We want at least to get out of the station before the Allied bombers come again.'

'Good thinking,' Kammler said.

The day before Wilson had supervised the dismantling and packing of the separate parts of his Feuerball and Kugelblitz in the BMW plant at Spandau for transportation to the railway station. Today he was pleased to follow the others out of his office for the last time. Just as they were leaving, Flugkapitan Schriever, Habermohl, and Miethe emerged from the former's office and stopped right in front of them. Schriever, thinking he was now in charge of Projekt Saucer, gave Wilson a broad, superior smile.

'So,' he said, 'you're going to Nordhausen.'

'Yes,' Wilson replied.

'Naturally, I'm sorry to be losing you.'

'I'm sure you are, Flugkapitan.'

'I have naturally recommended your work to Himmler—'

Thank you.'

'- and while obviously he appreciates your contributions to Projekt Saucer, he feels it's now time that we Germans take it over completely.'

'I understand,' Wilson said.

'Once we get to Prague, I'll have the saucer flying in no time, I can assure you, Wilson.'

'I hope so, Flugkapitan.'

Schriever offered his hand. Wilson took it and shook it, then Schriever gave the Nazi salute and led his two men away. Stoll smiled thinly at Wilson, nodded toward the exit, then led him and the other two Nazi officers out of the hangar.

Wilson didn't look back. There was nothing there to interest him. He took his seat in the SS car, made room for Stoll beside

him, and kept his eyes open as they drove out of Kummersdorf toward Berlin. The night sky was bright with stars, the moon gliding behind thin clouds, but he soon saw a red glow in the sky, far ahead in the darkness. Then he heard the sound, the distant crump-crump of explosions, and knew instantly that the glowing in the sky was from the flames of an air raid.

'They come nearly every night now/ Ernst said. The swine never stop.'

'Remember the Blitz on London,' Wilson replied, 'and you won't expect them to stop.'

'My family live in Berlin, Wilson.'

'I'm sorry,' Wilson said, though he didn't give a damn.

'My wife left me,' Ernst continued like a man in a trance, 'but she's living with the children in her parents' house in the district of Wannsee, which they bomb all the time.'

'Not good,' Wilson said, bored.

'I worry about them more when they're away - and now we're off to Thuringia.'

'It's important, Captain Stoll. Very important.'

'Yes,' Ernst said. 'I know. I just can't help but worry.'

Luckily, they did not have to return to Berlin, but instead turned away from it, to a station in a small town that Wilson didn't recognize, though he knew it was on the route to Brandenburg.

The station was heavily guarded, surrounded by armed SS troops, and the midnight silence was broken by the barking of Alsatian dogs and the awful sound of men bawling through megaphones. Flashlights shone on white faces, searchlights swept across packed trucks, and Wilson had to follow Stoll through massed ranks of armed troops, none of whom looked too happy, and into a small railway station that was the stage for a nightmare. Prisoners from the camps were there, under-nourished, terrified. They were forced to run the gauntlet of snarling dogs and cracking whips, then herded up into the boxcars, where they were packed in like sardines. There were not many left - most of the boxcars had been closed already - but Wilson saw

enough to have a clear picture of what was happening.

It seemed chaotic, but it wasn't - it was very well organized - and when Wilson saw General Nebe near the last of the open boxcars, his face impassive but his dark eyes always restless, he understood why.

Nevertheless, Wilson was glad to get out of it and into his carriage, which, as he discovered when the train pulled out shortly after, he was sharing with Ernst Stoll, Brigadier Kammler, General Nebe, and their most favored officers. Nebe let them all relax, smoking and drinking, playing cards, and soon the distant sounds of the bombing of Berlin had faded away with the crimson sky, leaving only dark flatlands outside and the train's clickety-clacking.

'We are on our way at last,' Ernst Stoll said. Thank God for that at least.'

'Yes,' Wilson replied. The sooner we get there, the sooner you can return to Berlin and your family.'

'If they're still there,' Ernst said.

'If they are not,' Kammler said icily, 'you will have made your personal sacrifice for the Third Reich. Would you not consider that an honor, Captain Stoll?'

'Naturally I would, sir.'

'You seemed a little bitter, Captain.'

'No, sir. I'm just tired, that's all.'

'We all are.' Kammler sneered, then lit a cigarette, blew a cloud of smoke, and engaged Nebe in whispered conversation, which only served to make Ernst more nervous, as Wilson carefully noted.

Turning his attention to Kammler and Nebe, sitting together on the seat opposite, he wondered at the caliber of human being he had been forced to deal with.

Kammler, he knew, had been responsible for the planning of various concentration camps; had personally supervised and confirmed the plans for the enormous subcamp at Birkenau, part of Auschwitz, with its four gas chambers and crematoria; was impatient, ruthless, completely amoral, and, though Himmler's present favorite and ostensibly devoted to him, was

consumed by no more than self-interest.

General Nebe, on the other hand, was a more shadowy figure, one of shifting allegiances, someone known to be a practiced survivor and no stranger to bloodshed. He rarely smiled, fondled his pistol a lot, and kept his conversation to the bare minimum. A good man to have on your side; a man to dread if your enemy. To Wilson, such men were animals -but they had to be used.

It was a truly depressing thought.

Closing his eyes, he tried to sleep, but instead thought about how divorced he was from his fellow men, unable to share their petty concerns and narrow ambitions. They wanted the here and now, the love of woman, man's esteem, but failed completely to see just how short life was and, therefore, how important. Though born to be the tools of evolution, they still lived like cavemen.

Their evolution would not come naturally. At least not in time to save them. The continuation of the human species could be guaranteed only if men took matters into their own hands and re-created themselves.

And as most men could not even conceive of that, the exceptional few, like Wilson, would have to lead the way.

I will do it, he thought, trying to sleep, but failing dismally. I will re-create myself, with my willpower and surgical assistance, and in so doing become the first of that race that will fly to the stars.

I will become a biological mutation with my mind unimpaired. I will not find immortality - no, it's too late for that - but the operations I've had, which have so far been successful, are merely the first steps on the road to man's transformation, physical and mental... Those who follow me, on the operating table and with my philosophy, will evolve, as their regressive fellow men die off, into the Superman.

This will be my achievement.

Thinking about it, he smiled. He was still traveling, after all. He had left his home in Iowa, left his friends, then his country, and now he was on the road out of Germany.

He was going to where the air was clean and mankind could be reborn.

Not immediately, however. He was still in the real world. He was reminded of that fact when the Allied bombers returned, growling low overhead, and the darkness outside the noisy train became a fabulous tapestry. There were ballooning balls of white light, jagged yellow flames, clouds of black smoke, then the luminous, scorching heat of the explosions lent the darkness a crimson hue. Sparks fountained to the sky, decorating moon and stars, and the buildings of the town outside the train collapsed into more beauty. It was the singular beauty of death, the awesome radiance of destruction. Wilson saw the walls exploding, the smoke billowing up from the flames, and knew, even as the noise erupted and clawed through him, that the beauty and horror of life on earth were one and the same.

The train screeched and shuddered, then ground to a halt while the SS officers crowded up against the windows and looked out at the night.

'Why are we stopping?' Kammler asked, glancing at Nebe.

'I don't know,' Nebe replied, then stood up and crooked his finger at Ernst Stoll. 'Come with me, Captain.'

The train had stopped on the outskirts of town. The darkness outside was filled with sheets of yellow flame and geysering sparks. Smoke billowed up from the buildings, obscuring the moon and stars, and the steady droning of the Allied bombers seemed to make the air vibrate. Nebe stopped and glanced out, started forward again, then stopped when an SS sergeant rushed into the carriage and gave the Nazi salute.

'Why have we stopped?' Nebe asked.

'Some of the prisoners are panicking, sir. They're hammering on the doors of the boxcars and might start a riot. We don't know what to do.'

'What we do is set an example,' Nebe said softly. 'Captain Stoll, come with me!'

Wilson watched them departing, followed closely by

Kammler, then he pulled his window down enough to stick his head out. The noise of the air raid was deafening, hammering at him like a huge fist, and he saw collapsing buildings, more showering sparks, billowing smoke, and glanced backward along the train to where armed troops were covering one of the boxcars, the dogs straining at the end of their tethers, barking and snapping.

Nebe, Kammler, and Stoll were there, standing in front of the boxcar. Nebe was removing his pistol from his holster as his troops opened the door. Bombs were exploding nearby, the ground roaring and erupting, and even as earth and debris showered back down, Nebe took aim with his pistol. The first prisoner was dropping. Nebe shot him and he fell. Another prisoner jumped out as Kammler and Stoll unholstered their pistols and started firing. The prisoners were shot as they jumped out, screamed and jerked and collapsed. Then the women inside started wailing as the SS troops, encouraged by their leader, fired into the boxcar.

The noise was atrocious, a savage, staccato roaring, adding to the crescendo of the aircraft growling overhead, the bombs exploding on all sides, and the sibilance of the tracer bullets crisscrossing the sky above the boiling black smoke.

No more prisoners jumped down, but Wilson heard the women wailing. That dreadful sound was shut off when the boxcar doors were closed again, locking in the subdued prisoners, then Nebe led Kammler and Ernst Stoll back to the carriage.

The train moved off again as they returned and took their seats, Kammler and Nebe facing Wilson, the pale-faced Stoll beside him.

Wilson noted Stoll's shocked appearance. It was something worth remembering. Stoll obeyed orders, but not without distaste, and that virtue, which Wilson viewed as his weakness, was what would make him useful.

Wilson closed his eyes again. He fell in and out of sleep. The train traveled through the night, through more air raids and long silences, passing smoldering ruins and columns of

troops on the roads and villages still remarkably untouched and silhouetted in moonlight The ruins gradually disappeared, giving way to pine forests. The forests rose and fell over the hills of Thuringia, shielding picturesque villages, nineteenth-century houses, and the remains of fortified castles that stood majestically on the crest of the hills, overlooking the babbling brooks and rivers that crossed lush valleys.

The train climbed up through the forests. There were no air raids here. The sun rose beyond the hills, a pearly light through starlit darkness, then the gray light turned into silvery striations that gave the trees back their color.

The trees covered the hills and mountains, hid the great caves hacked out of them. The train, which had been climbing more slowly by the hour, finally stopped in a cleared area by the old walled town of Kahla, in the region of the southern Harz Mountains, on the same line that led on to the underground Nordhausen Central Works.

Wilson looked out. The pine trees soared all around him. The old walled town of Kahla could not be seen from here, but the train lines branched off into a tunnel that led inside the forested hills.

In there lay his destiny.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

After spending a nightmarish week in the Harz Mountains, supervising the resettlement of Wilson and his flying saucer project, Ernst returned to Berlin to do the same for the ungrateful and increasingly arrogant Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, though in this case the move was to Prague, Czechoslovakia.

After settling Schriever, his two trusted engineers, and other assistants and slave workers in the research complex just outside the city, where the naive scientist had been looking forward to testing the flying saucer before the Soviets advanced too far, Ernst returned to a bomb-shattered Berlin. He felt older than ever and no longer was able to sleep at night

When he made his report to Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsfuhrer, who had once seemed so icily calm, now was oddly distracted. His eyes behind the glittering pince-nez roamed restlessly left and right.

'Four days ago,' he said, before Ernst could utter a word, 'the Russians took Minsk and captured one hundred thousand German soldiers. One hundred thousand,' he repeated slowly, like a man in a trance. 'It is something to think about.'

Embarrassed, Ernst didn't know what to say, so he simply remained standing in front of Himmler's desk, looking down at his chubby, pale face and surprised by the change in him. Eventually, as if remembering what Ernst was there for, the Reichsfuhrer looked up and said, in a less distracted manner, 'So, you have completed the resettlements. I myself have recently visited the new site at Prague, but haven't been to

Nordhausen since last there with you. What's it like there?'

'Very good, Reichsfuhrer. The Nordhausen Central Works are, as you know, hidden deeply in the Kohnstein Mountain. As of this moment, more than three thousand prisoners from the concentration camp at nearby Buchenwald are being used as slave labor and housed in a new subcamp named Dora. It is anticipated that by October this year, the whoie of the Dora subcamp will have been transferred underground and also increased to a total of over thirteen thousand slave workers. Another camp for the prisoners is being set up in a mountain valley to the south, less than a kilometer from the entrance to Nordhausen's tunnel B.'

'The prisoners are disciplined and work well?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said, thinking of how the unfortunates were driven to work with sticks, worked exceptionally long and exhausting hours, and not allowed to rest for a single moment.

'How are they disciplined?' Himmler asked, for such matters always interested the bureaucrat in him.

'Naturally they're supervised at all times with SS guards armed with pistols, automatic weapons, bullwhips, and sticks. When not working, many of them are shut up in the tunnels of the underground complex. When they refuse to work on the V-1 or V-2, they are shot or hanged in full sight of the other prisoners - either in the underground corridors or in the rollcall ground of the open camps.'

'Excellent, Captain. It is always best to carry out disciplinary measures in full sight of the other prisoners. It is always good to remind them of the consequences should they too commit an infraction.'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said. The nightmares generated by his week in Nordhausen and the other underground factories in the area, including the one at Kahla, were the cause of his inability to sleep.

'And the underground factories are definitely invisible from the air?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer.'

'Good.' Himmler offered a smile that seemed to. be turned

toward upon himself. 'As you know,' he said, clasping his hands under his double chin and returning to his former distracted manner, 'as early as 1941, I personally set up an SS proving ground near Blizna, a small village located by the confluence of the rivers Vistula and San, in southern Poland.'

'Yes, sir, I remember it well.'

Himmler nodded again and smiled in a dreamy manner. Toward the end of 1941,' he continued, 'after the villagers had all been evicted, Soviet prisoners-of-war were sent there and killed off almost to a man by hard labor and starvation, in order to get the proving ground completed. When they had died off, we sent political prisoners and eventually built a concentration camp for them. Since then we have razed the original village to the ground, camouflaged the whole area, and built a new, mock village over the proving ground, to fool Allied aircraft and their photographers. Cardboard cottages and outbuildings were sent there from Germany; dummies of men, women, and children stand around; and even flowers and other shrubbery have been planted. From the air, the illusion of an inhabited village is complete - and I like to think of it, Captain,' he continued, looking up at Ernst and smiling, 'as the prototype for all the camouflaged, underground factories built since then ... My personal creation.'

'And an excellent one, sir.'

'Thank you, Captain.'

Ernst, feeling weary and slightly unreal, did not think it wise to mention the fact that according to recent intelligence reports, Polish partisans were already moving in on Blizna, with a view to capturing it and holding it until the Soviet army arrived, as it surely would any day now.

'And a similar situation exists at the Schriever complex near Prague, in Bohemia?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer. Exactly the same. And Flugkapitan Schriever is hoping to test his flying saucer later this year.'

'Good. We need all the secret weapons we can get, if we're to defeat the Allied advance. What is the American, Wilson, doing in this respect?'

'Not much, I'm afraid,' Ernst lied, knowing that in fact Wilson was already planning to test his small Feuerball in the guise of an antiradar weapon and, if it was successful, to then implement the same ideas in the larger flying saucer he was intending to construct in Neuschwabenland. 'He's making various small contributions to the V-2 program but has otherwise turned out to be disappointing.'

'If the Soviets or Americans even get close, I want that man shot.'

'He will be, Reichsfuhrer. In the meantime, I agree that it's wise to pin most of our hopes on the V-2 rocket program and, possibly, Schriever's flying saucer.'

Himmler nodded, accepting Ernst's compliment, then unclasped his hands. 'So, Captain,' he said, 'when are you returning to Nordhausen?'

'As soon as I see my wife and children, Reichsfuhrer.'

'Ah, yes,' Himmler said. 'Now living with your mother-in-law, I believe.'

'Yes, sir.'

'I do not approve of the separation, but am pleased to note that you did, at least, do something about her lover. I assume now he is one of the hundred thousand German soldiers captured at Minsk. It is all he deserves.'

'Yes, sir. I agree.'

Himmler stood up behind his desk and stared somberly at Ernst. These are terrible times,' he said, 'and we must all remain courageous. I wish to thank you, Captain, for all you've done so far. Believe me, I'm proud of you.' Then, to Ernst's amazement, he offered his hand. Ernst shook it, found it oddly clammy, then saluted and walked out.

Berlin was barely recognizable, with once-familiar areas now razed to the ground, blackened ruins and piles of rubble as far as the eye could see, and a constant smell of fire in the air, instead of the summer flowers. There were few soldiers about, only old men, women, and children, a good many of them crippled, and Ernst became even more depressed and longed for escape.

He went straight to Brigette's apartment, wanting to have her one last time. He was relieved to find the building still standing, though the one beside it had been bombed, and he hurried eagerly up the stairs to ring the bell of her door.

However, before he could do so, the door opened, a Luftwaffe flight lieutenant stared at him in surprise, then grinned sheepishly, finished buttoning up his jacket, called 'Auf Wiedersehen!' back over his shoulder and left by the stairs. Brigette appeared in the doorway, her red hair disheveled, a cigarette between her lips, still wearing her dressing gown. She was just about to close the door when she saw Ernst.

Startled, she froze for a moment, then grinned, stepped back, and waved him inside, saying 'Ah! My pretty kapitan! Come inside and be warmed!' A little shaken, Ernst stepped in, pushed the door closed behind him, and just stood there, feeling foolish, until Brigette pressed her lips to his and ran her hand down his spine. 'Did you bring me a present, my beauty, from wherever you've been?'

'Not this time,' Ernst said.

She stepped away from him and pouted, blowing smoke in his face. 'Nothing? Not one little thing? Is this how you treat the girls who suffer at home?'

Ernst was not amused by her flippancy, assuming she was trying to make light of the man who had just left.

'You don't seem to be suffering too much,' he said. 'You still have your boyfriends, I see.'

She grinned, adjusted the dressing gown to cover her breasts, then waved her hand in an airy manner, indicating the once-elegant apartment. 'Not suffering?' she asked in a theatrical, manner. 'But darling, just look at this place. It is not what it once was.' Which certainly seemed true enough; the furniture seemed faded and dusty, the drinks cabinet bare. 'No Russian vodka,' she continued. 'No cognac from France. No more pasta and salami, no more dairy products from Denmark, no more jewelry and furs from handsome officers flushed with victory and pride. Only angst, my darling, and the air raids and the long queues for food. Why not the odd boyfriend?'

Her mockery angered him, but he tried not to show it, as he still hoped to get into her bed before visiting Ingrid.

'I suppose I've no reason to complain,' he said. 'It was just a shock, that's all.'

'Why, darling? You've always known about my other men. You've always known that I like my little presents and can't bear to be lonesome.'

He wanted to slap her face, but managed to restrain himself, because what she had said was perfectly true. Indeed, she had often teased him with talk about her other men, and in those days, when Berlin was rich and he a golden young conqueror, he had taken the teasing in good part. That he couldn't do so now was a sign that things had changed radically... He was no longer a conqueror, she had visibly aged, and both the city and this faded, bare apartment reminded him of the forthcoming defeat. He felt that darkness descending...

'So what are you doing here, Ernst?' Brigette said, inhaling and exhaling cigarette smoke and turning away to take a seat on the worn sofa, where she crossed her long, still-elegant legs and swung one invitingly.

'You know what I came for,' he said, feeling a choke in his throat.

She smiled, then stubbed her cigarette out, and stretched both arms along the back of the sofa, thus forcing her breasts out. 'But you didn't bring me my little present, dear Ernst, and you know I expect that.'

'I know you like your little presents, but I didn't realize they were mandatory. I mean, I never thought of them as absolutely vital. It was my pleasure to give them.'

'You gave them in return for pleasure.'

'That's beside the point.'

'The point, dear, is that I never lend myself unless I'm offered a present.'

'I didn't know you were for sale.'

'Yes, you did,' she said calmly. 'I charged more than a common whore would charge - it just wasn't money.'

'Presents,' Ernst said bitterly.

'Exactly,' she replied. 'Some men, they can't admit that they're buying it, so one asks them for presents. Little presents. Expensive presents. Ones with high resale value.'

'You're a mercenary whore.'

'No, Ernst, darling, I'm a survivor. I've learned not to depend on men for anything, so I take what I can from them. To save for a rainy day, darling - which means when Berlin falls.'

'That's the talk of a traitor.'

'Are you going to report me, darling? After all, that's what you often said you were - no more than a policeman.'

The remark humiliated him, reminding him of his failures, but the thought that he might not have her this last time made him desire her all the more, which made him swallow his pride.

'I'm going away,' he said, despising the plaintive tone in his voice. 'I'm being posted away and don't know what will happen after that. I just thought...'

'One last time?'

'Yes,' he said, almost whispering. 'For old times' sake, at least.'

'For old time's sake,' she echoed sardonically.

'Yes,' he said, walking toward her. He stopped directly in front of the worn sofa and gazed down at her swinging leg. It was exposed up to the thigh and it made him take his breath in; then, when he raised his gaze, he saw her breasts thrusting against the dressing gown, the skin above bare and marble white. When he raised his gaze higher, he saw her sensual lips curved in a mocking smile.

'So you're going away,' she said, 'and leaving me to the tender mercies of the Allied troops or the Soviets - and still you want your little pleasure for old time's sake. Well, my dear, a girl has to survive and, when the city falls, will need more than her fading looks - so since we've always had a particular relationship, let's keep it that way... Which means that if I don't get my present, you won't have any fun.'

'I've been away for weeks,' he said, loathing the piteous tone in his voice and feeling his anger rising out of his humiliation.

'I've been worked night and day. I didn't have the opportunity to buy presents - not even for my wife and children, let alone you.'

'You're separated from your wife and children.'

'I still see them - and will this evening.'

'Perhaps they no longer expect presents - but I do, my dear.'

'I don't have one, Brigette. For God's sake, don't be—'

But she stopped him short by leaning forward on the sofa, taking hold of his wrist and turning it over to examine his watch.

'A gold Rolex,' she said.

He jerked his hand away. 'If you think—'

She leaned back on the sofa and stretched her arms along the back of it, simultaneously exposing her full breasts and swinging that long leg. 'A gold Rolex is worth a lot,' she said, smiling. 'And I still want my present.'

Ernst exploded, hardly knowing what he was doing. He grabbed her by the collar, jerked her to her feet, slapped her face, and threw her back down. He saw the torn dressing gown, a bared breast, blood on her lips, then bent over and slapped her again and dragged her onto the floor. She cursed and clawed at him, tried to roll away but failed, and writhed beneath him when he straddled her body and ripped the dressing gown off her.

He didn't feel lust - only violent, blinding rage - but when the dressing gown was lying in shreds around her, he tried to force her legs open. She didn't scream, but she cursed him loudly, trying to jerk her wrists from his hands, and when finally he let go to hold her legs apart, she frantically tried hitting him with her fists.

Surprised, he released her thighs and took hold of her wrists again. He jerked her hands away from his face and, still straddling her and breathing in spasms, looked at her as she stopped writhing beneath him and glared fiercely at him. When she stopped struggling, when her body became motionless, he released her hands and rolled off her, then

stood up and straightened his jacket, feeling foolish and beaten.

'The Soviets will know what to do with you,' he said with as much contempt as he could muster, looking down at her, where she still lay on the floor, too careful to move. 'Good luck, Brigette. You'll need it.'

He made a point of not slamming the door in anger when he left for the last time... but her mocking laughter pursued him.

The lines for the tramcars to Wannsee had been blown up in an air raid, so he took a taxi through the darkening light of the early evening, trying not to look out at the crippled children and old people who were clambering over the piles of rubble or exploring the charred ruins, hoping to find something they could barter for money or food.

Yes, Berlin was unrecognizable, the gaunt remainder of a lost dream. He was glad when the worst ruins disappeared from view and were replaced with the relatively less devastated areas overlooking the Havel River. Not that there were no ruins here, but they were fewer and more spread out, and he was even more relieved to find his in-laws' elegant old house still standing in its gardens overlooking the waters of the Wannsee. He asked the taxi driver to wait for him, then rang the doorbell.

Ingrid's mother answered the door, looking shockingly aged. Her hair was now completely gray and the skin of her handsome face, though tight on her cheekbones, was webbed with lines of tension and possibly hunger.

She stared in a confused manner at Ernst, then, recognizing him, murmured a greeting and pulled him into her arms. When they embraced, he kissed her cheek, which seemed cold, then followed her inside the house. She walked ahead of him, her body heavy and ungainly, saying over her shoulder The children will be so glad to see you. How long has it been now?'

Noting that she hadn't included Ingrid in her first comment, Ernst said, 'About eighteen months. Maybe two years. I'm not sure. How have things been?'

'Not so good,' she said vaguely. 'All the air raids... food shortages... the anxiety ... Ingrid!' she called out as she entered the living room. 'You have a visitor, dear!'

She stepped aside to let him enter, hugged him again impulsively as he passed her, whispered, 'I think I'll leave you two alone,' then hurried away. Ernst stepped into the living room and saw Ingrid looking up from where she was sitting in an armchair, an open newspaper laying across her lap, her face still exceptionally pretty, but drawn, as if sleep had eluded her.

'Hello, Ingrid,' he said, walking across the room, which was, he noted, still filled with the excellent furniture, international bricabrac, and fine paintings that her father had collected before he died.

'What do you want?' she asked coldly.

Startled, he stopped in front of her, looked down at her, then glanced at the sofa opposite. 'Can I sit down?'

'Are you planning to stay long?'

'No. I have a taxi waiting.'

'Then you can sit down.'

He hadn't expected a warm welcome, but her coldness was truly shocking. He sat on the sofa and smiled at her, hoping to warm her.

'What do you want here?' she asked him, clearly not warmed at all.

'I'm being posted out of Berlin,' he said, 'and I don't know when I'll be coming back. I came to say good-bye - and also because I'm worried about you and the children.'

'Are you, indeed?'

'Yes.'

'Why?'

'Because of the air raids, for a start.'

'They've been bombing Berlin for a long time and you didn't worry before.'

'I did. It was you who left me. You do remember that, don't you?'

'Yes, Ernst, I remember. And I also remember why. It was

because I found out about your whoring and so turned to another man - a good man, Ernst, a very good man, whom you had sent to Russia.'

'At the insistence of the Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst lied. 'He thought it best you were parted.'

'Damn the Reichsfuhrer! And damn you for being a liar! Eberhard wasn't sent to Russia on the word of Heinrich Himmler. It was you, Ernst, who came up with that idea. You. You alone. You had him sent to Russia because you knew he probably wouldn't survive - and I haven't received a letter from him since the Russians captured our troops. Either he's dead or he's rotting in a Russian prison camp - and either way, I won't see him again. You're a bastard! I hate you!'

She turned away from him, picked up a packet of cigarettes, tipped one out into her hand, then reached out for the matches.

'You're exaggerating the whole affair,' Ernst said, though he knew that she wasn't

'Please get out,' she responded, then struck a match, lit her cigarette, and exhaled a thin, nervous stream of smoke from shivering lips.

'No matter what you think of me,' Ernst said, struck by her beauty, cut by her vehemence, 'I'm seriously worried about you and the children. You've survived the air raids so far, but they're going to get worse - and sooner or later, either the Soviets or the Allies, maybe both, will march into Berlin. What happens then ...' He tried to put it into words, could find none, so just shrugged. 'I simply don't know.'

Ingrid blew a cloud of smoke, watched it intently, then turned unhappy green eyes upon him and said, 'You haven't told me anything I don't know - except that if the Allies or Russians come, you probably won't be here.'

'I can't tell you where I'm going, but it's safer than here. We're still married, so I can probably take you with me, and I think you should come.'

'No, thanks.'

'Please, Ingrid. For the sake of the children, if not yourself.'

'You murdered the man I love - if he's not dead, he might

as well be - and I'm not going to share my future with you for the sake of the children. You're not the man I once loved. You're not the father I wanted for them. You could have been that man - you almost were - but then you threw it away. Now look at you, Ernst! A leading light of the SS. A man who fornicates with whores, collects the victims for the torture chambers, rounds up the unfortunates for the concentration camps, and generally lends his support to the bloodiest dictatorship on earth. And a man who once wanted to be a scientist - or at least an engineer! No, Ernst, you're not the man I married - and you're not the man for my children. I'd rather they died in an air raid than grow up with you. If you want to say good-bye to them, you may do so. But that's all you can do. After that, you can only leave.'

Ernst drank her in with his eyes, recalling what she had once meant to him, then filled up with unutterable grief at what he had lost. Though drawn and anguished, she was still lovely, and he had lost that as well... Ingrid ... the children... His whole world. How had it happened?

He sighed. 'All right, Ingrid. Where are the children?'

'Upstairs in their rooms.'

'Can I go up?'

'Yes, but don't make it sound definite. As far as they're concerned, you're just off on another trip. Is that understood?'

'I do hope to be returning to Berlin,' he told her.

'Nothing's certain these days.'

He went up the stairs and found the children in the room they shared, Ula still blond and lovely, though now ten years old, Alfred nearly seven years old and no longer chubby. They greeted him warily, as they always did on his odd visits, but he welled up with emotion and clung to them sO long he embarrassed them. Eventually he let them go, gave them some money, kissed their cheeks, then, sniffing back his tears and composing his face, returned to the living room to say good-bye to Ingrid.

Her mother had come back in and Ernst was shocked when he saw them both. Ingrid now looked like her mother had only

ten years ago. There were streaks of gray in Ingrid's blond hair. Her bright-green eyes had darkened. She still had a good figure, but it had filled out in the wrong way, and Ernst noticed, with a shock, that she was wearing one of her mother's old dresses. Her face, though still beautiful, was closed against him.

'Will you reconsider?' he asked her.

'No,' she replied.

'For the sake of the children. For your mother's sake—'

'Don't bring them into this.'

Her mother looked embarrassed, staring down at the floor, and Ernst, not feeling angry but dead, walked up to the old woman, embraced her, kissed her cheek. Then, as her tears started falling, he simply nodded at Ingrid.

'I promise you, I'll make it back,' he said.

'Don't make rash promises, Ernst. None of us can make promises these days. We take each day as it comes.'

'I'll be back.'

'Good-bye, Ernst'

He turned away and walked out. The taxi was still there, making a small fortune in these otherwise bleak days, and even as Ernst walked toward it, his boots kicking up gravel, he heard that distant, familiar rumbling and the eerie wail of the sirens. He looked toward Berlin, at the large moon in the starlit sky, and knew that the Allied aircraft were returning for another night of destruction.

There's nothing left for me here, he thought forlornly. Now I have only Wilson.

Then he slipped into the rear of the taxi and was taken back to the city, which, even as he was driven toward it, was turning into a furnace.

Hell is on earth, he thought.

Chapter Thirty

Bradley was in church. He was, to be precise, in an annex of the shell of the Church of St Pierre in the ruined old town of Caen, France, to which he had driven, one week after its fall to the Canadian and British troops, from the town of Saint-L6, which had been captured by the US 1st Army.

Bradley had driven in a jeep from Saint-L6 to Caen through a landscape devasted by bomb craters, burned-out barns, collapsed houses, mountains of rubble, and putrefying dead animals, mostly cows. He had arrived in Caen, at the invitation of the British SOE, which was now being more agreeable to him, after the lovely old cathedral town, eastern bastion of the German defense forces, had been reduced to ruins by relentless Allied artillery and air bombardment. He had then been directed by some weary British 2nd Army infantrymen to the Church of St Pierre, which he had found simply by heading for the tower that was visible above the ruins of what had once been prosperous streets.

The tower had been damaged and was surrounded by more rubble, but luckily the interior of the church remained intact. It had become a refuge for hundreds of the townspeople who had lost their homes in the artillery and air bombardments. The refugees were still there when Bradley arrived, but within days they had been moved out to more hospitable quarters. Bradley at the invitation of the British Secret Intelligence Service, had set up a temporary office in this annex, where, with the assistance of members of the Manhattan atomic bomb Project's ALSOS and OSS's Project Paperclip, he had begun

an intensive interrogation of resistance members and local townsfolk as well as less cooperative collaborators, suspected and otherwise.

While the members of ALSOS concentrated on tracking down details of all German V-1 and V-2 rocket projects, Bradley and his fellow OSS sleuths were attempting to trace the whereabouts of those scientists and engineers known to have been involved in the construction of rockets and other secret weapons, including any aircraft remotely saucer-shaped and relating to Wilson.

Bradley was not having much luck.

What he had learned so far was that the Germans had built a frightening number of V-l and V-2 rocket launching sites, most of them in the Pas de Calais area and the recently captured Cherbourg peninsula. What he had also learned is that after the devastating RAF bombing raids of 1943, Wernher von Braun's rocket team had been moved out of Peenemiinde to an unknown destination, had been returned when the damage had been repaired, but reportedly was about to be moved again. Unfortunately, no one knew more than that... and no one seemed to know Wilson.

The American.

Goddamn him!

The more Bradley saw of the war's awesome devastation, the more he wondered how much Wilson had contributed to it and the more he wanted to find him and put a stop to him. He was still haunted by the memory of that saucer-shaped aircraft in the barn near Montezuma, Iowa, where Wilson had been born and returned to work in secret, and he was convinced that the V-l rocket program could not have been so advanced without Wilson's help. Now, more than anything else, he had to find out.

Sitting behind his makeshift desk in the annex of the damaged church, he had come face to face with the best and worst faces of the war - female collaborators with heads shaved by their liberated former friends; male collaborators bruised and scarred from beatings by their fellow countrymen;

the pitiful victims of Nazi torture; old and young members of the French resistance, whose features had been shaped by deprivation and constant fear and courage. He was feeling overwhelmed and exhausted when he finally came up with something.

The man who sat facing him across the old, cluttered farm table the morning of July 20, 1944, was wearing the clothing of a French peasant - black jacket and baggy pants, open-necked white shirt and beret - but had strikingly handsome features and brown eyes filled with passionate conviction.

He had not been brought in, but had specifically asked to see the investigating officer. According to his papers, he wasn't French but Polish, and his name was Andrzej Pialowicz.

'I'm surprised,' Bradley told him, 'to find a Polish citizen in the French resistance.'

'I am a leading member of the Polish resistance,' Pialowicz replied in surprisingly good English, 'but am forced to flee the country when the Gestapo and SS round up and murder my group. When you finally get to Poland, and if you find your hands on the Nazi secret services documents, no doubt you will find me listed there.'

Bradley nodded. 'Why did you not just go underground in Poland'

'It is becoming too difficult in Cracow, where I operate, and when my group is captured and my lover tortured and sent to a concentration camp, I know that the last people I can trust are all gone - and if I stay in Cracow, it will only be a matter of time before I am caught.'

'Good thinking,' Bradley said.

'Also, Major Riedel of the SS is becoming obsessed with capturing me, which is a further motive to leave the country and go underground, where even my name will not be known. So, convinced that the Mies will invade Europe eventually, I come here and join the French resistance.'

'How did you get out of Poland?'

'I travel by night, usually cross-country, keeping well away from the roads. I also cover great distances by train,

hanging under the carriages for hours.'

'That's a helluva thing to do,' Bradley said. 'One hell of a thing.'

'When we have to, we can do surprising things. You should know this by now.'

Bradley was certainly learning it. He was gradually getting used to the fact that many of the people he interviewed, who often looked so young and inexperienced, had lost their families and loved ones, been tortured by the Nazis, lived under the threat of death for as long as they could remember, and treated adventures such as that described by Pialowicz as perfectly normal.

He was getting used to it, but sometimes it still amazed him, though he tried not to show that

'So you've been in France since... ?'

'June 1940.'

'Have you heard anything about your lover since?'

'No.' Pialowicz showed the merest flicker of emotion, then became stone-faced.

'You don't know which camp she went to?'

'No.'

'If you give me her name, I'll put her on the file. If she's found, we'll get in touch with you.'

This I would appreciate. Also, she is the reason I come to see you.'

'Oh, who is she?'

'Her name is Kryzystina Kozilewski.'

Bradley wrote the name down in his notebook, after asking Pialowicz how it was spelled.

'So,' he said, looking up again. 'What's the relevance of Kryzystina Kozilewski?'

'One of my functions here in France,' Pialowicz responded, 'is to liaise between the French and Polish underground groups. It is one of those Polish groups that conveys to you through the French resistance, in 1942, that the Nazis are testing remote-controlled rockets near Peenemunde, in the Baltic.'

'The V-1 rocket.'

'Yes. Anyway, since I am the person liaising between that polish resistance group and the Frenchmen who pass the information on to you, through SOE, London, I naturally know about your interest in the American scientist, John Wilson.'

Feeling his weariness slipping away from him, Bradley leaned across the table and prompted Pialowicz with 'Yes?'

This is where my former mistress, Kryzystina Kozilewski, comes into the picture,' Pialowicz said, keeping his features carefully composed to mask any pain he might be feeling. 'When the Nazis overrun Poland in September 1939, I form a Polish resistance group and enlist the help of Kryzystina. Kryzystina has had a hard life, is experienced in the ways of men - I say this without rancor - and on behalf of the resistance, uses her charm and experience to gain the trust of German officers, obtain valuable gossip from them, and pass the information on to us.'

'Is that why she's in a concentration camp?'

'I think so, yes,' Pialowicz said.

At that moment, a great armada of Allied aircraft passed overhead, heading toward Germany. Pialowicz glanced up at the ceiling of the annex, then lowered his gaze again.

'Early in 1940 the Germans requisition the boarding house owned by Kryzystina and send its residents to a concentration camp. Kryzystina saves herself from this fate by engaging in an affair with the commander of the troops involved in the requisition - an SS captain named Ernst Stoll, who is under the command of my worst enemy, Major Riedel. And it is through her affair with Stoll that Kryzystina learns about the American, John Wilson.'

The noise of the aircraft passing overhead had reached a crescendo and Pialowicz stopped talking for a moment, waiting for the bombers to pass on ... for the noise to die down. Bradley thought of the ruins of Caen, of all the other ruins he had seen in his journey and shuddered to think of what that mighty armada of bombers would soon do to Germany. The awesome power of modern technology was now ever-

present... and if Wilson had progressed even further, God knows what would be coming.

When the noise of the aircraft had passed, Pialowicz said, 'To return to Kryzystina... According to what she tells me in 1940, this German who becomes her lover, this SS captain Ernst Stoll, is a former rocket engineer, deeply embittered at being denied membership of the VfR, or German Amateur Rocket Society and, later, General Dornberger's rocket program, which is placed under the command of Wernher von Braun, one of Stall's old school chums, while Stoll is turned into a mere technical administrator. Disgusted, Stoll lets himself be persuaded to join SS intelligence, which at least gives him the opportunity to supervise certain secret weapons research programs at Kummersdorf, south of Berlin - and it is there that he becomes involved with the American, Wilson.'

'He actually worked with Wilson?'

'Yes. Wilson does not actually work with von Braun's rocket teams, but with a much smaller group at the other side of an old firing range at Kummersdorf West. However, according to what Stoll tells Kryzystina, while Wilson is to work on secret weapons other than remote-controlled rockets, many of his remarkable innovations are passed on to the rocket team, which certainly hastens the development of the rockets.'

Now Bradley was feeling really excited. At last Wilson's continuing existence had been confirmed. At last he'd been given shape, even if he still was faceless.

'Did Kryzystina find out what Wilson's project actually was?'

'Yes. One night when Stoll is drunk and particularly bitter, he lets slip that the program is called Projekt Saucer and involves the construction of a saucer-shaped, vertical-rising aircraft. How far it has progressed, he doesn't say, but he does also let slip that the project is highly secret, that it is Heinrich Himmler's personal passion, and that even Hitler is unaware of its existence.'

'What was this Wilson like?' Bradley asked, desperate to put a human face on his faceless quarry.

'Apparently a lot older than he looks,' Pialowicz replied. 'About sixty-five years of age.'

'In 1940.'

'Yes.'

'Which makes him about seventy now,' Bradley observed.

'Yes.'

'Anything else?'

'Yes. This Wilson is very strange. According to Stoll, John Wilson is a man obsessed. He cares for nothing but his work and has few scruples when it comes to doing it. That is one obsession. There are others.'

Pialowicz glanced around him, at the ruins of the church, saw nothing that he hadn't lived with for a long time, so returned to the subject.

'He does not smoke, does not drink, and claims that his exceptional youthfulness is due to some kind of lifelong diet. Also, he is obsessed with extending his life span and, according to Stoll, is convinced that any kind of extreme emotionalism, such as love or sexual passion, encourages the aging process. Regarding his own sexual drives, he claims to relieve them as functionally as humanly possible. And, finally, while not sharing Heinrich Himmler's mystical notions of an Aryan Super Race, he certainly believes and is striving for the creation of a race of geniuses, devoted to science - of which he will naturally be the leader. For that reason, he treats his own health and his work as the base material for research, medical and scientific. In other words, he is a man so objective, he is scarcely human at all... Very strange, yes?'

'Yes,' Bradley said. 'Very strange.'

He glanced back through the arched doorway of the annex and saw other intelligence officers at other tables, interviewing other suspects, collaborators, and allies. The sunlight outside was beaming in through the stained-glass windows, which had remained unharmed, casting striations of many colors over worn, harassed, and sometimes jubilant faces. Big guns thundered in the distance and some people looked around. The

battle for Europe had moved on from this destroyed town and was continuing elsewhere.

'So in 1940,' Bradley continued, 'Wilson was still located in Kummersdorf, south of Berlin. Do you know if he's still there?'

'No,' Pialowicz said, 'he is not. About three weeks ago Wilson's team are split up for reasons we have not yet ascertained. But according to our informants, Wilson and some others are moved by a train filled with SS troops and concentration-camp prisoners to somewhere in the southern Harz Mountains. Alas, we do not know where, though we do have reason to believe that the area around Nordhausen, in Thuringia, is littered with large, well-disguised underground factories where the Nazi secret weapons are produced with the help of slave labor from nearby camps. We believe Wilson is destined for one of those hidden factories.'

'And the rest of his team?'

Pialowicz shrugged. 'About a week after Wilson is moved out, the rest of the team, including Schriever, Miethe, and Habermohl, is put on board a train heading for Prague, in Bohem, in Czechoslovakia. We have no idea why - nor do we know their final destination.' Pialowicz shrugged again, then raised his hands in the air. This is all I can tell you.'

'It's a helluva lot,' Bradley replied. 'More than you realize.'

Pialowicz smiled for the first time, then stood up and said, 'For me you will please find Kryzystina?'

'We will,' Bradley said.

He watched the young man walk out of the annex, sat there for a few minutes in silence, trying to calm his excitement, then followed him out of the church.

Too excited for coherent thought, he walked around the shattered town, letting the sun shine on his face, observing the appalling ruins and the troops and civilians moving around them, passing tanks buried in rubble and overturned, scorched trucks and eventually arriving at another church, which also was damaged. Stepping inside, he had to adjust to the gloom. Then he saw hundreds, maybe a thousand or more, refugees on the floor, lying on mattresses, surrounded by bits of

furniture, making coffee and soup on small paraffin burners, and attending to the wounded and the dying, for whom there was still no room in the remains of the hospital. Light beamed obliquely on them, illuminating motes of dust, covering them in a silvery haze that made them look slightly unreal.

It was a dream of life and death, of suffering and self-sacrifice, and Bradley had seen it too many times on his journey through France. Nevertheless, he was shaken, torn between faith and despair, and he turned away from it, from man's stupidity and nobility, and hurried back to the Church of St Pierre, to continue his work.

Chapter Thirty-One

Ernst's growing conviction that hell might be on earth was made concrete when, after his painful farewell to Ingrid, he returned to the Harz Mountains. For a week that seemed like a year, he divided his time between the nightmarish daily routine of the underground factories in Nordhausen and Wilson's flying saucer construction plant nearby, just outside the old walled town of Kahla.

Desperate to avoid the daily whippings, public hangings, and shots to the back of the head in the bunkers of Nordhausen, all designed to keep the V-1 and V-2 assembly lines rolling, he spent most of his time in the underground factory at Kahla, pretending to supervise Wilson, whom he knew had seen through his pretense and was quietly amused by it.

'You always seem so tense,' he said to Ernst. 'You must learn to relax.'

Ernst was fascinated by Wilson, fearing and admiring his old man's wisdom, but mostly drawn to his air of icy invincibility and fascinated by his plans and theories, which admitted no human doubts. He was completing his Feuerball, the remote-controlled antiradar device that looked like a flying saucer but was only three feet wide and was, so he said, a flawless prototype for the larger, pilot-controlled system still on the drawing board.

'If the Feuerball flies,' Wilson said, 'and responds to its commands, then the Kugelblitz will also fly when we have the time to complete it. In the meantime, every test that needs to be done can be done with the Feuerball. Very soon now I'll

try it against the Allied planes and see how it performs. I don't doubt that it will work admirably.'

Humiliated by Brigette, deprived of Ingrid and his children rarely able to forget that he had once been an engineer and now was merely observing the great achievements of Wernher von Braun and Wilson, Ernst leaned toward the latter, was ensnared in his web, and began to see his only hope for redemption in the dream of Antarctica.

'Not with Himmler,' Wilson confided. 'We can't trust him anymore. Personally, I never did for a second, but now I know I was right Kammler and Nebe are talking. They see Himmler a lot. They say he hasn't been the same since the first great defeat in Russia - and like Hitler, he's losing control and falling back upon fantasy. Astrologers and occultists, quack doctors and mesmerists - Himmler and Adolf Hitler, soulmates, will eventually go the same way.'

'I could have you shot for saying that.'

'But you won't,' Wilson said, 'because you too have witnessed Himmler's changing moods and know what he's like.' Which was true enough, after all. Ernst thought Himmler was going mad. The more the Allies advanced, the more distracted and crazy Himmler became, albeit in his quiet way. The Reichsfuhrer, the bureaucrat, the chicken farmer, was quietly falling to pieces. He had forgotten Neuschwabenland, had lost confidence in Wilson, and now pinned all his hopes on Rudolph Schriever's abortion of a flying saucer, on other obscure 'secret' weapons, and on his own demented plans for making a 'private' peace with the advancing Allies.

He was not the awesomely remote Reichsfuhrer of the past, but a pitiful creature.

Not a man to trust.

'Yet I steal from him,' Wilson said. 'I steal the gold from his mind of mud. I don't believe in his mysticism, in his blond young gods of war, in his anthroposophy and theosophy and Rosicrucianism, in his bizarre dreams of Atlantis and Lemuria and the undefiled Aryan. These are the dreams of madmen, the visions of the demented; yet they do hold a kernel of truth:

the transformation of man. I too believe in this - though not in the same sad way. I believe in man's evolutionary drive toward the Superman - and I believe in biological mutation and mental enhancement.'

They sometimes walked out of the tunnels, into the day's clear light, and gazed over the forested hills of Thuringia to the summer's horizon. There were no whippings there. No hangings. No beatings. But somewhere out there, beyond the horizon, the world was at war.

'Forget Himmler,' Wilson told Ernst. 'He's just another Nazi lunatic. He's raised muddled philosophy and primitive dreaming from the slime to the tortured blood and bone of an insane ideology. Blood and bone are acceptable - we're all here to feed evolution - but his philosophy of ice and fire, his pitiful dependence upon Horbiger, is enough to show us that he doesn't belong to the real world. We will go to Antarctica - but not to further an idiotic SS elite. We will go to further what you once had and lost: the belief in science as an absolute - the one hope for mankind. You can recapture that dream, Ernst - but only through me. Forget Himmler. Betray him - yes, you must! - and regain your faith where it matters: in a colony devoted to science and unimpeded by ephemeral, earthly concerns. It has already begun, Ernst. The factories and accommodations under the ice have been completed and already a few hundred people have been shipped there, to prepare for our coming. Cast off your past, come with me, and get back what you lost. All the rest is lost anyway.'

Which Ernst knew was the truth, because the truth was undeniable - the Allied advance through France, the Soviets forming a pincer movement, Berlin crumbling in flame and smoke, his wife and family endangered - even his mistress, his whore, defeating him and laughing at his retreat - everything now defeating him and mocking his youthful dreams - and so Wilson, who had once seemed so distant, now seemed very close to him.

'We need an escape route,' Wilson said, back in his workshop, over the Feuerball, his steady gray gaze focused

on the three-foot disc gleaming beneath him. 'We need to get from here to Kiel in the Baltic, and from there to our friends in Argentina, then from there to Antarctica. Nebe can help us in this. He's a vulture, but reliable. But to do it, he has to disappear, and that makes things difficult. You must do this for us, Ernst. You must help him disappear. When he disappears, when no one is looking for him, he can lead us to freedom. Do you understand, Ernst?'

'Yes,' Ernst said. 'I understand.'

'Arrange that and you can travel with me to Antarctica and become an even better engineer - no, a scientist! - than you'd ever imagined you could be. Do that and... you're free!'

Ernst left Wilson in Kahla and returned to Nordhausen where, in the great tunnels, while the conveyor belts rolled, the SS guards cracked their whips, spines snapped at the end of ropes, gunshots ricocheted in the bunkers, and the German genius for organization was completely perverted. He had chosen this life - at some point he had decided - and so he swallowed his remaining guilt, cast shame aside for all time, and traveled back to Berlin by train and car for another meeting with Kammler.

He returned to a nightmare.

There's been an attempt on the Fuhrer's life,' Kammler told him in his office in SS headquarters. 'Lieutenant-Colonel Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg, the chief of staff to the commander of the General Army Office in Berlin, planted a bomb in a briefcase during a meeting in Fuhrer Headquarters in Wolfsschanze. Miraculously, the Fuhrer escaped with minor burns, but now all hell has broken loose. A planned military revolt in the city by Stauffenberg's co-conspirators has already been put down, Stauffenberg, generals Beck and Olbricht, and their two adjutants have been executed by firing squad in the courtyard of the Bendlerstrasse, other conspirators have committed suicide, and Himmler has already set up the machinery for an investigation of the uprising and is drawing up a death list containing hundreds of names.'

'They were all involved in the attempted coup?'

'Highly unlikely,' Kammler replied. 'But in situations such as this, guilt or innocence is often a matter of luck. Hundreds of men are going to die, Captain Stoll, and General Nebe may be one of them.'

'Nebe?'

'Yes, He has no alibi. At the time of the assassination attempt, you were in Nordhausen and I was in the Pas de Calais, supervising the rocket launchings - but Nebe was right here in Berlin, and, since Himmler has never trusted him, he's gone down on the list.'

'Does he know this yet?'

'No. I caught a glimpse of the list in Himmler's office only an hour ago. He was still filling in names.'

'What do we do now?' Ernst asked, feeling sick with fear.

'It's the perfect excuse for Nebe to disappear,' Kammler said with a self-satisfied air. 'In order to plan our escape route from Kahla to Kiel and collect troops truthworthy enough, and willing, to be our armed escorts during the journey, Nebe was always going to have to go underground. Our problem before was that his disappearance would have raised too large a question mark. However, now, if he disappears, it'll be assumed that he simply fled in fear of his life - as so many will. So now he will disappear. He'll go underground in Thuringia. We'll protect him there until all this fuss has died down - if necessary, I can confirm that he was executed by my men - and then, when the dust has settled, he can surface with new papers and quietly start organizing what we need for our escape before the Soviets or Allies reach us.'

'Excellent,' Ernst murmured, his thoughts clogged with dread. 'But who will... ?'

'I will arrange it,' Kammler said. 'I have the freedom of movement necessary. Meanwhile, you'll report directly to Himmler and become his right hand, thus ensuring that you remain above suspicion.'

Still haunted by the memory of the infamous Night of the Long Knives, and aware that a similar nightmare was about

to be put into motion, Ernst felt sick to his stomach and said 'I really would rather not—'

But Kammler stepped up to him and stared icily at him. 'You will do it, Captain Stoll. You will do whatever he asks of you. You will be his right hand, his loyal subject, no matter what is asked of you. Do you understand, Captain?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said.

He reported to the Reichsfuhrer. The nightmare closed in upon him. The death list was completed and the rounding up began and the days and nights after were filled with beatings and entreaties and roaring guns and blood-soaked, riddled corpses. They were shot in their homes, in floodlit courtyards, in their beds and in cars and in fields where the wind howled and bent the grass.

Ernst had to be part of it, prove his worth, show his loyalty, and he managed it by denying it, by pretending it wasn't happening, or by convincing himself that those begging and screaming deserved what they got. The innocent died with the guilty, the same way, without mercy; and the ghastly climax was held in the great courtroom of the Kammergericht, where, for the cine-cameras, the most notable of the defendants were humiliated even as they were sentenced.

They were brought in in old clothes, haggard, unkempt, some deprived of their false teeth, all forced to hold their beltless trousers up, and then, when sentenced, were led out of the courthouse and into Plotzensee Prison where, in a small room, they were stripped to the waist and hanged from meathooks with nooses made of piano wire.

Ernst and his fellow officers were obliged to look on, all sweating in the bright lights required for the cine-cameras that were taking moving pictures of the stripped bodies writhing in agony.

That's when it ended, when Ernst was reprieved, and he returned to his bed in the SS barracks and slept the sleep of the damned, haunted by nightmares.

Meanwhile, the western front had collapsed, the fate of France had been sealed a few days before when General

Patton's divisions poured through the gap at Avranches, and the Allied bombing of Berlin was now reaching new heights of appalling efficiency. The ruins stretched as far as the eye could see; the sky was a constant pall of smoke.

Ernst was called to Kammler's office and went drugged from lack of sleep. He was informed that General Nebe had gone underground in Kahla, in Thuringia. Nebe had been listed officially as missing, possibly dead in the recent mass executions, when many bodies had been buried unnamed. Ernst was to return to Kahla, to keep a close eye on Wilson. He was to leave the next morning.

Feeling haunted and lost, dispossessed of his soul, he returned to the barracks and started packing... and then heard the wailing of the air-raid sirens.

The noise seemed to cut through him, lacerating his stripped nerves, and something collapsed inside him, the final remnants of his will. He lay on the bed and closed his eyes and begged the planes to turn back. Naturally, they ignored him, were soon above him, making the room shake, and then the darkness outside erupted and filled up with hellish noise. He covered his ears with his hands. It didn't help at all. The noise seemed to fill his head, a vast symphony of destruction, and his bed shook and rattled as a brilliant light washed over him and the men in the other beds cursed and jumped up and ran for the door.

Ernst hurried out through clouds of dust, felt waves of heat, saw fire and smoke, then was struck by a dreadful premonition that could not be denied. He thought of Ingrid and the children, of that old house in Wannsee, and sensed, even as he visualized it, that something had happened.

It was there and would not budge - the conviction that they were dead - and he commandeered an SS car and drove out of the barracks and raced through the blazing, erupting city, heading for Wannsee. This time he found no respite - the pattern of bombing was widening - and a cloud of smoke and dust covered the river and the houses around it. Ernst glanced up at the sky, saw the crisscrossing searchlights, the Allied

bombers as thick as flies in the paler light of the full moon and stars. It was a lovely August night - only mankind had made it hellish - and as he drove through the gateway of the house in Wannsee, he knew that he had been part of it.

He squealed to a halt in a cloud of smoke, climbed out into scorching heat, and rushed toward the flames that licked up from the rubble. It had been a direct hit - most of the house had collapsed - and he was beaten back by the heat. He fell to his knees in hot ash and looked up at the flames licking over the exposed beams and beating at the broken walls. Then he screamed like an animal, out of the deepest well of his old self, as another wall collapsed, causing more geysering sparks and smoke, and he covered his face with his hands and shed the last of his tears.

Ingrid and his children were dead.

Now he had only Wilson.

Chapter Thirty-Two

A V-1 rocket had been found intact. It lay near an enormous bomb crater in a field not twenty yards from the southern wall of the immense main building of the launching site in the Pas de Calais in liberated northern France.

'It's nearly twenty-six feet long,' explained US Army Major General Ryan McArthur, 'has a wingspan of about seventeen point five feet, a body diameter of approximately two point five feet, and a launch weight of four thousand eight hundred and sixty pounds. Its warhead weighs eighteen hundred and seventy pounds and its fuel, twelve hundred pounds. She's some baby, right?'

'Right,' Bradley said, suitably impressed. He had not seen McArthur since being introduced to him by Gladys Kinder in London, three months ago. Now, as he followed McArthur across the bomb-cratered field near the launch site and its silos, he couldn't stop thinking of her.

'And this,' McArthur said, stopping where an even bigger rocket, approximately twice the size of the V-l, was being hoisted into the air by a British-controlled Straho crane, 'is, we think, one of the enormous sons of bitches that devastated parts of Chiswick and Epping a few days back.'

'The V-2,' Bradley said.

Yeah, we think so. And this mother is nearly fifty feet long, has a body diameter of five point five feet, a weight, empty, of seven thousand-odd pounds, and a fuel weight of twenty thousand one hundred and fifty pounds, compared to the V-1's meager twelve hundred. How'dya like that on your head?'

'A homburg hat will do fine, thanks.'

McArthur laughed and slapped Bradley on the shoulder. They stood side by side on the cold, windswept field, watching the enormous rocket being hoisted up off the ground by the crane, prior to be taken scmewhere safer for a thorough examination by a team of Allied scientists. Bradley had driven here from Caen, after the recent capture of Antwerp. Major General McArthur's invitation had surprised him.

In fact, while Bradley had been interrogating people in Caen, McArthur's ALSOS agents had been swarming all over the liberated areas of France, particularly the Pas de Calais and the Cherbourg peninsula, where, it had been discovered, most of the V-1 and V-2 rocket launch sites were located. Over the past two days, then, since Bradley's arrival, McArthur had been taking him on a tour of the major captured rocket sites, which were, in their sheer size and design, something more than impressive. This particular site was located on the edge of the forest of Eperlecques, three miles north of the village of Watten, on the canal network between the sea and the Belgian border.

'It's our belief,' McArthur now said as he walked Bradley away from the V-2 rocket and back toward the site's huge main building, 'that this was intended to be one of the largest rocket sites of all. Mercifully it was put out of action by the repeated bombing raids of the B-17 Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force of the good ol' US of A.' He stopped a good distance from the towering, concrete-bunker-styled building in front of them. 'Just look at it,' he said. That was the reception building for V-2 trains arriving from Germany. It contained offices and staff accommodations. Over there,' he said, waving his right hand, 'is the railway station, with the lines two feet below floor level and the roof five feet thick - though it has been penetrated by one of our bombs that didn't explode. Over there,' he continued, pointing past the damaged wall of the enormous bunker to a tower rising out of the windblown grass, 'is the launch control, approximately sixty-three feet by seventy-three feet and fifteen feet high - no small silo, believe me - and the

launch silo, which is thirty by fifty, though now filled with water.'

He led Bradley into the enormous main building. Constructed from reinforced concrete, it was three hundred feet long, one hundred and thirty-eight feet wide, and had work levels going two hundred and sixty feet belowground.

'We believe it was their intention,' McArthur said, 'to construct a building that could be demolished only by a bomb so large that it'd be impossible for an airplane to carry it. That's why the ceiling above you,' he said, pointing up to the eighty-foot-high roof, 'is made from reinforced concrete twenty-three feet thick. Theoretically speaking, to pierce it you'd need a bomb weighing about twelve tons and striking the ceiling at Mach One, the speed of sound - but we don't have that yet.'

Bradley looked up. Above the northern entrance, at the junction between the ceiling and the north wall, an explosion had blown off a large piece of concrete and forced out a mess of steel reinforcing bars. A second explosion, near the center of the roof, had detached another large piece of concrete and caused a fine web of cracks.

'Something obviously damaged it,' he observed.

But McArthur shook his head. 'Not our normal bombing raids,' he said. 'In fact, what you're looking at is very minor damage, right?'

'Right'

'Well, it wasn't caused by our beloved Flying Fortresses during the course of normal operations. In fact, to test the strength of the structure, after we'd captured it, we deliberately tried to destroy it with a couple of twenty-two thousand-pound Grandslam bombs- and this is all the damage we managed to inflict This goddamned place is damned near impregnable - and so are most of the others.'

'How was it constructed?' Bradley asked him as they walked around the enormous, empty, silent building, looking up at its towering walls and high ceiling.

'Forty-nine-thousand tons of steel were needed to build that roof alone,' McArthur said. 'According to intelligence reports,

based on the interrogation of locals, hundreds of jacks were used to raise the roof slowly, inches at a time, with the walls being built up beneath it, as it was raised. The enormous amounts of steel, cement, sand, and gravel needed were brought in from Watten on that standard-gauge railway track you saw outside. So far we've estimated that the site took six months to construct and used about thirty-five-thousand slave workers, who came from the two prison camps located about a mile artd a half from here. At any one time there were always three to four thousand men at work, which went on around the clock on twelve-hour shifts. The slave labor, or Sklavenarbeiter, was controlled by armed members of the black-shirted SS Totenkopfverbande, who didn't hesitate to execute anyone too ill or exhausted to work. This place, then, is an extraordinary achievement... but the price... Jesus Christ! You don't want to think about it! Come on, let's get out of here.'

They went outside again, into the shadow of the towering wall, and were whipped by the wind howling across the bleak, bomb-blasted fields, where once livestock had roamed. Now the fields were covered with soldiers, British, French, Canadian, and American, as well as concrete silos and the usual debris of war: armored half-tracks, overturned trucks, the blackened remains of burned-out tanks, melted tires, and scorched earth.

'I have to think about it,' Bradley said as McArthur walked him toward his parked jeep. 'I have to fix firmly in my head just what they were capable of.'

'The Nazis?'

'Right. When you hear the stories you can't believe it - they're too incredible to be true - vast underground factories hidden deep in the mountains; the assembly lines run night and day with slave labor - and then you see places like that, the sheer enormity, the work behind it - and you have to accept that they could do it and that he must be part of it.'

'Wilson?'

'Yeah. He's always been a man to hide things. He hid his

own life, hid his work in Iowa, hid his hangars in the wilds of Illinois, then went to hide himself in Nazi Germany, to create God knows what. We saw those rockets, right? We know how advanced they are. And even though that's frightening enough, they're just the tip of the iceberg. Wilson's in the Harz Mountains. We don't know exactly where. We only hear about vast underground factories and the use of slave labor. Was it possible? I didn't think so. Not until I came here. Now, having seen what you've shown me, I know that it is... The Harz Mountains... Factories hidden inside the mountains... Yes, they could do it... And that bastard is using it.'

'Why?'

'I don't know... and that's exactly what frightens me.'

McArthur smiled gently, patted him on the shoulder, then climbed into the driver's seat in the jeep and cocked a finger invitingly. When Bradley had climbed in beside him, he turned on the ignition, drove carefully around the bomb craters, and said, Thank God, Paris has been liberated - a few days there will do you good.'

'I don't want to go there,' Bradley replied. 'I don't have the time.'

'I think you'll make the time,' McArthur said with a lopsided grin, "cause Gladys Kinder is there. Now, do we go there or not?'

'Faster!' Bradley said. 'Faster?

Almost convulsed with laughter, McArthur maneuvered around the last of the bomb craters, bounced off the high verge, then drove along the straight, tree-lined road that would take them to Paris.

The bar in the Ritz Hotel in the place Vendome was packed with British Tommies, American GIs, young men and women wearing armbands of the French Forces of the Interior - FFI - or Red Cross, and more than a few journalists, including the famous, and famously loud, bearded American novelist who, five days before Paris was freed, had entered Rambouillet where he had, according to what he was now loudly stating to

those crowded around his bottle-strewn table, acted as an unofficial liaison officer between the 5th Infantry Division and the French partisan patrols. The roar of the conversation that came out of the swirling cigar and cigarette smoke was punctuated by the tinkle of glasses, the popping of champagne corks, the metallic clatter of M-1 army rifles, tommy guns joggling hand grenades, and other weapons; and Gladys Kinder, looking flushed, was leaning sideways in her chair to take hold of Bradley's hand and tell him, 'It'd be a lot cheaper in the correspondents' mess in the Scribe Hotel, but this is, after all, a once-in-a-lifetime event and the Ritz is the only place to experience it'

In this atmosphere of celebration, Bradley was almost sorry to have missed the previous day's victory march from the Arc de Triomphe and along the Champs-Elysees and on to Notre-Dame, but being here so unexpectedly with Gladys was doing his heart good.

'I'll never forget yesterday as long as I live,' Gladys continued while stroking Bradley's sweaty palm. She wasn't embarrassed by the presence of Major General Ryan McArthur, who in any case was looking around the crowded bar with a broad grin on his face. There were thousands of people lining the Champs-Elysees all the way up to the etoile. General Leclerc's division, including elements of the US 82nd Division, marched between the cheering thousands, to repeated shouts of 'Viva la France!' De Gaulle, on the reviewing stand in the place de la Concorde, surrounded by other dignitaries and a couple of US generals, was stiff as a board and proud as punch. And after that, when the parade disbanded, it was hugs and kisses all afternoon, with God knows how many glasses of Calvados and champagne and wine - and I'm still not hung over!'

'It's the excitement,' Bradley said. 'You'll probably be as high as a kite for days, then come down with a bang.'

'We'll all come down with a bang when this war ends. That's a terrible truth.'

'It sure has its excitements,' Bradley replied with no great

deal of pride, thinking of the death and destruction he had witnessed on the march through France, yet unable to deny that he had never felt more alive than he had felt these past few weeks. 'I can't deny that. But right now, the most exciting thing in the world is seeing you again, Gladys.'

'Aw, shucks,' she said, beaming, then kissed him on the cheek. 'You sure know how to please a gal!'

McArthur turned back to them, raised his glass of Calvados, and said solemnly, 'Ladies and gentlemen, lovebirds, a toast to the liberation of Paris.'

'I'll drink to that,' Bradley said, raising his glass.

'And so will I,' Gladys said, touching his glass with hers.

'You've been drinking to it for two days solid,' McArthur observed, 'but you're looking good on it. So, let's drink!' They all emptied their glasses. As McArthur was refilling them from the bottle on the table, a drunken young member of the FFI kicked his chair back, stood up, and raised his glass above his flushed face. 'Vivent les Americains!' he declared in a ringing tone. He tossed down his champagne in one long gulp while the others at his table cheered and various British, Canadian, and Dutch troops booed and catcalled. The young FFI man, with a broad, sweaty grin, bowed theatrically to the packed room and fell back into his chair.

'Victory is sweet,' McArthur observed, 'but can lead to more fighting.'

'Let's hope not,' Gladys said. 'So what have you two been up to since we last saw each other? Still in pursuit of rocket bombs and mad American scientists?'

'We're not allowed to discuss it,' McArthur said, 'particularly to journalists.'

This journalist has a personal interest in the case. Besides, this conversation's off the record. I just wanna know, kids.'

Bradley grinned. 'McArthur here's been showing me the V-1 and V-2 rocket launch sites, which have already been photographed for the newspaper - so no big secrets there.'

'And what did you think?'

'I think the Krauts are more advanced than we'd imagined

- and in more ways than one. I think that no matter how big the project, they'd know how to hide it.'

'Such as Wilson's project, for instance.'

'You got it, Gladys. Bright girl. If Wilson's trying to build a new kind of aircraft, we're talking about a big project - but no matter how big it is, I now think the Krauts could keep it well hidden.'

'Where?'

Bradley glanced at McArthur, who simply smiled and nodded. 'Underground,' Bradley said, turning his gaze back on Gladys. 'In great tunnels and factories hacked out of the interior of mountains. I think that's where our man is.'

'Where?'

'You've already asked that.'

'I mean, precisely.'

Bradley shrugged. 'We don't know exactly, but we think it's somewhere in the Harz Mountains, probably south, in the area of Thuringia.'

'And is that where you plan to go, Mike?'

'Yes,' Bradley replied.

'You're going to follow the advance?'

'Yep. As far as I can go.'

'With the fighting troops?'

'Yes.'

'I don't want you getting yourself killed.'

'I'll try not to,' Bradley said.

Gladys stared steadily at him, her face showing concern. He was touched and wanted to kiss her lips, but was too shy to do so, because McArthur, filling up their glasses again, was grinning broadly at both of them. 'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said, 'let's drink up and fall down!'

They touched glasses and drank as a combo started playing a Cole Porter medley. The American novelist, all belly and beard and drunken bellowing, stood up and lurched out of the bar, trailed by his admirers. A French woman crossed the room, giving address cards to the men. She stopped in front of Bradley, glanced at Gladys and McArthur, smiled and gave

McArthur a card and said, 'Call anytime,' then gracefully passed on. McArthur studied the card thoughtfully, slipped it into his shirt pocket, and said, 'A night of love in Paris at a price. To the victor the spoils.' Gladys chuckled and McArthur grinned, his eyes scanning the noisy room, then he raised his eyebrows and said, Well, well! We have an unexpected visitor!'

Bradley looked up in surprise as his urbane, friendly adversary, Lieutenant-Colonel Wentworth-King of SOE, London, emerged from the crowd around the bar, carrying a glass in his right hand, a swagger stick under his left arm, and looking dashing in his British army uniform and peaked cap. He stopped at their table, grinned, and said sardonically, 'I thought I recognized you, Bradley! What on earth are you doing here?'

'Just celebrating the liberation of Paris. Nothing more, nothing less.'

'I'm sure ... And in the presence of Major General Ryan McArthur, of the Manhattan atomic bomb project - accidentally, no doubt.' He smiled guilelessly at McArthur and said, 'Good to see you again, sir. Mind if I join you?'

'Pull up a chair,' McArthur said. 'It's party time in the Ritz.'

When Wentworth-King had taken a chair, Bradley introduced him to Gladys. 'Ah!' he exclaimed softly, shaking her hand. 'Gladys Kinder, the well-known American journalist. I've read your articles in Collier's and elsewhere. Your work is spread far and wide.'

What I write is widely syndicated,' Gladys explained. 'I don't really write that much.'

'I enjoyed your regular London column,' Wentworth-King said. 'It made me feel quite heroic. Not that you mentioned me personally, but you were kind to the British.'

'I've won a heart,' Gladys said to Bradley. Where have you been hiding this lovely man? You must invite him more often.'

Wentworth-King beamed and McArthur chuckled while Bradley tried to hide the spasm of resentment that unexpectedly shook him. Wentworth-King was charming his lady and he didn't like that.

'So what are you doing in Paris?' he asked Wentworth-King, after throwing an angry glance at Gladys.

'I came in this morning,' Wentworth-King replied, 'to set up a base of operations and grill a few Frogs. Still chasing your rocket engineers, are you?'

'Yes,' Bradley said tersely.

Then you might be interested in knowing that the Russians have captured Blizna, in Poland, including Himmler's mock village and disguised rocket proving ground.'

'Any reports on anything unusual?'

'So far, no. But then the Russians don't talk a lot. We only know that since it's a proving ground, they certainly found a few rockets.'

'A great help,' McArthur said.

Wentworth-King grinned, unperturbed, then smiled charmingly at Gladys. She returned his smile, then, catching Bradley's accusing glance, hid her face in her glass.

'Can I take it,' Wentworth-King said, returning his attention to Bradley and McArthur, 'that you chaps are still convinced that Wilson is working on something more advanced than the V-1 and V-2 rockets?'

'I'm convinced of it,' Bradley said.

Well, just to prove that I'm a decent chap at heart - no hard feelings and so forth - you might be interested in knowing that the most unusual reports have recently been coming into SOE headquarters in London.'

'Unusual?'

'Yes. A few days before I left to come here, we started receiving reports from Allied pilots, saying that when flying over Germany they were harassed repeatedly by strange lights that tailed their aircraft and appeared to make their engines malfunction.'

'Strange lights?' McArthur asked.

'Yes,' Wentworth-King said, 'Lights... or balls of fire. One report described an encounter with a, quote, enormous ball of fire, unquote, that made the aircraft's engine cut out. Another report talked about ten small balls of reddish fire that

were, according to the report, flying in formation, at amazing speed. In both cases, the so-called balls of fire, or "Foo fighters," as they've been dubbed, reportedly flew away when fired upon, but usually returned afterward. The balls appear to have been systematically tailing the aircraft.'

'What areas?'

'All over Germany, but mostly in the vicinity north of Nuremberg.'

'Have the reports been analyzed yet?' McArthur asked.

'Yes,' Wentworth-King said. 'And according to analysis, if the so-called balls of fire weren't some kind of atmospheric or electrical phenomenon, they could have been solid objects that were glowing red-hot. And if that is the case, they'd have been no more than three or four feet in diameter, remote-controlled, and, most oddly, shaped like discs or...' He paused to shrug his shoulders and raise his hands in a gesture of disbelief, 'like saucers ... flying saucers.'

To contain his excitement Bradley stared stonily at Gladys, who simply smiled back sweetly, then turned to Wentworth-King and said, 'Isn't this information confidential? Or is it just me you trust?'

Wentworth-King was amused. The information's already been published in the British press, so I think it's okay to discuss it now. Not that I've got anything else to add - I merely pass the information on to my American friend here, Bradley, whose imagination is clearly more vivid than mine. And now, alas, duty calls and I have to be off.' He finished his drink, stood up, and offered Gladys his hand. 'It was an absolute pleasure meeting you,' he said. 'We must do it again sometime. You'll find details of our Paris HQ tomorrow in the correspondents' mess in the Scribe Hotel. Do give me a call.'

'I will,' Gladys said.

'Au revoir,' Wentworth-King said, kissing her hand and letting it go with what seemed like great reluctance. 'And to you, Major General,' he said finally. 'And you as well, Bradley. No doubt I'll see you when I see you. Travel safely. And good luck.'

'Same to you,' Bradley said curtly. He didn't look at Gladys again until the urbane lieutenant-colonel had left the room, skipping around a uniformed member of the French 2nd Armored Division and a British lance corporal who were arguing heatedly about something or other. When he had gone, Bradley asked McArthur, 'Well, what do you think?'

'I think it's Wilson. What's north of Nuremberg?'

'Thuringia... the Harz Mountains,' Bradley said, feeling more excited, though still angry with Gladys.

'Exactly,' McArthur said. We better run a check on those reports and see what we come up with. Right now, however, I have to get back to the ALSOS office and see what's cooking there, which should make you two lovebirds happy, though you don't look it right now.' He stood up with a broad grin on his face, finished his drink, then gave them the thumbs-up and left the bar.

'Alone at last with my man,' Gladys said, 'but he's no longer smiling.'

'I'm fine,' Bradley said. 'I'm just surprised you didn't go chasing after that upstanding British officer, Wentworth-King, who so clearly charmed you.'

'Oh, ho!' she responded, smiling. The fires of jealousy! I'm having a wonderful day!' She reached out for his hand, squeezed it affectionately, and said, 'A lady my age is easily charmed, Mike, and I do like to flirt. But come on! I was only doing it to tease you - because I want you to want me. Do you want me? Do you want me right now? Here and now, in this grand hotel?'

'What's your room like?' Bradley asked her.

'Come up and see,' she said.

They made love under the pink satin coverlet of the twin bed in a dove-gray room filled with elegant Empire furniture and overlooking the rear gardens of the Ministry of Justice. They no longer made love with the vigor of young people, but with the tenderness of two souls united as one, bonded by common experience and a lack of illusions. Bradley took to her body

like a lemming to the sea, returning to that place he could fondly call his own, and received all the pleasure he could obtain by simply giving her pleasure. All his love for her returned, pouring out of him like a river, leaving him cleansed and renewed, at peace in her arms. He then slept in those arms, as she slept in his, and when they awakened they made love again, even less vigorously, though as tenderly, as before, then dressed and went for a walk through the darkening city.

'I love Paris,' Gladys told him. 'It's a city made for lovers. I loved it before the war, when I used to visit it a lot from London, and I nearly always thought of you when I walked its streets - my married man, my secret, platonic lover, far away in America. Finally I've got you here with me. Isn't it nice?'

'Yes,' Bradley said. 'Very nice.'

Already familiar with the city, Gladys led him by the hand down the passage that ran alongside the Ritz, from the place Vendome to the rue Gambon, pressing her nose to the elegant shop windows, which she could see in the moonlit darkness, and showing him all the things she would buy before leaving Paris. She took him into the rue de Rivoli, around the place de la Concorde, then along the broad, tree-lined avenue of the Champs-Elysees, which in the moonlight was wonderful.

'It'll all be over soon,' Gladys said.

'Yeah, I guess so,' Bradley replied.

'Do you think you'll be able to find Wilson?'

Bradley sighed. 'I don't know.'

'If you don't find him, you'll go crazy.'

'I just might at that. Of course now that I've got you, it won't be too bad - but I do want to finish it.'

Gladys chuckled softly and slid her arm around his waist. 'You've only got me for the moment,' she said. 'When will you move on?'

'Tomorrow,' Bradley said. 'I have to find myself an army. Probably General Bradley's 1st Army, since they're heading for the Rhine. And you?'

'I might see you in Berlin.'

'And when it ends? Will you return to America or stay here in Europe?'

'I'm not too sure. I mean, I'll have to think about it. I love living here - I mean in London, of course - and I don't really have anything to go home for. I've been gone a long time, Mike. Maybe too long now.'

She had led him off the Champs-Elysees, down past the Grand Palais, and now they were coming to the river Seine its water stippled by moonlight, curving away toward the distant Eiffel Tower, silhouetted against the sky. Tracer bullets were looping upward around the tower like a fireworks display.

'The German planes must be coming,' Gladys said. They won't give up that easily.'

Bradley heard the big guns firing, then a series of explosions, and saw that familiar red glow filling the sky, a good distance beyond the Eiffel Tower, in what he thought were the suburbs.

'They're going to have to give a lot up,' he said, 'so they better get used to it.'

Gladys smiled and tugged at his hand, leading him across the Cours la Reine, then back along the river, toward where they had come from.

'Say, Mike, do you really love me?'

'Sure, Gladys, you know I do.'

Then how can you even think of giving me up? What kind of man are you?'

'What do you mean, Gladys?'

'Give me a reason for going back.'

'What reason?'

She sighed in exasperation. 'Goddammit, Mike, you're dumb!'

'You think so?'

'Yeah.'

'Would you marry a dumb man?'

'Yeah.'

'And would you let him take you back to America?'

'Yes, dammit, I would. Have you proposed?'

'I think so.'

'I accept. Yes, I do!'

She turned into him, her hair blown by the river's wind, and he kissed her, clung to her, choked up and inspired. Then she stepped away, gave him a smile, and raised his hand to her lips - but she didn't quite make it.

Her back was turned to the river, to that fireworks display in the distance, but before she could raise his hand, the river rushed up to swallow her. Bradley saw the geysering water, a flash of light, a stream of smoke; then heard the explosion, the plane passing overhead, and felt himself being picked up and slammed down into silence.

The silence became a ringing - a jarring sibilance in his ears. His lips were pressed to the pavement, so he rolled onto his back and saw Gladys covered in the blood that was spurting out of her head. He tried to sit up and collapsed, looked at Gladys, saw the blood, groaned aloud, not in pain, but in despair, then passed out again.

He was awakened by the sound of a siren and the screeching of brakes. Then someone told him he was going to be okay and helped him sit upright.

They were rolling Gladys onto a stretcher and her head was all bandaged.

'Oh, God!' Bradley groaned.

He clambered to his feet, swayed dizzily, found his balance, then hurried forward as the men with the Red Cross armbands hoisted Gladys up on the stretcher to put her into the ambulance. Her head was bandaged, her leg was in a splint, and she was covered in blood.

'Jesus, no!' Bradley said, then reached out to touch her, but was foiled when the Red Cross men slid the stretcher into the ambulance. Bradley, shocked in more ways than one, started clambering up after her. When he was in the back, kneeling beside the stretcher, Gladys looked up and smiled at him.

'Hi, partner!' she said.

Bradley picked up her hand, passionately kissed it, his tears

flowing, then one of the medics clambered in beside him and said, 'She'll be okay.'

'What?' Bradley asked, stupidly.

'She'll be okay,' the medic repeated. He looked about eighteen years old and had the smile of an angel. 'She got hit on the temple with a piece of the pavement and fractured her leg - apart from that, she's okay.'

Bradley looked down at Gladys. She was soaked in her own blood. The bandage around her head was bloody and she was as white as the sheet they had wrapped around her. 'But the blood...' he began, fascinated and frightened by the sight of it, though Gladys was smiling.

The medic slammed the ambulance door closed, then placed his hand on Bradley's shoulder. 'Steady on there,' he said. 'We're taking off. I don't want you to fall on her.' The ambulance roared into life and moved off with a jerk. The medic grinned and kept Bradley steady, then also studied the blood covering Gladys.

'She was hit on the temple,' he explained. That always causes a lotta blood - but it's deceptive, believe me. She'll only need about two stitches and then she'll be right as rain. As for the leg, it's only broken. It may hurt, but it ain't serious. She'll be in a French hospital for a week or two, then she'll be up and about. No problem at all, bud.'

Bradley almost wept with relief, then was filled with exultation. He bent over to kiss Gladys on the forehead, on the bloody bandage, then held her hand in his lap and smiled like a happy fool. Gladys, getting her color back fast, smiled broadly and winked at him.

'You two are married?' the medic asked.

'Yeah,' Bradley said. 'Right.'

He stayed with Gladys all the way to the hospital, all the way to her bed, ensured that she was tucked in like a baby, then kissed her good-bye.

'I love you,' he said. 'It's as simple as that, Gladys. If I don't see you in Berlin, I'll catch you in London. I still have your address.'

'You take care,' she told him.

He nodded and kissed her again, then walked out of the ward, treading lightly and not looking back because his tears would embarrass her.

'Hallelujah!' he whispered.

Chapter Thirty-Three

Wilson awakened at dawn as he had planned, immediately switched on the light, then looked around his spartan room. Apart from clothing and technical books, it contained no personal items. Like the rest of the complex, his room was located underground, but it had at least been built into the breast of a hill and therefore offered a magnificent view of the forested valley. Wilson lay on for a brief while, letting himself feel slightly excited, then swung his legs off the bed, worked his bare feet into his slippers, and walked across to the desk. A red circle had been drawn around today's date: February 16, 1945. Wilson picked up a pen and scored through the date, then dropped the pen and went to the window to look over the valley. At the other side of the valley was the old walled town of Kahla, but Wilson's modest research complex, really an underground launching site, was well hidden in this hill, within its sheltering pine trees. Here, today, he would supervise the first test flight of the Kugelblitz, which had progressed much quicker than expected.

He did not feel nervous, because he had nothing to fear. The Kugelblitz was merely an enlarged version of the antiradar Feuerball - and the latter had been tested last year, to everyone's satisfaction.

From August to December, Wilson had sent the three-foot-wide, saucer-shaped, remote-controlled Feuerballs hurtling skyward from this underground launching site near Kahla, to harass the Allied aircraft, cause their engines to malfunction, and fly out of range before they could be attacked. Some of

the Feuerballs had blown up in flight, others had malfunctioned in various ways, but each failure had been examined as minutely as possible and its causes corrected in the following prototype. Eventually, by November, Wilson had had nightly launches for a month without any failures. Then, confident that his design was foolproof, he had canceled further launches ordered the destruction, by high explosives, of the remainder of the prototypes, and begun applying the same principles and designs to his nearly completed, pilot-controlled larger model, the Kugelblitz.

But now his time was running out.

According to what Ernst Stoll had told him, news of the relentless Allied advances on all fronts had even reached the ears of the inmates of the concentration camps that were supplying Nordhausen Central Works and Kahla with forced labor - in fact, now sabotage by the prisoners was a very real threat. Indeed, only three months earlier, in November, a large number of prisoners from the Nordhausen underground camp had been arrested, shut up in the bunkers, and forced by torture to confess to sabotage. A group of those who had confessed had even made a failed bid to escape, which only hastened their deaths. All in all, according to Stoll, about three hundred prisoners had been executed - some hanged in the roll-call ground, some in the factory corridors, and some shot in the back of the head while still in the bunkers.

A foul business, Wilson thought, and one not likely to encourage the prisoners to be merciful when the Allies came to their rescue.

Thinking of that possibility only reminded him again that his time was running out. Even more pleased, then, that the Kugelblitz was to be tested this morning, he pressed the bell to call his breakfast and went for his shower in the adjoining bathroom. He returned to find his meal on the table, placed there by his servant who, like all the rest of the workers, came from one of the camps. It was his usual frugal breakfast of cereal and fruit juice, and when he had finished it, he left his room and went down to the hangar.

Ernst Stoll, who now had the eyes of the walking dead but otherwise looked handsome in his SS uniform, was already waiting for him in his glass-walled office, looking out at the hangar.

'You've come straight from Berlin?' Wilson asked, surprised. 'You must have traveled all night!'

'No, Wilson, I didn't I arrived here yesterday evening with General Kammler, but spent the night in Nordhausen Central Works.'

'Kammler's still at Nordhausen?'

'Yes. He's just checking things out. He'll be here on time.'

'I haven't been to the Central Works since Christmas. How are things there?'

'Busy,' Ernst said. There are now about forty thousand political prisoners and civilians working there. And Camp Dora and the many other subcamps in the area are expanding tremendously. Production of the rockets proceeds at full speed, the underground passages are being enlarged, as requested by Himmler, and four new factories are being undertaken: one as a refinery, another for liquid oxygen, and two for Junkers jet engines.'

'So much ambition at the end of the road!'

'It keeps Himmler happy. Bear in mind that the original plans were drawn up in much better days - and if we don't stick to them now, we'll arouse great suspicion. Besides, it's good experience for where we're going. For instance, in the town of Bleicherode, about twenty kilometers from the Kohnstein Mountain, there's an old potassium mine where we'd already begun to bore new tunnels, galleries, and accommodations at a depth of seven hundred meters, with the idea of reaching sixteen hundred kilometers. The plan was to tunnel through to another potassium mine nearby, in Neubleicherode, and there install more factories for work on the V-2 and smaller antiaircraft rockets. Not far away, in a cliff face near the town of Lehestein, a tunnel is still being bored, intended to end in a large cave in which we were going to install a liquid oxygen plant and quarters for rocket crews... and so forth. Naturally

we no longer have use for these places, but they keep the work force busy, allay the suspicions of Himmler's Nordhausen spies, and incidentally prove that what we're planning for Neuschwabenland can actually be accomplished.'

'And today, after testing the Kugelblitz, well start planning to leave. How much time do we have left?'

'Not much,' Ernst replied, gazing out of Wilson's glass-walled office at the large, pilot-controlled flying saucer that was resting on a hydraulic steel platform in the center of Kahla's biggest underground hangar.

The saucer looked exactly like the Schriever saucer, except for the smaller, less visible, but infinitely more powerful, adjustable jets around its rim, as well as its more seamless surface. This was made from Luftschwamm, or porous metal, thus allowing the saucer to fly at least as fast as the much smaller Feuerball, and probably faster. The saucer's top body rose up to the central pilot's dome, made of unbreakable Perspex.

The war is being lost and a lot of our leaders are breaking down,' Ernst continued. The Fuhrer's permanently on drugs supplied by his quack, Dr Morell, and is also rumored to be suffering from syphilis and going insane. Himmler spends most of his time in his sanatorium in Hohenlychen, one hundred and twenty kilometers north of Berlin, where he talks to his astrologer and discusses the possibility of arranging a private surrender to the Allies. I myself was visiting the rebuilt Peenemiinde in October when Marshall Goring was shown a successful launching of a V-2 rocket. Goring's eyes were tired and his face was very puffy. During the rocket launching, he swallowed a lot of pills; then he pulled his pistol from his holster and kept tossing it in the air and catching it, as if in a trance, until his aide-de-camp gently took it away from him.'

Never before had Wilson heard Stoll talk with such weary contempt about his masters. Now he knew that he could finally get the SS captain to do whatever he wanted.

Wilson was pleased: Disillusioned romantics always made the most fanatical converts.

'And how goes the war?' he asked.

'Most of France and Belgium are liberated. Soviet divisions have taken Warsaw. Italy is virtually lost. Most of Germany is in ruins. Our air force has no fuel. Our industry has been wiped out by Allied bombs. Our rocket attacks came too late.'

'It's only a matter of months, then?'

'Yes, Wilson. No more than that.'

'And Kammler?'

'Since last July, when the attempt on the Fuhrer's life turned him against the Wehrmacht and encouraged him to place the whole rocket program in the hands of the SS, meaning Kammler, our recently promoted brigadier has been making an admirable public display of crisscrossing the country to take charge of the rocket firings - which means he has freedom of movement and is absolutely above suspicion. I still don't like him, but he's certainly no fool and knows just what he's doing - though now that most of the launching sites have been captured, he has less to do there.'

'Do you think he's still dependable?'

'Yes. His sole desire is to avoid being captured and hanged as a war criminal - which means he wants to go with us.'

'When is he coming here?'

'Any minute now,' Ernst said. 'He wants to witness the test flight of the Kugelblitz. It's not something he'd miss.'

Glancing across the hangar, the doors of which would soon open to reveal the southern Harz Mountains of Kahla, Wilson saw that the German workers, under the supervision of the engineers, were already starting to raise the hydraulic platform under the saucer.

In that gloomy space, the saucer looked even larger than its seventy-five meters in diameter. It was resting on retractable shock absorbers, had an almost seamless, perfect aerodynamical shape, and even the pilot's cockpit, located at the machine's center of gravity, could be retracted during high-speed flight, thus making the machine look like a perfect disk, with no surface protuberances of any kind.

It was, to Wilson's way of thinking, something worth seeing.

Just as the whining, clattering steel platform came to rest on its adjustable wheels and went silent, Kammler and Nebe entered the hangar by the rear door and marched past the saucer into Wilson's office. Looking as handsome and cold as ever, Kammler sat on the edge of Wilson's desk. Nebe, as dark and unreadable as always, stood near the door of the office with his hand on his pistol.

He feels naked without that pistol, Wilson thought. The man is a predator.

'Welcome,' Wilson said, addressing his words to Kammier. 'How are things going?'

'Excellent,' Kammier said. 'At the end of January, Himmler placed me in complete control of the rocket program. I've just returned from the Hague, from where the V-1s and V-2s are being fired. We'll keep firing them from there until Antwerp falls, which it surely will, and then we'll be firing them no more, since we'll have run out of launching sites. When that time comes, it will be time to move from here - let's say March or April - certainly not much longer, since as from yesterday, Allied troops were massed along the Rhine on a sixteen-kilometer front, prepared to launch themselves into Germany. In other words, our time is running out, so let's hope this test flight succeeds and we can start making arrangements in the knowledge that we have a workable saucer to take with us.'

Even as he spoke, the large doors at the far end of the hangar were being opened. Sunlight poured in and revealed an immense open space that ran out to the base of a steep, densely forested hill. The smooth, metallic gray surface of the Kugelblitz took on a brilliant, silvery sheen that clearly reflected the images of the men around the platform. Then the engine of the hydraulic platform roared into life and the platform, now on its raised wheels and manipulated by a combination of remote-control console and jib and crane, started moving slowly out of the hangar into the open air.

'Oh, my God!' Ernst murmured, awe making him seem more alive. 'It's absolutely superb!'

Wilson could not resist a smile, then nodded at Kammler

and Nebe and led them, with Stoll, out of his office and across the concrete floor of the hangar, toward the open doors and the still moving Kugelblitz.

'Has the escape route been organized yet?' he asked Nebe, who had fallen in beside him.

'Yes,' Nebe said in his flat, passionless manner. The matter of when and how we leave will be complicated by the Soviet offensive, which is moving rapidly toward Peenemunde. Because of that, Wernher von Braun and five thousand of his workers are being moved this week to the new research station still under construction in the Bleicherode mine. Because the technicians and their families are going to be housed in the surrounding villages, as requested personally by Himmler, we're going to have to keep this place secret and leave at night, when we won't be observed.'

'When the time comes to evacuate,' Kammler said, 'I'll ensure that von Braun and his team don't know about it. In the meantime, while they're living in the Nordhausen area, I'll keep them under close guard and make sure that none of them comes this far. In short, they won't know you exist.'

'Fine,' Wilson said as he led them out of the hangar and into the freezing wind of the cleared area, 'but how will we go?'

The same way von Braun and his team are coming here,' Nebe replied. 'By train, truck, private cars, and even barges. To ensure that at least some of us get through, we'll be split up into groups and make the journey on three separate nights by different routes. The first will go to Rostock, then round the coast of the Baltic Sea; the second also to Rostock, but then on to Lubeck; and the third and last to Hamburg, via Hannover, then on to Kiel from there. A meticulous schedule has been arranged for each group; each journey will be made by a combination of vehicles to confuse anyone trying to track our movements; and each stop, or change-over point, along the way will be in a secret location heavily guarded by my most trusted SS men - all of whom, like me, had to go underground after the failed July plot against Hitler. In other words, they're all men who've everything to gain and nothing to lose by

coming with us. In that sense, at least, they'll be trustworthy and reliable.'

'It all sounds very organized,' Wilson said.

'It is,' Nebe replied.

The engines of the mobile platform in the clearing went dead, the wheels were raised to let the platform rest on the flat earth, and the Kugelblitz bounced lightly on its shock absorbers, then steadied again.

Out there, in the open air and sunlight, it was a thing of great beauty.

Wilson walked up to the pilot, who was waiting by the concrete observation bunker in the shadow of the high wall of the hangar. The man was wearing a Luftwaffe flying suit and seemed totally fearless.

'Are you ready to go?' Wilson asked him.

'Yes,' he said.

'Good. Then let's do it.'

Wilson escorted him across the clearing and up onto the steel platform, finally stopping at the curved rim of the Kugelblitz, their heads in line with its ring of tiltable jet nozzles. From there, the raised pilot's compartment seemed to tower high above them, at the top of the ladder sloping upward to it The pilot climbed up and Wilson followed to help him in. When the pilot was strapped in, Wilson checked that all seemed well, then climbed down and let an engineer climb up to secure the Perspex hood. When that was done, the engineer climbed back down, pulled the collapsible ladder after him, gave the thumbs-up to the pilot, then marched with Wilson back to the concrete bunker in front of the open doors of the hangar.

Kammler, Nebe, and Stoll were already there, gazing through the protective, tinted glass in a long slit in the bunker's wall. Because the Kugelblitz was being flown by a pilot, there was no remote-control panel, as there had been with the Feuerballs, though there was a man sitting by a radio console, prepared to talk to the pilot.

'All set?' Wilson asked him.

'Yes, sir.'

'Then there's no point in waiting.'

The man at the simple radio console relayed Wilson's permission to take off to the pilot Kammler smiled and crossed his fingers. General Nebe remained impassive. Ernst took a jeep breath and licked his lips, then bit his right index finger.

Wilson heard the birds singing, the wind moaning through the forest, the babbling of a brook beside the hangar, where the land rose protectively. He thought of his first prototype, the Flegelrad, or Wingwheel, which had been a crude affair based on the principles of the wheel, with its many wings radiating out to the rim and revolving around the pilot's cockpit at the center of gravity. Impossible to control, its balance destroyed by its vibrations, it had been superseded by a later model, in which balance was achieved with a new stabilizing mechanism and the earlier Rocketmotor was replaced by an advanced turbojet engine. That second model flew, but not much better than a helicopter, so Wilson had experimented with his smaller, remote-controlled model, the Feuerball. Finally this, the Kugelblitz, the perfect aeronautical machine, would allow for frictionless air flow and defeat the former limitations of the boundary layer. Thus, he was giving the world a saucer-shaped, jet-propelled aircraft of extraordinary speed and maneuverability.

And at last it was taking off. Tilted downward, the adjustable jet engines roared into life, spewed searing yellow flames at the earth, and created a circular wall of fire around the saucer, between its rim and the ground. The flames beat at the blackened earth, roaring down, shooting up and outward. The saucer shimmered eerily in the rising heat waves and then took on a crimson glow. It shuddered violently for a moment, swayed from side to side, bounced up and down on its shock-absorbing legs, then lifted tentatively off the ground.

It hovered in midair, floating magically on a bed of fire, then roared louder and ascended vertically, thrust upward by the flaming jets, and was distorted in the shimmering heat waves. It turned to a silvery jelly, then became a lava flow, red and yellow and glaring white, then hovered magically once more,

about ten meters up, before roaring demonically, the noise shocking, almost deafening, and suddenly disappearing - though in fact it had shot vertically skyward, to be framed by the rising sun.

It stopped there, bouncing lightly in the sun's shimmering, oblique striations, then shot off again, this time flying horizontally, to disappear beyond the horizon in the wink of an eye.

Wilson heard the applause around him, then the pilot's voice on the radio - distorted by the static but obviously exultant - confirming that he was flying beyond the limit of his airspeed indicator, higher than the upper limit of his altimeter, and already could see the Elbe River, winding toward Hamburg. He soon saw the curved horizon, the Baltic Sea, the port of Rugen, then he turned back and was soon crossing Magdeburg and reappeared as a flash of light above the green, forested hills of the majestic Harz Mountains. That flash of light became a silvery coin, a flying saucer, a glowing disc - then, abruptly, the Kugelblitz was right above them, hovering high up in thin air, again framed by the rising sun. It descended vertically, perfectly, on pillars of yellow flame. The flames scorched the earth and flew outward in all directions and formed a bed of fire and smoke, then the Kugelblitz settled down on the steel platform, which its flames had made red-hot. It subsided onto its shock absorbers, bouncing lightly, swaying gracefully, then its engines cut out, leaving a sudden, shocking silence, and the flames died out and the smoke drifted away and the flying saucer was visible.

It was resting on its shock-absorbing legs, gleaming silvery in the sunlight - a technological object of rare beauty, an extraordinary achievement.

'We've won,' Wilson said with quiet pride. 'Now let's blow it to smithereens.'

Chapter Thirty-Four

The landscape that Ernst drove through on his way to Himmler's unofficial headquarters in Dr Gebhardt's sanatorium at Hohenlychen, 120 kilometers north of Berlin, resembled the interior of his own mind - a place of ruins and mounting rubble, a cold, bleak terrain.

He had felt that way since the death of Ingrid and the children - first grief, then guilt, then despair, then a feeling like death - and he now sensed that he would never feel better as long as he lived. He understood that this was why he'd decided to throw in his lot with Wilson. He needed the American's icy confidence, his air of calm invincibility, but he also needed to hide away in a place like the Antarctic the way other men, disillusioned with or frightened by life, hide themselves in isolated monasteries, wanting only the silence of the day and the night's lonesome wind.

He wanted escape.

Reaching the sanatorium, he wasn't surprised to find it surrounded by trucks and heavily armed SS troops - just as the Fuhrer's bunker in the Chancellery had been. Even though wearing his uniform, Ernst had to show his papers to an unsmiling guard at the main gate, then was escorted inside the building, past other guarded doors, and into Himmler's personal study. The Reichsfuhrer was at his desk, leaning slightly forward to look down through his pince-nez at a large astrological chart, but he looked up when Ernst entered and offered a wan smile. Ernst saluted and murmured 'Heil Hitler!' - because this ridiculous formality was still kept up - then

Himmler, who rarely invited his guests to sit, actually told him to do so.

Ernst sat in the chair facing the desk as Himmler said, 'You have come from Berlin, Captain?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst replied. 'After flying in from Nordhausen. I was expecting to find you in the Chancellery, so I naturally went there first'

'I'm not feeling too well,' Himmler said testily, 'so I came here for a much-needed rest.'

Ernst did not choose to argue, though he knew that Himmler had in fact come here to get away from the bombings and the general madness overtaking Berlin, now that his envisaged Thousand Year Reich had shrunk to the area confined between two rivers, the Rhine and the Oder, and was about to be annihilated completely with enemy attacks from the east and west. Also, since January, when he had been given the responsibility of stopping Marshal Zhukov's advance to the Oder River but failed lamentably to do so, his position of trust with Hitler had been lost. Now, along with Goring and Speer, he was a rejected former favorite, forced to watch the fanatical Martin Bormann gain the trust of the increasingly paranoid Fuhrer and become arrogant with it

'And how were things in Berlin?' Himmler asked, as if he had not been there for months.

Ernst sighed and shrugged. The same. There are air raids every day and night. Our courageous Fuhrer insists on staying in the Chancellery bunker and refuses to give in.'

'Most admirable,' Himmler said.

'Yes,' Ernst replied. 'Indeed.' Not mentioning that Hitler's bunker, deep beneath the Chancellery garden, had more than once been badly damaged by Allied bombs and was a most depressing sight, with air vents covered in cardboard, the rooms now barren of their former paintings, tapestries, and carpets, rubble on the floors, planks thrown across gaping holes filled with water from burst mains, and an almost daily breakdown of water and electricity. Hitler himself had appeared to be in a dreadful condition, with a limp left arm,

an incapacitated right hand, a general lack of muscular coordination, obvious breathing problems, and an embarrassing tendency to absentmindedness and outbursts of paranoid anger. Because of this, there were armed SS troops standing guard at every door, in every corridor. The bunker was filled with rumors about suspected plots, coups, and assassination attempts that, if nothing else, distracted everyone from the bombs raining down almost nonstop.

In short, a nightmare.

'Did you speak personally to the Fuhrer?'

'No, sir. I only saw him in the Chancellery air-raid shelter, when he was conversing with some of his officers.'

'Did you hear my name mentioned?' Himmler asked anxiously, twisting his snake ring around on his finger.

'No, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst lied.

'You don't think he's heard about... ?' But his voice trailed off into an uneasy silence, as if he couldn't even mention the subject that was, even more than his recent rejection, gnawing away at him.

Ernst knew what his deeper anxiety was about

The past couple of months had seen the disaster in the Ardennes, the terrible bombing of Dresden, the Soviet crossing of the Oder River, and the Allied advance to the bank of the Rhine where they were, this very day, massing for their advance into Germany.

Not oblivious to this dreadful turning of the tide, and encouraged by his masseur, Felix Kersten - a dubious character and doctor without a medical degree - as well as by his chief of espionage General Walter Schellenberg, Himmler had earlier in the month held a secret meeting right here with Count Folke Bernadotte of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in an attempt to negotiate a separate peace. The attempt had failed, but now Himmler was terrified that the Fiihrer would find out what he had been up to behind his back - even more so because his former personal adjutant and current SS chief in Italy, General Karl Wolff, had also been negotiating behind the Fuhrer's back, first with Allen Dulles,

the OSS representative in Switzerland, then with two Allied generals in Ascona, Switzerland.

Himmler was convinced that if Hitler found out, he would be executed without further ado. No wonder he was a dramatically changed man, his pale face now sweaty.

'No, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst replied, keeping his face composed. 'I don't think he's heard anything at all. In fact, I don't think he hears much about anything except the war's progress, which of course is disastrous.'

That's the talk of a traitor!' Himmler snapped with a sudden, surprising burst of energy.

'I apologize, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst said quickly. 'I meant no offense. I merely point out that even the Chancellery is being bombed every day and the enemy is closing in from east and west and will soon be heading for Berlin.'

Visibly sagging again, Himmler looked down at the ring he was twisting on his finger, studied it for a moment, then looked up again with a hopeful gleam in his normally distant gaze.

'We might still be able to stop them,' he said, 'with our new, secret weapons.'

'I'm afraid most of the rocket launching sites have been captured,' Ernst informed him. 'So even if we produced more advanced rockets, we could not—'

But Himmler waved his hand impatiently to cut him short. 'I don't mean the rockets,' he said. 'I know all about the rockets. I'm thinking, instead, of Rudolph Schriever's flying saucer, which he insisted he would be testing soon. Have you been to see him in Prague?'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer. I was there a week ago. Schriever is still confident that he can have the saucer flying before the Soviets get that far. I was certainly impressed with what I saw there, and I think he can do it.'

'Good,' Himmler said.

Nonsense, Ernst thought He had indeed visited Schriever in his research complex outside Prague. Although his saucer might fly, it would be little help. It was an obsolete model, using Wilson's old gas-turbine rotors - not much more advanced

than a helicopter and without decent weapons. In truth, it was a joke, designed to keep Schriever engaged and Himmler's mind off Wilson. Even if Schriever did get it flying before the Soviets got to him, it would hardly do much damage to the Soviet or Allied advance. In fact, it would probably be shot out of the sky as soon as it took off.

'I knew I was right in depending upon Schriever,' Himmler observed. 'He is a German, after all. I only wish I'd had the sense to do it a lot sooner, rather than waste all that time on Wilson. How is the American?'

Ernst had been waiting for the question. Though prepared for it, he could not stop a tremor of fear from passing through him. He had rehearsed this many times, with Wilson, by himself, and though he knew it would probably work, the thought of failure was frightening. He was going to lie to his Reichsfuhrer - it was a major lie, and a dangerous one - and when he recalled those high-ranking officers writhing in piano-wire nooses strung from meathooks in that small room in Plotzensee Prison, he didn't relish what would happen to him if he made a mistake.

'I'm afraid you were right about Wilson,' he said. 'We put him to work in Nordhausen, helping the rocket engineers, but he was clearly too old and senile to be of much use to them. As for his so-called flying saucer, it was a poor imitation of Schriever's. When test-flown, it hardly got off the ground before blowing up.'

It had indeed been blown up, but deliberately, by Wilson, after having performed superbly during its test flight. Wilson had done it with no flicker of emotion. He didn't want to risk flying it until the war had ended (he didn't want it to be observed) and, also, the components for many models had already been shipped to Antarctica. He himself would take the drawings for this final, successful prototype there, when they sailed out from Kiel.

Wilson, then, was still very much alive ... but well hidden in Kahla.

'Naturally that failure,' Ernst continued, 'combined with

Wilson's increasingly senile behavior in the Nordhausen Central Works, encouraged us to do what you had suggested and put him to death. He was executed in one of the bunkers and his body then burned as part of the mass cremations at Buchenwald. Then all the papers regarding his Projekt Saucer were set to the torch.'

'You did the correct thing,' Himmler said. 'Good riddance to bad rubbish. We should have known that an American would not have served us well in the end. And now all of our resources can be directed toward the Schriever saucer, which must be successful.'

'It will be, Reichsfuhrer.'

Himmler nodded, scratched his nose beneath the pince-nez, then glanced down at his astrological chart and spoke to the desk. 'Wernher von Braun and his five thousand technicians are now safely housed near Nordhausen?'

'Yes, sir. The new research station has almost been completed in the Bleicherode mine. Von Braun and his technicians have been accommodated there and in the other villages in the general vicinity of Nordhausen.'

'They discovered nothing about Wilson and his Projekt Saucer?'

'No, Reichsfuhrer. We executed Wilson and destroyed all evidence of his project a few days before von Braun and his team arrived.'

'Good,' Himmler said. The Allies and the Soviets will both want our scientists, so failing all else, we can use them as bartering points if it comes to surrender. Make sure they are kept under guard and be ready to move them at short notice.'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst said.

Himmler nodded thoughtfully, still gazing down at the astrological chart, which had, Ernst knew, been given to him by his 'masseur,' Felix Kersten.

How the mighty have fallen, Ernst thought. This pit has no bottom.

'Nevertheless,' Himmler said distractedly, 'I have good reason to believe the tide will turn again and leave us

victorious.' He looked up at Ernst, smiled in a dreamy manner, and tapped the astrological chart with his knuckles. 'My charts,' he said. 'I study them often. The charts tell me that well be saved at the last minute with some secret weapon. perhaps our new jets or the atom bomb project... But most likely Flugkapitan Schriever's flying saucer... I place my faith in my stars.'

'Yes, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst said, too embarrassed to say anything else, but standing up and getting ready to take his leave. 'I'm sure that's the case.'

'You are returning to Nordhausen now?'

Ernst nodded.

'Good. When do you next plan to visit Schriever?'

'When he calls me for the test-flight of his saucer, which should be in a month.'

'According to my charts, that should be enough.'

'I hope so, Reichsfuhrer.'

Himmler stood up, adjusted his jacket, then straightened his spine and gave the Nazi salute. He waited until Ernst had returned it, then said, 'Thank you, Captain. These are trying times, but you have behaved commendably so far. I trust you won't let me down in the future.'

'No, sir, I won't'

'Good-bye, Captain. Heil Hitler!'

'Heil Hitler!'

The words had a hollow ring in the large, gloomy study, reminding Ernst of the life he had wasted for the dream of such madmen. He walked out with relief, as if escaping from prison, and drove back to Berlin through the evening's descending darkness, reaching Reinickendorf Airport as the bombs started falling.

He saw the fires all over Berlin as he climbed out of his car, heard the explosions growing louder as they came closer to the airport, and strapped himself into the seat in the plane as the darkness just beyond the airport became a hell of explosions. The plane took off through a brilliant web of languidly looping tracers, flew through exploding flak, and

managed to make its escape without being damaged.

Ernst settled into his seat, feeling nothing, not even fear. He thought of how everywhere he went these days there was only destruction. Then the young navigator emerged from the pilot's cabin, stopped in front of him, and handed him a written message.

Reading it, Ernst learned that earlier that morning Britain's General Montgomery had launched his assault across the Rhine; that two airborne divisions - one British and one American - had dropped on the German side of the river to support the infantrymen; and that 240 kilometers upriver, General Patton's US 3rd Army had done exactly the same.

Fully aware that the news signified the beginning of the end of the Thousand Year Reich, Ernst simply crumpled up the message and let it fall to the floor.

He was almost relieved.

Chapter Thirty-Five

Bradley was so tired, he thought he was dead. He was sitting behind another makeshift desk surrounded by rubble and four broken walls, with no roof, in the remains of what had once been an elegant house in what was now left of the city of Cologne, which had been bomb-shattered and torn by the dreadful fighting of the past few days.

The ruined building in which Bradley was sitting was being guarded by filthy, weary, armed soldiers from the 104th Infantry Divisions of General Omar Bradley's US 1st Army, with whom Bradley had made the bitterly won advance from Aachen, on the Siegfried Line. When he glanced at them, which he could do with ease, because few of the building walls still stood completely, he was reminded of just how hard they had fought and how far they'd come.

Sitting at his makeshift desk - the ruined house's kitchen table - and waiting to begin what he thought would be his most important interrogations on behalf of Project Paperclip, he could hear the continuing sounds of battle from beyond the battered city, as the Germans were pushed back to the Rhine. Nevertheless, irrespective of the constant noise, he still managed to fall in and out of a delerious half sleep, in which he thought of nothing but what he had experienced over the past couple of months.

'The pilot's on his way,' his assistant, Sergeant Lew Ackerman of the US 3rd Armored Division, whispered into his ear. 'He'll be here any minute.'

Thanks,' Bradley said.

He had meant to open his eyes and smile, but instead drifted into another half sleep and recalled the Hurtgen forest, snow and mud erupting around him, the infantrymen moving forward through that hell of exploding shells, swirling smoke, chattering machine guns, and screaming wounded, their blood splashing on the muddied white of the snow, their bodies crumpling into it. Bradley had survived it (he had hugged the ground a lot), but then found himself farther south, advancing toward the heavily fortified village of Schmidt and the Roer reservoirs. The resistance was fierce and many men died in the mud, but the village was taken, then the west bank of the Roer. Then the Germans flooded the river by blowing up the dams and Bradley found himself helping to form a bridgehead in the early hours of the morning. The men of the US 1st and 9th forced a difficult crossing and assembled a temporary bridge for the others to follow. The moon was bright and many of them died - but Bradley survived again, soaking wet but not with blood, and helped drag some of his dead friends from the river before moving on.

It wasn't excitement that stuck in his mind, just constant noise and permanent exhaustion - and Bradley remembered that sitting at his table in this ruined house in the ruined heart of the city of Cologne, now one great heap of rubble.

He remembered being deaf and cold, being exhausted and cold, and then recalled, more specifically, the march eastward to Duren, the city's complete destruction, another river crossing - someone said it was the Erft - and finally, in a hell of noise and smoke, the outskirts of this city. Allied aircraft bombed it constantly, the big guns leveled what was left, then the US 1st Army moved in, taking the town street by street Bradley was right there, with the 104th Infantry divisions, clambering over the rubble, choking in dust and smoke, firing his M-1 rifle at those murky figures in the dust-wreathed ruins, throwing his hand grenades into rubble-filled basements, running forward and ducking and running forward again, and dragging dead, bloody bodies out of his way to start all over again.

He had played his small part in the capture of Cologne and couldn't help feeling proud of himself. He was too old for this, after all, and was not obliged to do it. The function of OSS was intelligence gathering - to follow the advancing armies and set up headquarters in their wake - but Bradley had wanted this last adventure, a final testing of his courage, and he had to confess that doing it had made him feel young again. It was confirmation of that awful truth - that men throve on risk-taking - and it helped him to understand what drove Wilson on his weird personal journey: the need to risk everything he had to create his own world.

What would be frightening about Wilson, Bradley suspected, would be the world he was hoping to create - clearly one in which normal human feelings had little weight.

It helped to think about Wilson. It made Bradley feel more alert. He rubbed his eyes and yawned and stretched himself on the wooden chair. He was pleased to note that a jeep had just pulled up outside and his ALSOS assistant, Major Arnold Grieves, was leading a US Air Force pilot through the remains of the front doorway, past the armed guards, and through the rubble-strewn passageways to his open-air office. A cold wind was whipping up the dust and forcing Bradley to shiver.

'Hallelujah!' he whispered as Sergeant Ackerman stepped over a broken wall, holding a tray containing what looked like four mugs of steaming coffee.

'I brought us all coffees,' he confirmed, placing the tray on the table. 'It'll help keep you warm.'

'You're a treasure,' Bradley said. 'I will never forget this act. Look me up after the war and I'll give you a kiss.'

'No, thanks,' Ackerman said, taking the chair beside Bradley and raising his steaming mug to his lips as Major Grieves, small and portly and reportedly brilliant, stopped in front of the table with the pilot beside him. The pilot was in his flying uniform, was roughly handsome and unshaven, and was actually puffing on a cigar, just like in the movies.

'Hi, Mike,' Grieves said informally. This is Lieutenant Edward Schlesinger of the 415th Night Fighter Squadron.

Eddie, this is Colonel Mike Bradley of OSS and his administrative assistant, Sergeant Lew Ackerman of the US 3rd Armored Division.'

'Hi,' Schlesinger said, exhaling a cloud of smoke and pulling up a chair without being asked. 'Howya doin'?'

'Fine,' Bradley said, as Arnold pulled up the last chair. An enemy shell came screeching in toward them and fell in the ruins of a house in the adjacent, debris-strewn street. The explosion threw up more debris and a ballooning cloud of smoke, but neither Bradley nor anyone else at the table took any notice. Instead, Bradley glanced down at his notes and said, 'You're a pilot with the—'

'He's just told ya,' the pilot said, nodding in the direction of Major Grieves. The 415th Night Fighter Squadron, flying bombing raids over the Rhine.'

'Originally out of England?'

'Right. But now out of a French airbase near Paris. One hell of a city.'

'I agree,' Bradley said with a grin, amused by the pilot's lack of respect for rank. 'But the incident you're going to tell me about actually happened when you were flying out of England.'

'Right. Aston Down, Gloucestershire. A Limey base.'

'How'd you get on with the Brits?'

That's a joke, isn't it? They thought we were overpaid, oversexed, and over there to steal their women.'

'Which you were.'

'I guess so, Colonel. No argument there. Are those coffees for us?'

'Yes,' Ackerman said.

'Terrific' Schlesinger picked up one mug, Grieves picked up the other, they both drank, then Schlesinger inhaled on his cigar and exhaled some more smoke. Because the smoke from the last explosion was drifting over them, the cigar smoke went unnoticed.

'Apparently this incident occurred on the night of November 23, last year, during a bombing run over the Rhine.'

'Right. November 23, 1944. I have the date branded in my brain and won't ever forget it'

'What happened, exactly?'

'It was a pretty normal bombing run,' Schlesinger said, 'with nothing out of the ordinary until we got to about twenty miles from Strasbourg.'

'When you say "nothing out of the ordinary," what do you mean?'

Schlesinger spread his hands. 'Nothing!' he said. 'Just another routine bombing raid. No problems over France, a bit of flak over the Rhine, then another untroubled period until we started gettin' near Strasbourg. That's when it began.'

'You were harassed by some kind of flying object.'

'A Foo fighter,' Schlesinger said.

'That's the word you guys are using for this particular kind of unidentified flying object?'

'Right We call them Foo fighters.'

'Why?'

'Just a joke name. It comes from the Smokey Stover comic strip. You know? The popular phrase, "Where there's foo, there's fire." It's as simple as that'

Bradley chuckled and shook his head in amusement, then got back to business. 'So you'd heard about the Foo fighters before you made that particular flight.'

'Yeah, right - but that don't mean I imagined the sons of bitches. Everyone in the crew saw the same objects - and one of our B-25s went down because of the harassment. No, sir! They were real, all right!'

'So what happened?'

'We're just approachin' Strasbourg with not a thing in the goddamned sky - no enemy aircraft, no flak, no tracers - nothing! Then, without warning, these goddamned Foo fighters appeared - about a dozen of them - and started tailing certain of our aircraft, mostly the bombers. They ascended from the ground - most of us saw them coming up. They looked like balls of fire - an orange-yellow fire, sometimes flaring white, with a tail of fire streaming out behind it - but

when they flew beside my plane, a B-25, I could see that they had a dark, inner core, which was probably solid. That core was shaped like a disc, or saucer, and most of us agreed it was no more than three or four feet wide.'

'And you think they were actually tailing your aircraft.'

'No doubt about it, Colonel. Those goddamned things were controlled. With that orange-yellow fire around them and their unusual shape and size, they certainly seemed a bit weird and even unreal - but they were under control.'

'What makes you think that?'

'Because they flew right at our airplanes as if about to crash into them, then turned abruptly and tailed us, sticking really close to us. Then, each time we fired our guns at them, they flew out of range at incredible speed - and in every direction.'

'How fast?'

'Faster than any plane I've ever seen.'

'Why did you fire at them? They were only tailing you, after all.'

'Because as soon as they started tailing us, or at least flying in formation with us - since they were usually right beside us - they appeared to cool down a bit, giving us a clearer impression of the dark core inside. Then they definitely looked saucershaped, probably made of metal - at times they glinted - and they seemed to be spinning rapidly on their own axis. When they were spinning like that, they made a whipping, whistling sound - like they were whipping up the air around them. And when that happened, our radar and engines malfunctioned and our planes started failing... It was weird. Really frightening.'

'And you're sure that the malfunctioning of the engines was directly related to the spinning of the fireballs?'

'Absolutely. I'm sure - we were all sure - because as soon as we fired on the Foo fighters, they flew away from us - the second we started firing, in fact - and as soon as they flew out of our range, our engines kicked on again. So that's what was happening, see? When they came close to us, our engines malfunctioned and we started going down; when we fired at

them and they flew away, our engines kicked back into life and we were able to level out and keep flying. So they came at us and were chased away, returned and were chased away again, and our engines were cutting in and out, and we were falling and then leveling out again. This happened repeatedly until we gave up and turned back to England ... which we only did when Tappman's B-25 went down for the count.'

'Lieutenant Victor Tappman ... the fatality.'

'Right Good old Vic. Out of Denver, Colorado. One of the best pilots we had - and even he couldn't handle it.'

Another shell fell nearby, exploding a few streets away, but Schlesinger merely turned his head to glance at the rising smoke, then inhaled on his cigar and shook his head ruefully.

'His B-25,' he continued, 'like all of the others, had been cutting in and out going down and leveling out again; but then it cut out for too long, fell too far to be leveled out, and then went into a nosedive that he couldn't control. I think his engines came on again, but then the aircraft was in that spin, and so the plane was forced quicker toward the earth and eventually crashed. I heard Tappman on the intercom, shouting about the goddamned fireballs. "They're killing our engines!" he shouted. "They're not planes!" I heard his gunner cry out. "They're balls of fire!' The gunner also emphasized that the balls of fire were climbing - so they weren't natural phenomena - and then Tappman screamed, "We're going down! Pull her up!" Then he gave one, long drawn-out cry of the word "Foo!" which is where it all ended.'

'You mean, the Foo fighters flew away after Tappman crashed.'

'No,' Schlesinger said, taking another drink of his coffee and putting the mug back down. 'We all turned back when we saw Tappman crashing - and only then, when we were actually heading home, did the Foo fighters fly away... And those sons of bitches did fly away, Colonel, they didn't just disappear. They ascended vertically above our aircraft, stayed above us for a short while, then, when they were certain we were heading home, they flew away horizontally and finally, when

a good distance away, descended in formation toward the ground. They were controlled, Colonel. Definitely!'

'It could only have been remote control,' Bradley said.

'Like the V-1 and V-2 rockets,' Grieves offered, 'so it's certainly possible.'

There was silence for a moment. Bradley heard the distant battle.

This is some office you got here,' Schlesinger said. 'Real cozy, in fact'

Bradley smiled. 'We make do with what we have.' Schlesinger nodded, straight-faced, and said, 'Can I go now?'

Bradley also nodded. 'Sure. And thanks a lot. You've been a great help.'

Schlesinger grinned, pushed his chair back, and stood up. 'Anytime. No sweat'

Grieves stood up with him. 'Are you going to that hospital right now?'

'Yes,' Bradley replied. 'I want to catch up with the 1st Army. I can't hang around too long.'

'Any messages for HQ in Paris?'

'Not yet,' Bradley said.

'Okay, Colonel, I'll see you in Berlin.'

'I sure as hell hope so.'

Grieves grinned at him and left, taking the pilot with him, and Bradley stood up and stretched, then said to Sergeant Ackerman, 'I'll take the jeep and be back in an hour or so. Can you hold the fort?'

'I'm not expecting many visitors,' Ackerman replied laconically, his gaze taking in the ruined walls and missing roof of the house.

'I'll bring you back a hot blonde,' Bradley said.

'You do that, Colonel.'

Bradley left the ruined building, passing the armed guards, then climbed into his jeep and drove through Cologne, or what was left of it. The devastation was appalling - no street was untouched. He drove past skeletal buildings, imposing hillocks of rubble, the blackened remains of exploded tanks,

overturned trucks, and mangled half-tracks. People still lived in the ruins, their pitiful possessions grouped around them, and children kicked up clouds of dust as they clambered over charred wooden beams and jumped off the remains of walls. Occasionally shots rang out - the army was cleaning out German snipers - and Frenchmen with FFI armbands and women armed to the teeth were kicking collaborators - the men bruised, the women with shaved heads - along the streets and into basements and rubble-strewn rooms to mete out rough justice.

Bradley tried not to see that, for he disapproved but could do little to stop it. He was undeniably relieved to arrive at the hospital. Though it was still standing, it had also been severely damaged and was surrounded by rubble.

He parked as some Flying Fortresses growled overhead, heading toward the Rhine and the German cities beyond it, and thought of the balls of fire, the so-called Foo fighters, that had been harassing and sometimes destroying Allied bombers for months now.

Saucer-shaped objects, he thought. It could only be Wilson.

And he had to admire Wilson, while also feeling a touch of dread. Bradley was more determined than ever to find him as he entered the hospital.

There was a jagged hole in the roof just above the reception desk and the floor below it was covered in broken plaster and a dirty white powder. Uniformed MPs were on guard, checking for malingerers, but they snapped to attention and saluted when Bradley stopped at the desk. He asked for Major General Saunders, the OSS officer who had called him there. When Saunders arrived, he forgot to salute, but offered his hand.

'Major General McArthur told me about you,' he said with a casual, relaxing smile. 'He told me what you were after. This woman, we think she knew the man you want, and she's eager to talk. No love lost there, I think. Come on, Colonel, this way.'

'How is she?' Bradley asked as Saunders led him through the nearest door and into a corridor.

'Not too good,' Saunders replied. 'She copped a bomb in this very hospital. She was working here as a nurse for the Germans when we bombed it to hell. She was buried in rubble, broke a lot of bones, and will possibly be paralyzed for life. But she can talk. She's coherent. She came here from Berlin, where she'd lived in the Kurhessen district with an SS engineer named Helmut Kruger. According to her records, which we found in the hospital files, she came here to work under the auspices of the SS and was otherwise being favored with all the privileges of an SS dependant or wife. Since, according to those same records, she and Kruger had not been married, we wondered why this was so and decided to ask her about it. We were surprised, then, when she told us with some bitterness that the name "Kruger" was a pseudonym for an American engineer, John Wilson, who had worked at the rocket research center at Kummersdorf, just fifteen miles south of Berlin. I conveyed this information to Major General McArthur and he told me to contact you. Your special baby, he said.'

He led Bradley along some more corridors, few of which were undamaged, then into a ward where the beds were crammed tightly together and the roof, which had collapsed, was temporarily covered with canvas sheets. Most of the windows were also covered in canvas, and the wind drummed against it.

Saunders led Bradley to the bed of a woman whose steady, fearless gray gaze emerged from a swathe of bandages that covered her head and hid most of her features. Her arms and legs, protruding from a white sheet, were in plaster casts.

'Mrs Bernecker,' Saunders said, 'this is Colonel Bradley, from the American intelligence service, OSS. Mike, this is Mrs Greta Bernecker.'

'Hi,' Bradley said, feeling awkward because of the woman's injuries.

'Hello,' the woman replied in good English. You wish to know about Wilson?'

Taken aback to hear Wilson mentioned so casually - like a living person - Bradley took a deep breath and said, 'Yes.'

'So ... ask your questions.'

Bradley took another deep breath, surprised by his nervousness. He glanced at Saunders, who smiled back and said, 'I don't think you'll need me anymore, but if you do, you can find me through our temporary office right here in Cologne - and you know where that is. Okay?'

'Okay,' Bradley said. He watched Saunders take his leave, walking past the other beds, sometimes nodding and waving at the patients he knew, then, when the OSS officer had gone, he turned back to Greta Bernecker.

'You were living with Wilson in Berlin, is that right?'

'Yes.'

'He was called Kruger at the time?'

'No. He was only listed officially as Kruger. The SS confiscated his American documents and gave him those of a dead German named Kruger. I gather it was because they didn't want uninformed government clerks and administrators learning that an American, Wilson, was working for, and being supported by, the Third Reich. Officially, then, he existed as Kruger - but those who knew him, or worked with him, called him Wilson.'

'He was working at Kummersdorf at that time?'

'Yes. He was actually working at Kummersdorf West, at the other side of the old firing range, well away from the real rocket research center.'

The one run by Wernher von Braun.'

'Correct, Colonel.'

'And when Wernher von Braun left to go to Peenemunde?'

'Wilson took over the larger hangars at Kummersdorf.'

'Do you know what he was working on?'

'Some kind of highly advanced, radical aircraft.'

'Did you find out anything about it?'

'No. He sometimes talked about it, but I didn't understand what he was saying. He was an engineer, an aeronautical scientist, and such talk just bewildered me. He was after an

aircraft that could go straight up and down, like a helicopter, but could fly a lot faster. He said it was shaped like a saucer -I remember that much. In fact, the research program was called Projekt Saucer, which confirms what I say.'

Bradley thought of the hangar in Iowa, then of the Foo fighters, and knew he was traveling in the right direction.

'Did von Braun know anything about Wilson's project?'

'I don't think so. It's possible, but I doubt it I know from what Wilson told me that he'd contributed considerably to von Braun's rocket program - by passing on certain of his technical innovations - and I think that because of that, von Braun thought that Wilson's experiments were related solely to the V-1 rocket program.'

'Who did know about Wilson's work?'

The people who worked with him: an old Italian, Belluzzo, two German engineers, Habermohl and Miethe, and a Luftwaffe engineer, Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, who was obsessed with pleasing Himmler and tried stealing the credit for Wilson's work. While at Kummersdorf, they were all under the supervision of an SS officer, Lieutenant Ernst Stoll - now a captain, I think.'

'Is Wilson still at Kummersdorf?'

'No. Conflict between him and Flugkapitan Schriever, with Schriever gaining Himmler's trust, led to the research team being split into two groups. One group, headed by Schriever, Habermohl, and Miethe, were sent to somewhere in Bohem, in Czechoslovakia, and the other, headed by Wilson alone, went to the Harz Mountains.'

'Whereabouts in the Harz Mountains?'

'I don't know exactly. He mentioned a place called Nordhausen, though I don't think he was actually going there, but to somewhere close to it.'

That made sense to Bradley. British and American aerial reconnaissance and local resistance intelligence had already confirmed that some kind of huge rocket production center was located underground, near Nordhausen, in Thuringia. As that area was also part of the Nazi's planned Last Redoubt, it

was logical that anything related to secret weapons would be transported there.

Trying to hide his excitement, he forced himself to look at the heavily bandaged Greta Bernecker and asked, 'Is what when you and Wilson separated? When he was moved to Thuringia?'

'Yes,' she replied bitterly. 'We weren't married and only SS wives could go - so I was left in Berlin.'

'Yet ended up in Cologne.'

'Yes,' she said, still sounding bitter. The SS offered me a pension or the chance to work in one of their hospitals. Since the pension was laughable, I accepted their offer of work here. And this was an SS hospital, Colonel, before you people came here.'

Bradley studied the woman carefully - or what he could see of her. Her visible features were hard, the lips sensual, slightly cruel, and her gray eyes, though hardly filled with warmth, were admirably fearless. She might be paralyzed for the rest of her life, but she was not seeking pity. You had to admire that.

'How did you come to be living with Wilson?' he asked her.

'I was working at the time as a nurse in a secret, experimental hospital just outside Berlin, and Wilson went there more than once to have some operations.'

'What do you mean by an "experimental" hospital?'

'It was devoted to Himmler's so-called anthropological experiments, mostly under the auspices of the Ahnenerbe, the Institute for Research into Heredity. Normally, the experiments were carried out - often under appallingly crude conditions and without anesthetic - on inmates from the concentration camps; but Wilson was obsessed with extending his life, and as soon as an experiment produced results, he made personal use of it, no matter how painful. He used himself a lot, in fact - gave his blood and urine and shit and even semen; underwent numerous tests and experiments. He had operations on his failing heart, on his stomach and joints; he even had some basic plastic surgery to make him look

younger. He was a man obsessed, Colonel.'

'And no longer like a seventy-five-year-old.'

'No, the pig looked much younger.'

The vehemence was startling, but Bradley knew he could use it. 'Why did you move in with him?' he asked.

'Because he asked for me,' she said. 'It was an SS hospital and he had a lot of influence, and I wanted to have a few comforts so I went with him.'

'Why did he want a woman at his age?'

Greta Bernecker, swathed in her bandages, actually managed a smile. Bradley didn't like her, but he had to admire her guts. The combination of bandages and courage reminded him of Gladys in the ambulance in Paris. Thank God, she was now back in London - and writing letters again.

'It wasn't romance,' Greta said, 'if that's what you're thinking. No, he needed a trained nurse - one who understood his needs - and since I'd been looking after him for so long, I was an obvious choice ... He was a vigorous man, Colonel - those operations had done him good - but he wasn't interested in normal sex. What he wanted was his own semen - for the experiments, nothing more - and since I had already done it for him, he wanted me to masturbate him and bottle his semen and arrange for its delivery to the hospital. I did the same with his piss and shit and blood. It was a job and I did it.'

'Did he treat you well?'

'Yes. In the sense that he wasn't cruel. He was neither cruel nor kind - he just didn't have such emotions - and as long as I did what he asked, he let me have what I wanted. But I thought he cared for me at least a little ... It's a human conceit.'

'But he didn't.'

'No. Not a bit. When the order came for him to move out, he just moved out and left me. I meant nothing at all to him.'

'Did anyone mean anything to him?'

'Not that I noticed. I think he was dead from the neck down. He had no heart, no soul. He was all brain - a mathematical

machine, above human emotion. I've never met a man like him.'

'Is there anything else you can tell me?' 'No. I don't think so. He left me and went to the Harz Mountains and is probably still there. I want you to find him and hang him. It's all he deserves.'

'Yes, Frau Bernecker.'

'Now I'm tired and wish to go to sleep. Good-bye, Colonel.'

'Good-bye.'

Unable to move anything else, Greta Bernecker closed her eyes. Bradley, elated and disturbed at once, walked out of the ward.

By nightfall, Bradley had left his makeshift office in the ruins of Cologne and was resting on one knee, like Davy Crockett, with his M-1 rifle in his right hand. The sky above him was filled with black clouds of bursting flak, phosphorescent streams of tracers, descending parachutists, and fat-bellied Allied bombers and gliders. All combined to make a noise that could strip the senses bare.

Bradley gazed across the river, along the length of that enormous bridge, and saw the water geysering up all around it and roaring dramatically. There were infantrymen bunched up all around him, behind him, in front of him, and as the ones in front jumped up and yelled obscenities and rushed forward, the distance between him and the bridge decreased all too rapidly.

He moved forward at a crouch, holding his M-l like a woman. He heard the shouting and the roaring and the rumbling of tanks and half-tracks and thought that he was living a dream too intense to be borne. Then he was all alone there - not one soul in front of him; just the river and geysering water and that enormous length of bridge, plus a dizzying drop down into the river, where dead bodies were floating.

American bodies, he thought, and started shaking. I can't do this. It's too much.

'Go, dammit! Get going!'

Someone grabbed him by the shoulder, shook him violently, and threw him forward. He jumped up and ran like the wind, straight onto that damned bridge. The wind was worse out in the open, carrying all the noise to him, and the German shells were looping down all around him and the water was roaring. He was drenched, but kept going - he had no choice. When he glanced around him, he saw geysering water and more men falling off the bridge. Shocked, he looked away, raising his eyes to the heavens, where he saw the bombers and bursting clouds of flak and tracers painting the night Death in war could be so beautiful - always lighting up the darkness - but it was still blood and broken bones and burning and it made him feel nauseated.

'Keep going, goddammit!'

Which he did, as he had no choice. Running above death and destruction. Advancing beneath a night sky rendered exotic by modern technology. He ran and fell down, jumped up and ran again, while the water splashed over him, fell away, and bawling men, some of whom were his friends, jerked frantically and fell down. He couldn't stop to check their pulses. Once you started, you couldn't stop. You just had to keep going, through the hellish noise and chaos, and pray to God, as he was doing right now, that you'd somehow get through it

'Goddammit, fuckin' German sons of bitches! Goddammit, we've made it!'

Bradley didn't know who was shouting. All the voices seemed the same. They were filled with exultation and dread and a childish defiance. He just followed the other men, still running, crouched low, his M-l bouncing, and raced through raging water into more hellish noise and emerged to a stretch of solid ground that was erupting in flame and smoke. He jumped off the bridge, bringing his M-l up, taking aim, but the wave of men filing up behind him forced him onto the scorched ground.

It was earth and it was black and torn asunder by bomb and shell and his buddies were spreading out across it and heading into the darkness.

Bradley stopped for a moment, briefly blind and deaf, drenched, then realized that he was standing on the soil of the Thousand Year Reich.

He held his rifle at the ready and marched forward, straight into Germany.

To Wilson.

Chapter Thirty-Six

The move began on the first day of April. Kammler had arrived back from the Hague at the end of March, after firing the last of his 1,050 V-2 rockets on London. He had immediately informed Ernst that as the American army was rapidly approaching Nordhausen, the whole complex was to be evacuated forthwith.

'As you know,' he said, seated in his office in the Nordhausen Central Works, his back turned to the panorama of forested hills and sky framed by the large window behind him, 'it is Himmler's intention to use Wernher von Braun and his five thousand technicians as pawns in a possible trade-off with the Allies. While I personally disapprove of this, I cannot argue with the Reichsfuhrer, who is increasingly neurotic. I therefore had to agree to personally move them to a safe place in Oberammergau, in the Bavarian Alps. I plan to do that in four days' time. While I am thus engaged, I expect you personally to supervise the evacuation of the labor force from Camp Dora and back to Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, Neuen-gamme, Ravensbruck, and similar camps around Brunswick and Hannover. Brook no resistance. Execute those who either cannot or refuse to go. Make sure the evacuation is completed by the fourth of April, when the evacuation of the Kahla complex is due to begin. Understood?'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst replied. Although he had formerly detested Kammler's icy efficiency, he had to admire it now. 'But I fail to see how you can make it back here from Oberammergau by April 4.'

'I won't be coming back,' Kammler said. 'As soon as I've settled von Braun and his men there, where they'll be placed under guard, I'll take a plane to Kiel and join you there. Once I'm there, I'll remain with Wilson and his team until you return to Berlin to pacify Himmler.'

A tremor of fear passed through Ernst at the thought of returning to Berlin, let alone seeing the increasingly demented Himmler. 'Pacify Himmler?' he asked tentatively.

Kammler smiled with cold, mocking amusement. 'When I saw Himmler yesterday in that quack's sanatorium in Hohenlychen, he expressed his concern that the much-discussed Schriever saucer be test-flown as soon as possible and insisted that I send you to see him, to give him a full report To avoid any kind of suspicion, you must do just that'

Knowing that escape from the besieged Berlin was becoming more difficult every day, Ernst did not feel too happy. He was ashamed of the tremor in his voice when he said, 'But I may not get out of Berlin in time to rejoin you in Kiel before you leave for Argentina.'

Kammler chuckled maliciously. 'You'll get out, all right,' he said. 'I've personally arranged for an SS plane to fly you out of Reinickendorf Airport on the night of April 10, which should give you plenty of time to see Himmler, sort out what he wants you to do regarding that idiot Schriever and his saucer, and make your escape before Berlin falls. Any more questions?'

'No, sir.'

Ernst saluted and left Kammler's office; then he went to work with no great enthusiasm, but considerable efficiency. No longer revolted by what he had to do, he arranged for the first of the Camp Dora inmates to be moved out that evening. He personally supervised the movement of some groups to Bergen-Belsen; some were driven there by truck or train; others were made to go on foot, forced along by the snapping dogs and cracking whips, usually without food or water. If they lacked the strength to go on, they were killed, their bodies dumped in the ditches. Even here, Allied aircraft flew constantly over the roads and railway lines, bombing the

lengthy columns of prisoners and increasing the chaos. By normal standards, it was a nightmare, but Ernst took it in his stride. He was disgusted not because of any moral outrage, but because he was risking his own life to escort this ragged column of Jewish scum and other useless human rubbish to what would be their final destination.

Yes, he knew that they were marked for extermination before the Allies arrived.

He went to bed late and awoke feeling groggy. He was more alert later when Kammler's special train, with its sleeping cars and dining car and many well-armed SS guards, left with Wernher von Braun and about 500 of his V-2 experts and their families, on the first leg of the journey to Oberammergau.

Once they'd gone, Ernst paid a visit to the Kahla complex, where he found Wilson, silvery-haired but lean and remarkably fit, supervising the packing of the last of the components and drawings for the Kugelblitz. Because the workable model had been blown up a few weeks before, the hangar outside Wilson's office looked vast and cold.

'Will you soon be finished?' Ernst asked Wilson.

'Yes. Today, I think. Most of the components have already been boxed. Copies of the drawings and notes have been placed in three separate, portable safes and will be taken with each group, to ensure that if one lot is lost, the others will make it. Those in charge of the papers have been instructed to destroy them if there's the slightest chance of Soviet or Allied forces capturing them. And since the Kugelblitz itself has been blown up, there'll be no evidence left here regarding what we were doing.'

Ernst smiled. 'Good,' he said. 'Wernher von Braun's men did something similar with their papers. I gather that two of his engineers, Dieter Huzel and Bernard Tessman, hid the archives of the Peenemunde research station in the disused iron-ore mine near the village of Dorten, not far from Bleicherode. All over Germany, in disused mines and evacuated caves, the Third Reich is hiding its scientific secrets. We're the only ones who are burying ourselves with our

secrets - hopefully in the Antarctic'

'We're not burying ourselves,' Wilson corrected him. 'We're creating our own world.'

'I hope so,' Ernst replied.

He didn't see Wilson for the next two days - he was too busy supervising the continuing evacuation of Camp Dora and ensuring that those in charge of the ragged columns of prisoners would not be merciful to anyone too ill to march. As before, they were moved out at night, by truck and train or on foot. Driving back and forth in his jeep, between the trucks and the trains, along the roads filled with those marching, he heard the snarling dogs, cracking whips and gunshots, and saw bodies in the ditches or lying beside the railway tracks, their crumpled forms illuminated by moonlight and stars, or by the incandescent flashing of the exploding bombs from the planes growling overhead.

On the horizon, where the starry sky met black earth, the Allied big guns also flashed constantly, moving forward inexorably.

By the fourth day, both Camp Dora and the Nordhausen Central Works had been cleared of all prisoners. Then Ernst could begin moving out the technicians and troops. By nightfall the caves were empty, the great tunnels echoing eerily, the railway tracks leading into a darkness in which nothing stirred.

Ernst drove back to Kahla, leaving Nordhausen to the Allied troops, and found Wilson, his technicians, and the SS troops ready to leave. They went in three groups, one on each successive night. On the third night, Ernst joined Wilson and his team on the last train from Kahla.

The Allied guns sounded much louder when the train pulled away.

General Nebe was in charge and shared a car with them. His face was impassive, but his dark eyes were restless, first studying his fellow officers, then examining his pistol, then gazing out of the window at a darkness fitfully illuminated with distant explosions.

The Americans are rich and have an endless supply of

aircraft and bombs,' he said. 'No wonder they're winning.'

After that rare observation Nebe contented himself with his restless roaming - from one carriage to another, going outside when the train stopped, checking the boxcars containing the components or the workers they had decided to take with them to help with unloading.

Occasionally there was trouble - usually a prisoner in revolt. At such times Nebe moved with calm efficiency, usually by dragging the recalcitrant, ragged figure from the boxcar, making him or her kneel by the tracks, then putting a single bullet through the back of the victim's neck and kicking the body down the incline or into the brush.

That night brought another problem, near the station of Wolfsburg. A group of resistance fighters or possibly escaped prisoners attacked the train where it had stopped to change tracks. There were perhaps a dozen men, all wearing civilian clothes, firing rifles and pistols through the windows as they leapt up from the dark field and ran alongside the train. Nebe knew what they were doing - trying to capture the engine. While his men fired on them, he hurried though the linked cars to the engine and personally protected the driver until the train had pulled out again. When it did so, Ernst saw many of the resistance men sprawled dead in the dirt.

None of this bothered Wilson, though he said, 'Nebe enjoys the smell of blood in his nostrils. I'm glad he's on our side.' Other than that, he kept to himself, snatching sleep when he could and spending his waking hours with his notebook and pen, playing with mathematical formulas to distract him from the smoldering ruins of Germany outside the train.

They were bombed before dawn, just as Ernst was about to sleep. The sudden roaring almost split his eardrums as he dived to the floor. The bending tracks shrieked and he thought of Wilson and his crates. The whole car climbed up and crashed down and then rolled onto its side. The noise was deafening. Ernst slid along the floor, hit a wall, and rolled over Wilson. He turned around and saw the windows above him, glass shattered and glinting. Men screamed or bellowed

curses as Wilson crawled toward the nearest door. A bloody corporal formed a stirrup with his hands, Nebe planted his boot in it, then the corporal heaved him up through a window. More bombs fell and exploded around the train as Ernst found a cleared space. He pulled himself up through the window. The night roared and spewed flames. He crawled away from the window, rolled off and crashed down to the ground outside.

'Get the crates!' he heard Wilson shout

He saw Wilson hurrying alongside the car, which was practically on its side. Men were dropping through the windows and crashing down and rolling away from him. Ernst followed Wilson, crouched low. A silhouette was bellowing orders. Ernst clawed two or three men from his path and then saw the boxcar. General Nebe was already there. Six or seven trucks were near the train, and a dozen men were laboring under Wilson's crates with smoke billowing over them. Another bomb fell nearby. Nebe stepped forward and barked an order. The men heaved the crate up into the truck, then some knelt down to rest General Nebe's jackboot glistened. He kicked one of the lolling men. All the men jumped up, grabbed at their weapons, and climbed into the truck. Wilson was in there with the crates, so Ernst climbed up beside the driver. Nebe climbed in beside him, barked an order, and the truck started moving. The bombers passed overhead. A gray dawn began to break. Ernst saw a truck ahead, another behind, and was surprised to be still alive.

The dawn that broke over the devastated land was smoke-filled. All that remained were charred trees, smoldering buildings, and dusty columns of refugees, the latter heading in the opposite direction, away from the Soviets. They were gone soon enough, and the countryside became anonymous. Eventually the trucks stopped on a hill just outside Kiel, offering a view of the Baltic Sea beyond a broad, windblown field.

They were at a military station, surrounded by SS guards. An enormous bunker, half buried in the ground, its sloping roof covered in earth and grass, dominated the middle of the

field. Presumably it could not be seen from the air.

'That's where we'll stay until the submarines arrive,' Nebe explained with a shrug. 'It's as safe as we'll find.'

The remaining workers from the concentration camps unloaded the train and carried the crates and boxes into the bunker. When they were finished, Nebe said to Ernst, 'Now we have to get rid of them. My SS men will help us load the submarines - and we have no room for this scum. Take care of the men in the bunker and leave this lot to me.'

Ernst did as he was told, glad to wash his hands of the matter, and merely looked on as Nebe's men forced the prisoners up onto the waiting trucks and then drove them away, to another field well away from the sea. He caught Wilson's glance, but the American said nothing. When they heard the distant, savage roar of the machine guns, they turned away from each other. The trucks came back empty, and when Nebe climbed down, stroking his pistol, he simply nodded at Ernst.

Another day passed. Ernst had to wait for Kammler. The SS troops passed the time by playing cards and reading magazines, while their leader, General Nebe, sat in a chair all day to breathe in the fresh sea air. The docks could not be seen from there - only a gray swathe of the Baltic - but Nebe seemed to be content to just sit there and let events take their course. Wilson, on the other hand, was as restless as ever, didn't like being in the bunker, and as usual passed the time by solving mathematical equations and toying with scientific formulas.

'Don't you ever just relax?' Ernst asked him.

'I am relaxed,' he replied.

Beyond the noise of the sea, it was quiet. The Allied bombers hadn't come this far yet. It was the first peace and quiet Ernst had known for a long time, but he was still glad when Kammler finally showed up to give him something to do.

'It all went well,' he said. The rocket team is now off our hands. Von Braun and his men were housed in army barracks

in Oberammergau, behind wire and under SS guard, and will soon be joined by General Dornberger. Now you better get back to Berlin and keep Himmler happy. I'll expect you back here on the tenth. Good-bye - and good luck!'

Ernst was driven from the hidden bunker to a small, heavily guarded SS airfield nearby, where he boarded a plane. He spent the whole flight scanning the sky for Allied aircraft, but his luck held that day and soon, when he cast his gaze down, he saw the ruins of Berlin.

A pall of black smoke covered the city and was thickened with dust. The devastation was boundless.

'It's the end of the world,' Ernst said aloud, to no one in particular.

The plane touched down in hell.

Chapter Thirty-Seven

The sheer size of it was overwhelming. Bradley and Major General Ryan McArthur were inspecting the Nordhausen Central Works in the Harz Mountains, occupied the day before by the US 1st Army. The rocket production works, consisting of a series of tunnels, each approximately one mile long and joined together at regular intervals by other corridors, were located in the base of forested hills around a verdant valley; but where Bradley and McArthur were walking, in the middle of one of the gigantic tunnels, they could see only the railway tracks glinting dully in the overhead lamps and gradually disappearing into a darkness that led to a pinpoint of light - the outside world - a good half-mile away.

The tunnels were not quiet, because the army's engineers had already moved in, but Bradley's voice still echoed eerily when, stopping beneath the enormous shell of a V-2 rocket, he said, There's no doubt about it. Wilson had a lot to do with them. These bastards have been based on the rocket designs of our very own, shamefully neglected Robert H. Goddard, whom the German rocket engineers revered. And we both know who worked with Goddard just before he came here.'

'Wilson,' McArthur replied.

'Wilson,' Bradley agreed. He ran his hand wonderingly along the base of the enormous rocket above him - it was hanging from a jib and crane - and said, almost reverently, The most notable features of this baby's propulsion unit are the shutter-type valves in its fixed grill, the fuel-injection orifices incorporated in the same grill, the combustion

chamber, spark plugs, and nozzle - all of which are found in a Goddard patent, issued on November 13, 1934, and reproduced in full in the German aviation magazine, Flugsport, in January 1939. The Germans copied the designs for their early Peenemunde rockets, then Wilson came along and contributed his own, much wider knowledge of Goddard's work to the subsequent V-1 and V-2 rocket program. Eventually the rockets attained about a hundred times more thrust than Goddard's reached back in New Mexico, when Wilson worked with him.'

That's some achievement,' McArthur said. The V-2s that dropped on London are believed to have had a thrust of fifty-five thousand pounds, attained a velocity of six thousand four hundred feet per second, and could soar to an altitude of sixty-eight miles.'

'Right,' Bradley said. 'Practically on the way to the moon! And just think of the other similarities we've found so far between this baby and Goddard's original rocket Both rockets have the same motor-cooling system; the same pump drive; the same layout front to rear; the same stabilizer; the same guidance and fuel-injection systems. The only differences are that Goddard's rocket motors used gasoline and oxygen, whereas the V-2 uses hydrogen and peroxide; Goddard's rocket fuel was liquid oxygen and gasoline, whereas the V-2 uses liquid oxygen and alcohol; and, finally, Goddard's rockets were a lot smaller than the V-2. So the Nazis, with Wilson's help, simply did what the US government refused to do - they took Goddard's work seriously.'

'And you think Wilson's taken it even further.'

'Yeah,' Bradley said. 'Definitely.' He stroked the V-2 one last time, then started walking McArthur along the tunnel, toward that dime-size circle of light that represented the outer world. The war's not even over yet, but already we've discovered a helluva lot about what the Krauts were up to, scientifically speaking. So far, Germany's scientific papers have been found hidden in tunnels like this, plus caves, dry wells, plowed fields, riverbeds, and even cesspits - and we know that the weapons

we've found so far - not only these rockets, but heat-guided ground-to-air missiles, sonic-guidance torpedoes, Messerschmitt jet planes, rocket planes that fly even faster, highly advanced electrical submarines, and even the beginnings of an atom bomb project - yes, we already know that these weapons are more advanced than any we've got. Also, for the most part, they are based on the work of Robert Goddard and - in my estimation - on the furtherance of that work by Goddard's pupil, that goddamned traitor, John Wilson.'

'You've never called him that before,' McArthur said. 'I thought you almost admired him.'

'Yeah,' Bradley confessed. 'I do. Though I hate myself for it.'

'A genius,' McArthur said. 'A perverted genius. A mutant. ... No wonder you can't give up the chase. It's like pursuing an alien.'

'Right. He's not real. He's a part of my dreams. And to shake him loose, to get back to the real world, I've just got to face him.'

'You'll have to face something else soon,' McArthur said. 'And I don't think you'll like it.'

Bradley was going to ask him what he meant, but was distracted when they emerged into the light at the end of the lengthy tunnel. There they viewed the grandeur of the valley below: lush green, ribboned with sparkling streams, surrounded by the densely forested hills of Thuringia, and, rising above them, the majestic, rolling peaks of the Harz Mountains.

It was certainly beautiful, a pastoral vision ... but one scarred by spiraling columns of smoke, great fleets of Allied aircraft, marching troops and advancing trucks and tanks, and pale-brown clouds of dust - a victorious army.

'You don't believe it,' Bradley said, 'but it turns out to be true. All over Germany there are places like this - great factories and laboratories and camps hidden underground - immense, but invisible from the air, their existence once unknown. This place here - it's vast, but it's only one of many.

And what I want to know is, where was Wilson? Where is he now? And what has he hidden away?'

'Let's talk to someone,' McArthur said.

He led Bradley across the cleared area in front of the immense tunnel, past tanks and half-tracks and trucks disgorging more troops, under the great rockets hanging from cranes directly above, and into his jeep, which was parked by the road that led back to Erfurt. When Bradley had climbed in beside him, he drove down toward the valley, past columns of marching US troops. All the troops, Bradley suddenly noticed, looked terribly young.

God, he thought, for the first time in years, I sincerely want this business to be over. I want Wilson to disappear...

What he wanted, he then realized, was to be what Wilson was not - an involved human being.

'Where are we going?' he asked impatiently. 'I've no time for joy rides.'

'It's no joy ride,' McArthur replied. 'You're going to hell.'

He drove Bradley through Erfurt, a picturesque Renaissance town, dominated by its cathedral and fish market and old quarter, with its quaint burgher houses, Gothic alcoves, and timber-framed walls. Then on to the fields beyond, very green, though not sweet-smelling, then into the Buchenwald concentration camp, which was not quite so pretty.

The dead lay in neat rows, staring skyward, emaciated, and the living, though sometimes on their feet, did not look much better. Some of the living were dying - they had lived too long to want life - and the stench of the dead and the dying permeated the smoky air.

Bradley saw the raised gallows, the delousing rooms, the crematoria, and steeled himself to get out of the jeep and walk through hell's basement. He stuck closely to McArthur, feeling cowardly, and was glad when they had stepped up from the mud and entered a clean, cluttered office. A US Army captain was sitting on the edge of his desk, staring out through his window. He was smoking and

drinking a glass of something and looked drained and haunted.

'Hi, Cap'n,' McArthur said lightly. 'How are things in the funny farm?'

'Not funny at all.'

The captain turned to face them, his eyes crimson from lack of sleep, and when Bradley saw the way he gazed at McArthur, he knew they shared the same grief.

'I've only been here two days,' the captain said, 'and it seems like two years ... A goddamned, motherfuckin', two-year nightmare. I just can't believe this shit.' He shook his head from side to side disbelievingly, then looked up at Bradley. 'You're the guy wants to talk to my man,' he said.

'What man?'

The guy from Kahla. The one who worked for your Wilson. An American was involved in all this shit? I just don't believe if

He shook his head again.

'Involved how?' Bradley asked him.

'Your Wilson used a lotta the people from this camp. All these scarecrows, they swear to it Hold on, I'll go get my man. McArthur said you were coming.'

The man he brought in was rag and bone inside striped pajamas. His eyes, which seemed too big for his head, were disconcertingly bright

This is Colonel Mike Bradley,' McArthur's friend, Captain Shaw, said to the apparition who stood meekly by the desk. 'He wants to talk to you about Kahla. Here, take a seat.' When the corpselike individual had sat down, Shaw lit a cigarette and said, 'Colonel Bradley, this is Alex Overbeck. He's been in Buchenwald for two years and somehow survived it. He already knows who you are. Fire away, Colonel.' Then he gave the cigarette to Overbeck and kicked a chair toward Bradley. 'Sit down, Colonel.'

Bradley felt that he had to.

He opened his mouth to speak, glanced despairingly at McArthur, received only a forlorn shrug of his shoulders, men

looked back at Overbeck, whose eyes, which still seemed too big and too bright, were steady upon him.

'I understand,' Overbeck said, his voice as light as a feather. 'It is difficult to talk when I look like this, but it's not your fault, Colonel. I worked for the American at Kahla. Shall we take it from there? What would you like to know?'

Bradley coughed into his fist and said, 'I didn't even know that Kahla existed. You better...'

The gaunt creature smiled. 'Oh, yes, sir, it exists. It is an old walled town, approximately halfway between Erfurt and Nordhausen, and the Nazis constructed another underground factory there, using labor from this camp, the closest to it'

'We don't have a damned thing on it,' Bradley said, gradually getting used to Overbeck's appearance and feeling less ashamed.

When Overbeck inhaled on his cigarette, his cheekbones looked devoid of flesh.

'I had the impression,' he said, 'that even those at Nordhausen didn't know about it. The complex at Kahla was constructed in great haste, at a great cost in human life, and guarded by the SS Death's Head elite. The man in charge of it was SS General Hans Kammler. Next in charge was an SS captain, Ernst Stoll. When Himmler visited Nordhausen, he never came near Kahla - and it's widely believed that the other scientists, from Peenemunde, didn't even know that it existed. It was a special place, Colonel.'

'Are you suggesting that even Himmler might not have known about it?'

'I cannot confirm that fact, sir, but I certainly suggest it That belief was widely held among the Buchenwald inmates who worked at the Kahla complex.'

'And the American, Wilson, was there.'

Alex Overbeck, having survived a living death, was still able to smile - and to make it sardonic. 'Yes,' he said, 'the American was working there. I was amazed, but there he was. At first I couldn't believe it - it just didn't seem credible - but though occasionally, sometimes jokingly, he was referred to as

Kruger, those who worked most closely with him addressed him as Wilson. I noted, further, that though his German was grammatically perfect, it retained a trace of an American accent. Also, though he often wore an SS uniform, it was clear to anyone but a fool that he wasn't a military man - and never had been. Besides, he was too old - that was the biggest joke of all. He looked about sixty - an extremely healthy, vigorous sixty - but there were rumors that he was much older than that, maybe even by fifteen years. Whether or not there was any truth in those rumors, he was certainly no German soldier, let alone a member of Himmler's SS Death's Head.'

'What did you do in Kahla?' Bradley asked.

Overbeck just shrugged. "What we all did - I worked.'

'Doing what?'

'Anything they ordered me to do.'

'Let me rephrase the question: What work was the American involved in? What was he constructing?'

'A secret weapon,' Overbeck said as if it was self-evident. 'Not much different from the work going on at Nordhausen - rockets, submarines, jet planes... all sorts of highly advanced weapons.'

'And Wilson's? Specifically?'

'A disc-shaped aircraft. Jet-propelled, I think. We all made jokes about eating off the saucer - we were so poorly fed, you know. Anyway, that's what he was working on, this saucer-shaped, jet-propelled aircraft that rose straight up in the air. I hated him - to me, he was just a Nazi - but his machine was breathtaking.'

'You saw a test flight?'

'I helped wheel it out of the hangar.'

'And it made a vertical ascent?'

'Yes. Then it hovered in the air - not moving, just hovering - then shot off horizontally - so fast, I hardly knew where it went.'

'How fast?' 'Too fast to calculate. And since I couldn't judge even an aircraft's speed, I wouldn't hazard a guess.'

Bradley smiled. 'What did you do before the war, Mr Overbeck?'

'I was a priest,' Overbeck replied.

Bradley didn't know where to look. The man's strength made him feel weak. He coughed into his fist again, felt foolish then cleared his throat 'No wonder you can't judge the speed of aircraft.'

Overbeck blew a cloud of smoke and smiled again, his cheeks prominent 'Anything else?' he asked.

'Yes. Is Wilson's flying saucer still at Kahla?'

'No,' Overbeck said. 'It was blown up a few days later. I think they did it to keep you or the Soviets from getting your hands on it. Which is why, when they evacuated the site, they executed everyone who'd worked there and took everything with them. I'm a lucky man, Colonel.'

'Sounds like it. How did you escape?'

Overbeck spread his hands in the air and glanced up at the ceiling, as if speaking to God. 'I wasn't at Kahla that day,' he said. 'I normally worked there - but not that day. One of the wives here - the wife of an SS officer - wanted help in the house, and since the prisoner who normally did it fell ill and was therefore shot, I was dragged out of the queue waiting for transport and given to her instead. It's as simple as that.'

Bradley studied the floor. It had the look of something solid. He needed it because his head was swimming in a whirlpool of madness.

'When did they leave?' he asked.

'Early this month,' Overbeck replied. 'Apparently Kammler went first, taking the scientists from Nordhausen—'

'Who?'

'The scientists from Peenemunde.'

'But not Wilson?'

'No. Then Camp Dora was evacuated and the prisoners returned to their former camps. And finally, on the fourth, fifth, and sixth, the scientists from Kahla departed, one group each night.'

'Do you know where they went?'

'Prisoners working at the railway stations can confirm that the three trains, one each night, were all heading for different destinations - the first one marked to terminate at Rostock, the second for Lubeck, via Rostock, and the third and last for Hamburg, via Hannover. Since all of those places were in the line of the Allied advance, it can be assumed that they were only halfway houses and that the final destination would be on the Baltic.'

'Peenemunde?' Bradley asked. 'No,' Overbeck said, stubbing his cigarette out with obvious unhappiness, then breathing deeply, as if yearning for another. 'Since the Soviets are advancing at great speed toward Peenemunde - and were even then - the only other possible destination would be a port of escape, most likely Kiel.'

Bradley straightened up in his chair. This priest who looked like death was smart.

'Can you tell me anything else?' he asked.

'Just go to Kiel,' the priest said. Bradley glanced through the window, saw the gallows and a stream of smoke, shivered, and pushed his chair back and stood up to leave.

'Thank you,' he said.

'My pleasure,' Overbeck replied, his smile exposing his pain.

Bradley nodded at McArthur and they both left and walked back through Buchenwald. Bradley kept his gaze focused on the ground and prayed to God for deliverance... deliverance from hatred.

His new hatred for Wilson.

'I'm going to Kiel,' he said.

Chapter Thirty-Eight

Berlin was hell on earth. The black-charred ruins stretched away as far as the eye could see, the air was thick with smoke and dust, people were queuing hopelessly for food and even water, bombs fell constantly from the Allied planes overhead, and from a mere thirty-two kilometers to the east, the guns of the Soviet army roared ominously.

Ernst's final visit to the Fuhrer's bunker made him feel that he had entered an insane asylum. Goebbels had encouraged his unfortunate wife and six children to come and die with him and his beloved Fuhrer when the city fell. Goring had fled to Karinhall, where his butler was waiting with fourteen carloads of treasures and expensive clothing. Bormann, after demanding the execution of Goring as a traitor, had telephoned his wife at Berchtesgaden, to inform her that he had found a hiding place for them in the Tyrol, that she was to pose as a director of refugee children, and that he had kidnapped six youngsters from the kindergarten in Garmisch to make their escaping group look more plausible. And, finally, the Ftihrer was still babbling about secret weapons, accusing everyone of trying to betray him, ordering the arrest of that traitor, Goring, discussing the distribution of cyanide tablets with his frightened mistress, Eva Braun, veering wildly between chalk-faced exhaustion and outbursts of paranoid anger, and hoping to prolong the battle for Berlin until at least May 5, because he could then die on the same day as Napoleon.

All of this was taking place beneath the garden of the

Chancellery, upon which Allied bombs were falling with the consistency of rain.

Himmler had been to the bunker that very morning to pay his respects to the Fuhrer on his birthday, but had then left to return to Dr Gebhardt's sanatorium. Ernst made the 120-kilometer drive to Hohenlychen, passing columns of marching German soldiers and trucks and tanks that were being bombed relentlessly by Allied aircraft.

Eventually he found himself in Himmler's study, which was practically dark. The Reichsfuhrer was tapping his front teeth with his fingernails and looked glassy-eyed.

'I have not given up on negotiating peace,' he babbled without prompting from Ernst. 'I have instructed my masseur, Felix Kersten, to fly to Eisenhower's headquarters and discuss an immediate cessation of hostilities. I myself braved the pouring rain to meet with Norbert Masur, the representative of the World Jewish Congress, in an attempt to solve the vexing Jewish problem, explaining that I have already turned the camps at Bergen-Belsen and Buchenwald over to the Allies, have arranged the evacuation of nearly forty thousand prisoners from the camp at Sachsenhausen, and have authorized the release of another one thousand Jewish women from Ravensbruck - and still the Schweine was not impressed!'

He glanced wildly around the room, as if expecting to see Soviet troops bursting through the walls, then tapped his front teeth with his fingernails again and took a deep breath.

'Nor have I forgotten Count Bernadotte, of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, with whom I am still having consultations regarding a peace-making formula. I met him yesterday and will be meeting with him again. Failing that, I will arrange a personal meeting with Eisenhower, who may be more reasonable.' He removed his pince-nez, rubbed his glassy, dazed eyes, blinked and put the spectacles on again, and glanced nervously about him.

'It is not fair,' he whined. 'Everyone wants something from me. Kersten and Schellenberg want me to overthrow the Fiihrer with a coup d'etat. Von Krosigk has begged me to seek

peace through the Pope. Meanwhile, I'm supervising secret negotiations elsewhere - and now the Fuhrer and those Schweine surrounding him in the bunker suspect me of treason. Have they arrested that imbecile Goring yet? I hope so. They should shoot him!'

He pushed his chair back, paced the floor, stopped to tap his front teeth with his fingernails, then sighed and sat down again.

'All hope is not lost,' he said. 'We still have our secret weapons. My stars tell me they'll be ready just in time to turn the tide in our favor.'

Ernst heard the Soviet guns. They were only sixteen kilometers from here. He wondered how Himmler could have managed to convince himself that his secret weapons, even if they existed, could be produced in time, and in sufficient quantities, to hold back the Soviet and Allied advance, let alone turn the tide.

'Im afraid, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst began, hoping to offer some common sense, 'that the secret weapons—'

'Schriever's saucer! He said it was almost finished. What news do you have of it?'

Himmler's eyes gleamed with hope - the forlorn hope of the truly mad - and Ernst, who had once feared this man, now almost pitied him.

'I'm afraid, Reichsfuhrer, that Schriever's flying saucer won't help us now. Even if it works, it's come too late to do us much good.'

'Nonsense!' Himmler exploded, almost jumping out of his chair. The very sight of it will terrify the Soviets and make them turn back! As for the Allies, though they clearly are not so primitive, they will most likely do the same. I want that flying saucer to be finished! I want to know if it works!'

He stared wildly at Ernst, who hardly knew what to say, then drummed his fingers on the desk and took a few deep breaths. 'According to my astrological chart,' he said, sounding calmer, 'something extraordinary will occur toward the end of this month, just in time to turn the tide in our favor. I believe

that's a reference to Flugkapitan Schriever's flying saucer, so I want you to go straight to Prague and find out what's happening.'

'The Soviets are advancing on Prague,' Ernst reminded him.

'You can get there before the Soviets do - so do it, Captain. For me! Do it for your Reichsfuhrer.'

'Yes, sir,' Ernst replied, as he had in fact been planning to go there to complete Wilson's plot, but preferred to do it with Himmler's permission, to avoid suspicion. 'But what if the Soviets reach Prague before Schriever escapes with the completed saucer and his technicians?'

'In such circumstances you must destroy the flying saucer and hide all the papers relating to it. Then, when the tide turns in our favor, we can rebuild the saucer.'

'Very good, Reichsfuhrer,' Ernst said, now having permission to do what he had planned to do anyway.

'Nevertheless, that should not happen. The Soviets are still a good way away. I see no reason why you cannot get to Prague and back here again before the end comes - and I expect you to bring me good news.'

'I will, Reichsfuhrer. I promise.'

'Good-bye, Captain. And good luck.'

'Heil Hitler!'

'Heil Hitler.'

Ernst saluted, then walked to the study door. He opened it, started out, then glanced back to take a last look at his once-frightening, all-powerful Reichsfuhrer. He was already slumped over his desk, studying his astrological charts, neurotically tapping his front teeth with his fingernails and making loud, sighing sounds. He was all alone in that gloomy room, a shadow-figure, a mirage, a man disappearing into himself, to be lost in his own dream.

He was covering his face with his hands when Ernst quietly closed the door.

The car journey to Prague took nearly eight hours, was further hindered by more Allied bombing raids and roads filled with

columns of troops, and was not without a great deal of tension.

Bypassing Dresden in the dead of the night, Ernst saw the darkness illuminated by the flashing of the Soviet guns, where they were firing from the Oder River. The Soviet army was very close indeed. It had already captured most of Pomerania, Poland, and Hungary, and Ernst was thankful that it was closer to Berlin than to where he was going.

He arrived at Prague in the early morning. It smoldered just like Berlin. Ernst heard bombing and the continuing roar of the Soviet guns, and realized that it was only a matter of days before Prague fell also.

The war was practically over.

Indeed, the first news he received upon reporting to the SS officer in charge of security at the BMW plant on the outskirts of the city - placed in charge, as he was soon informed, because of fears that the plant would be overrun by groups of Czechoslovak patriots - was that by dawn that very morning, Berlin had been completely encircled and its last free airports overrun by the Red Army.

Now there was no way in or out The fate of the city was sealed.

'You can't go back there,' the SS commander, Lieutenant Gunter Metz, informed him. 'You might as well stay here. Wait until we see which way the Soviets are moving, then make your escape.'

Ernst had no intentions of remaining in Prague, but he complimented the officer on his keen thinking and then asked to be directed to Flugkapitan Schriever. He was escorted to the well-guarded East Hall of the great factory. There, remarkably, with a lack of realism fully the equal to that of Himmler and the rest of them, Schriever was still racing to complete his flying saucer, which was resting on its mobile steel platform and surrounded by engineers.

When Schriever saw Ernst walking toward him, he could not hide his frown.

'Captain Stoll!' he exclaimed, trying to recover, though not too successfully. 'What a pleasant surprise!'

Still smarting, even after all these years, from the knowledge that he had been passed over by the German scientific fraternity to make way for second-raters like Schriever, Ernst realized that he was going to enjoy doing what he now had to do - which was to check that Schriever had not, by some combination of luck and thievery, made any unexpected advances with his design and ensure that what he did have was destroyed before the Soviets reached here.

'I have been sent by Himmler,' he said without preamble, 'to check on the progress of your flying saucer. Is it actually flying yet?'

'Unfortunately, no,' Schriever replied, wiping his oily hands on a rag, 'but we should have it ready any day now - and then we will test it.'

'You do realize, do you not, that the Soviet Army is advancing on a front that extends from Gorlitz to Vienna and will soon be marching right into Prague?'

'Yes, Captain, I know; but a drastic shortage of components - ball bearings for the ring plates, new heat-resistant wing discs - led to a bigger delay than anticipated - and then the Soviets captured Breslau, where Habermohl was working, and since we then had to do his work as well, we were held back even more. Nevertheless, we've replaced the original gas-turbine rotors with jet engines - and the saucer you see before you, if test-flown, will not let us down.'

What Ernst was looking at was one of Wilson's crude, earlier models: a wide-surface ring that consisted of adjustable wing discs that could be brought into the appropriate position for vertical or horizontal flight while rotating around a fixed, cupola-shaped cockpit. Now powered by Schriever's addition of adjustable jet engines, it would, in Ernst's judgment, rise vertically a few feet, but then, once the angle of the jets was adjusted, go out of control - just as Wilson had said it would.

Although pleased that Schriever had made no unexpected progress and was still deluding himself with this piece of aeronautical rubbish, Ernst still knew that it was imperative

that the Soviets did not learn about any aspect of Projekt Saucer - at least not until Wilson wanted them to know, which would be in the future. He therefore said what had to be said - and took pleasure from doing so.

'It has to be destroyed,' he told Schriever, 'before the Soviets arrive.'

'What?' Schriever exclaimed, shocked.

'You heard me the first time,' Ernst said, thinking, How sweet is vengeance! 'We have to destroy it.'

'But it hasn't even been test-flown yet!'

'We still have to destroy it.'

Schriever's assistant, Miethe, arrived, also wiping his hands on an oily rag. Schriever glanced at him with widening eyes, then turned back to Ernst.

'Why?' he asked.

'To prevent it from falling into the hands of the Soviets, of course,' Ernst told him as flatly as possible.

'But we can arrange a test flight almost immediately!'

'You may be too late. The Soviets are advancing fast. We're also concerned about Czechoslovak patriots who already are causing trouble in Prague and may have men planted here, just waiting for the Soviets to get close.'

Schriever started to look desperate. 'But without even a test flight...'

'I'm sorry. We can't think about that now. We must destroy the machine.'

Looking increasingly suspicious, and even aggressive, Schriever glanced automatically at Miethe, who was cleverly keeping his mouth shut, then turned back to Ernst and said, 'I've been receiving instructions direct from Himmler's office - not from Nordhausen - so why are you suddenly taking over?'

'Nordhausen was evacuated and Himmler sent me to arrange the same thing here.'

'We're evacuating now?'

'Do you wish to shake hands with the Soviets?'

'Why can't we take the saucer with us?'

The risk is too large. We might get captured. We don't want them to get it.'

Schriever looked even more suspicious. 'Do you have written authority, Captain Stoll?'

'No. Of course not Officially, this project doesn't exist. No project - no papers.'

'Then why did Himmler's office not contact me?'

'Berlin was being encircled,' Ernst lied blandly, 'and Himmler's phones were cut off. The city, as you know, has since been cut off - so you can't ring through to them. Now please do as I say, Flugkapitan Schriever, and stop all this nonsense.'

'Himmler may have ordered the saucer to be destroyed, but not without a test flight. I insist on a test flight'

'When can it be arranged?'

'By tomorrow morning. Ten o'clock sharp.'

'Fair enough,' Ernst said.

He went straight to the commander, the young lieutenant, and gained his trust by sharing confidences with him, as if with an old friend.

'He can't be trusted,' he told Metz. We've had problems with him before. Himmler asked me to ensure that this project was obliterated, but Schriever, if his test flight is a failure, will insist on more time. We have to destroy it, no matter what, and I need you and your men. Will you help?'

'Of course, sir!'

Ernst did not sleep well that night. He rarely slept well anymore. His sleep was haunted by nightmares of death and destruction, by dreams of Ingrid and his children and all his other failures and betrayals.

It was dreams and nightmares, but also constant noise: the bombers growling overhead, the exploding bombs, the wailing sirens, the Soviet guns belching in the distance, but sounding closer each hour.

You couldn't tell how close they were - you never saw them; you just heard them - and Ernst, who had once dreamed of glory, was glad to get out of bed.

It was just after dawn. He wandered around the East Hall. He saw the sun burning through mist and the pall of smoke from the bombing raids, the smoke drifting from the city to the fields that were pockmarked with shell holes. He tried to think of another world - a normal world, without war - but every image in his head contained violence, destruction, blood and tears, flame and smoke - all created by a dream of omnipotence, the perversion of science.

He had helped to create it.

He was hungry but couldn't eat, so he lit a cigarette instead, and smoked it while gazing across the destroyed fields at the ruins of Prague. He smoked a lot that morning, just kneeling there, waiting, and then stood up when the doors of the East Hall opened and the engineers walked out

Ernst went to a telephone in the hall and phoned SS lieutenant Giinter Metz.

'Bring your men down,' he said.

Schriever arrived with Miethe, nodded at him, then ordered the saucer to be wheeled out of the hall. While this was happening, Lieutenant Metz arrived with a demolition team and a squad of seasoned SS troops, all carrying weapons. They spread themselves around the sunlit clearing outside as the retractable wheels of the steel platform were being withdrawn to let it become the saucer's launching pad.

Schriever, when he saw the demolition team, became flushed with anger.

He climbed into the saucer and strapped himself in, then Miethe replaced the Perspex lid on the cupola and made sure it was locked. Then he climbed back down the ladder and pulled it away. Schriever started the saucer when Miethe had returned to the safety of the concrete bunker.

It roared into life. Yellow flames spat at the platform. The flames shot back up and spread out obliquely to form a great fan of fire. The flying saucer roared and shuddered. It lifted off the platform, hovered just above it, making the steel turn redhot, then it ascended a few more feet and swayed dangerously from side to side. It roared even louder, belching

flame and smoke in a fury. Then, unable to go higher, Schriever tried to go horizontally - but the minute the jets on one side were raised, the machine tilted over. It hit the ground and rocked wildly like a dropped coin, then its engines cut out.

There was a brief, shocking silence.

'Destroy it,' Ernst said.

Miethe ran to the saucer, clambered up its tilted side, released the locks holding down the canopy, and helped Schriever out. Looking shocked and angry at once, he slid down the body on his backside, dropped to the ground, and rubbed his chin with his right hand, then saw the SS demolition team walking toward his precious creation.

'No!' he bawled. 'Damn you, no!' He hurried across to Ernst, fists balled, eyes blazing, while Miethe and the other engineers fanned out behind him.

They were going to protect the saucer, to keep the demolition team at bay, but when Ernst unholstered his pistol and aimed it at Schriever, lieutenant Metz's squad of SS troops raised their submachine guns and took aim on the hapless engineers.

Schriever froze where he stood, about four feet away from Ernst, and the engineers behind him did exactly the same.

'Let the demolition team through,' lieutenant Metz said, 'or suffer the consequences.'

The engineers looked around them, at that circle of submachine guns, then parted to let the demolition team walk up to the saucer. Schriever glanced over his shoulder, saw them unwinding the plunger cables, then looked back at Ernst, his dark eyes appalled. 'My life's work! We have to at least have the chance to correct what's wrong. One more day... a few days at most... It's too important... You can't do this!'

'Shut up,' Ernst said. 'You damned fool.' Then he cocked his raised pistol.

We want no witnesses of any kind, Wilson had said, unless they're in the Antarctic...

That meant Schriever and Miethe and all the rest of these engineers. When the Schriever saucer, though relatively

useless, was blown up, they would all disappear as well.

Schriever's eyes became wider.

'You wouldn't!'

'We would and we will. The whole business ends here.'

He glanced over Schriever's shoulder at the demolition team and saw the man in charge of the plunger preparing to lean on it.

'Good-bye, Schriever,' Ernst said.

The flying saucer exploded. No, it didn't - something else did - an eruption of silvery light and boiling smoke and geysering earth ... right beside Schriever's saucer.

Confused, Ernst hesitated. He saw Schriever ducking, squeezed the trigger, fired too late, and saw the man running away as the ground erupted around him.

The shells were whistling in from the east - Soviet shells, from the big guns. Then the soldier fell on the plunger - was thrown forward, in fact, on a wave of erupting soil - and Schriever's saucer disappeared in a ball of fire and spat debris everywhere.

'Shit!' Ernst hissed as the engineers scattered and the SS guns started chattering. Then he sprinted straight into the chaos, trying to take aim at Schriever as he ran away.

The SS troops were spreading out, firing wildly from the hip - not at the engineers, who were running across the field past the smoldering debris of the saucer, but back in the direction of the East Hall, toward which Schriever was running. They were not firing at him but at the other men pouring out, most of them wearing civilian clothes but returning the gunfire.

Schriever saw them as well - he was in fact running toward them - and he turned left and cut across the hangar doors and just about made it.

A Soviet shell saved him - exploding right behind him, between the men who were running out of the East Hall and the SS troops firing at them.

Ernst managed one shot but missed. He was blinded briefly by flying soil, cursed and rubbed his stinging eyes, then saw

the men who were wearing civilian clothes still running at him and firing.

Czechoslovak patriots! he thought. Coming out of the factory! The Soviets must be in Prague!

Then he saw Schriever, cutting back across the field, heading with the other engineers in the general direction of Prague. The ground was erupting between them, shells exploding around the factory, but Ernst went after him anyway, because, given the Czechoslovak patriots, it was the only direction left.

The SS troops were holding their ground, spreading across the remains of the saucer, firing their submachine guns at the advancing resistance men while being cut down by bullets or blown apart in explosions.

A burning light erased all of it. An appalling roaring filled the world. Ernst was slapped by a wave of heat, the breath was sucked from his lungs, he was picked up and spun wildly in the air, and then grass and earth rushed at him. He plunged into a silent darkness, losing his senses. Later he heard a ringing sound... Eventually he opened his eyes to find himself on the ground, lying on the rim of a smoldering shell hole near a parked SS truck.

The battle had moved away from the East Hall. It was ending in the shell-torn field with the SS troops being massacred by the greater number of Czechoslovak patriots. The engineers, including Schriever and Miethe, were still running, much farther away, toward Prague.

Let Schriever talk about his flying saucer, Ernst thought, sitting upright and shaking his head to clear it. It will become just another red herring. Another aid to confusion. It will suit us just fine.

He glanced carefully around him, looking for other resistance fighters, but saw only a clearing filled with the bodies of dead Czechs and Germans. After climbing to his feet, he checked himself for broken bones, found himself to be fit, then clambered up into the troop truck, which still had the key in the ignition. He turned the engine on, then drove across the

grassy field to get away from the factory, which was almost certainly now overrun. He managed to get to the road without being stopped.

From there he drove to the nearest Luftwaffe airfield, which was luckily still held by Germans. He pulled rank in order to commandeer a light plane, then ordered the reluctant pilot to fly him to the SS airport near Kiel.

When the plane had ascended, he looked down through the clouds at the pall of smoke hanging over Prague. Moving in on the city, like ants advancing in numerous lines toward their anthill, were long columns of Soviet tanks and men.

It was something to see.

Chapter Thirty-Nine

Bradley was scared. He had been well trained for this by OSS, had rehearsed it so many times, even making the goddamned jumps, but now that it was real and he was doing it with the professionals - worse, in pitch darkness and in the middle of a war zone - he was not as confident as he had been during his training.

He glanced at his watch. Five minutes to go. His heart missed a beat and he looked along the aircraft, through that dim light, and saw the men of the 82nd Airborne Division facing one another in the belly of the plane, looking bulky with their parachutes and helmets, not frightened at all.

Well, certainly not showing it, as he was convinced he was doing. His heart was racing and he was sweating, though his hands felt too cold, and he knew that the urge to have a piss was also due to his fear.

He was fifty years old, for Chrissakes, and shouldn't be doing such things!

He tried to forget what was going to happen by thinking instead of Gladys, who had continued to write him her wonderful, witty letters from her sickbed in a hospital in London. Apparently she had been shipped back to London from Paris, was making a good recovery, and would soon be walking again, but she badly missed having him in bed beside her. She had also informed him, by letter, that she had scribbled his name about fifty or sixty times on the plaster cast on her broken leg and all the nurses, doctors, and visitors now knew who he was.

Goddammit, he loved her.

She certainly made him feel good. Thinking about her made his heart race. It raced even more when he looked again at his wristwatch and realized that the jump would soon be starting.

Closing his eyes, he breathed deeply, trying to steady his racing heart, and saw, as he had so often since that one visit, the gallows and crematoria of Buchenwald, the priest's gaunt, haunted face.

He had gone back to the priest, feeling trapped in a web of horror, and had learned a lot more from him about life in the concentration camps and underground factories. The priest had told him about the beatings, about the all-too-public hangings, about the shots to the back of the neck and the daily gassings and burnings. He had also told him about worse things - most notably the medical and surgical experiments, performed on men, women, and children, often without anesthetics.

Apparently the Nazi doctors had been trying to learn what could not be gleaned from experiments on animals: the limits of human suffering; the effects of extreme heat and cold, of starvation and sleeplessness; the possibility of survival without certain vital organs; artificial insemination; the swopping of healthy limbs; the potential for extending the human life span by medical, biological, and mental mutation - all of which meant unimaginable pain and horror for the unfortunates used ... And Wilson, whether or not he had been involved directly, had not only shown an interest in the dreadful experiments, but had willingly used the people in the camps as part of his work force.

The man was a monster.

Or, as Major General McArthur had said, some kind of mutant.

Bradley shivered in his harness, then checked his wristwatch again. When he saw that he had one minute left, his stomach almost turned over.

What the hell was he doing here, with the 82nd Airborne

Division, about to parachute into the darkness? He was searching for Wilson.

He had left Nordhausen with the US 1st Army, with which he had traveled so far and seen so much action. He had gone as far as Paderborn with them, but there they had parted company, because he was intent on reaching Kiel before the Soviets took it. He had commandeered a jeep and driven himself through a landscape of appalling destruction, along roads filled with advancing Allied troops and fleeing refugees, past enormous open-air prison camps that stretched as far as the eye could see, to the town of Minden on the Weser, which had recently been occupied by the US 9th Army. There Bradley had attached himself to the British 2nd Army, which, reinforced by the US 82nd Airborne Division, was about to launch itself on the drive toward Lubeck, the doorway to Kiel.

Just before the attack was launched, Bradley had learned that a British SOE headquarters had been set up in Weser. When he paid them a visit, he found himself face to face with his old friend lieutenant-Colonel Mark Wentworth-King.

'Kiel?' Wentworth-King said in reply to Bradley's query. 'Difficult to say who'll get there first, old chap - General Montgomery's 2nd Army, now closing in on Hamburg, the 1st Canadian Army, now closing in on Oldenburg, or the bloody 2nd White Russian Army, now spreading right along the Baltic Coast. If the Russians get there first, you won't get your man, so you'd better move sharpish. I suggest, dear boy, if you have the heart for it, joining a contingent of your very own 82nd Airborne Division, which, to avoid our own guns, is about to parachute down just beyond Neumiinster, near Kiel's ship canal. From there they're hoping to fight their way into Kiel. What age did you say you are?'

Now here he was, fifty years old, preparing to jump out of this plane and parachute down into Germany... Maybe because Wentworth-King had goaded him into it, the smart son of a bitch.

Goddamned Brits! he thought.

'Hitch up!' someone bawled. 'Hitch up?

The door was pulled open and an angry wind howled in. The paratroopers connected their ripcords along the length of the plane. Bradley did the same, standing up like all the rest of them, feeling shaky and not sure if he could make it, but trying to hide that fact.

With the hatch open, the noise was dreadful - a combination of rushing wind and the roaring engines and whipping canvas flaps - but the men shuffled inexorably toward the opening, taking Bradley there with them. The flight sergeant was bellowing instructions laced with obscenities - and Bradley thought he heard other noises outside, though he couldn't be sure. The plane was shaking badly, as if about to fall apart, and he fought the urge to sit down again. Then the flight sergeant bellowed again, a man ahead shouted, the queue moved, and Bradley realized that the first man had jumped out and the others were following,

'Jesus Christ!' he said softly.

The men went out one by one, some bellowing just like the flight sergeant. Bradley swallowed, licked his lips, and wanted to be sick - and was shocked at just how loud the noise was three men away from that open hatch.

Two men.

One man.

The man disappeared through the hatchway, leaving Bradley exposed. The wind almost floored him, roaring at him, beating around him, but he stepped forward, was jerked forward - yes, the flight sergeant had grabbed his shoulder - and he saw his open mouth, the glint of fillings, heard him bellowing. 'Fucking jump!' were the words he heard as the roaring wind sucked him out.

He was swept back and up, his stomach somewhere in his throat, and saw spinning lights, maybe stars, perhaps the moon, and heard the roaring of engines and the magnified rush of wind and then plunged down. He was falling! His parachute hadn't opened! Then he was jerked up violently, a puppet on a string, and suddenly he fell down a black well of silence and saw darkness around him.

Darkness? No. He was falling through clouds. He saw other figures falling all around him on the end of their parachutes. They looked ghostly in the clouds, silhouetted in a gray mist, above and below and all around him as if in a dream.

Then he dropped down below the clouds and was dazzled by dawn light

More than that... the whole world.

Or so it seemed to him. He thought he could see its curved edge. It was actually the horizon, far away, beyond the land's end, a strip of gray stippled by rays of sunlight and spitting fountains of water. It was the Baltic Sea. The fountains of water were explosions. The sky above the sea was filled with black dots - Allied bombers - and the land, now below him, all around him, racing upward, was divided by streams and roads and endless, shifting black lines that, he realized with a shock when he saw the tracers and billowing smoke, were columns of refugees and soldiers passing each other, going in opposite directions, while the war raged about them.

The ground rushed up at Bradley as he fell down through the streaming smoke and noise of the continuing battle.

He braced himself for the landing.

Wilson saw the parachutists through his binoculars and knew they were at least an hour's march away. He turned away from them, scanning east and west, and saw the smoke of battle in both directions as the Soviets and Allies advanced. Then he looked at the Baltic Sea beyond land's end, a few miles away, and saw that the sky was filled with Allied bombers now pounding the port of Kiel.

'We have to leave right now,' he said to General Nebe.

'I know that,' Nebe replied. 'We've already loaded the trucks. I'm taking just enough men to help us unload at the harbor and the rest are being left here to hold off the enemy.'

'Do they know what you're asking of them?'

'These are SS troops, Wilson. SS troops are trained to obey and take pride in doing so.'

'Lucky us,' Wilson said, then glanced at Ernst Stoll. The SS

captain had made it back from Prague in the nick of time, bringing with him the news about Schriever and the latest troop movements. Now, because over the past few days he had actually seen what was happening, he was obviously keen to move.

'Let's go,' he said.

Wilson nodded. Stoll led them out of the bunker, away from the officers quarters and past the troop accommodations, along bleak concrete corridors with reinforced, low ceilings and machine-gun crews at each open window, then around the weapons room and ammunition dumps and storage huts, up the sloping ramps, and outside. There the trucks were parked in the covered, camouflaged garage, with the troops that were actually guarding them clambering up inside.

One of the trucks was special, because it carried the crate containing the remaining components of Wilson's saucer. Wilson insisted on riding in that, instead of in Nebe's staff car. Shrugging, Ernst Stoll climbed in beside him, saying 'Why not indeed?' They sat side by side, the large wooden crate looming over them, then the trucks coughed to life and moved out in column.

'I've thought about it,' Wilson said.

'About what?' Ernst replied.

This Schriever business. The fact that he's still alive. I don't think it matters that much - and may even help us. If, after the war, Schriever starts talking about his flying saucer, it will lead everyone in his direction. They'll check out his drawings and conclude, correctly, that the saucer he constructed was unworkable. After that, if anyone reports seeing our flying saucers, they'll almost certainly be treated as cranks. Once that happens, we can create a smokescreen of confusion and fly our own saucers with impunity. What do you think?'

'I think you're right,' Ernst said.

Wilson smiled and patted him on the shoulder. The German had lost everything in the world and now only had him.

'Good,' Wilson said.

The trucks traveled down to Kiel. A fine mist veiled the

dawn. Aircraft growled overhead, shells exploded on land and sea, and the big guns were thundering in the east, west, and south. Wilson pressed his hand against the rocking crate and then they came to the docks.

The truck squealed to a halt. The crate shook and then was steady. General Nebe's dark eyes emerged from the drifting mist and he motioned them out. Wilson clambered down first and was surprised at how dark it was. The black water reflected the lamps beaming down on the submarines. He glanced toward the warehouses. Nebe was murmuring to his troops. The men formed up in a neatly spaced line against the wall of a hangar.

'I'm going to take a demolition team,' Ernst informed him, 'and get them to lay a trip-wire across the road we've just come down, to blow up anything coming after us.'

'Very good,' Wilson said.

He almost felt proud of Stoll - this new Stoll was his own creation - but as pride was a destructive human weakness, he concentrated elsewhere.

Some men were unloading his precious crate - slowly, very carefully - and eventually, when they got it out of the truck, they hitched it up to a crane.

The crane started groaning.

Wilson glanced at the submarine anchored just below him: U-977. There were men on the deck, arranging themselves around the hold. Chains rattled and Wilson saw his precious crate dangling over the water. There was a moment's hesitation. The crate jerked up, then started spinning. Hands reached up and guided it down and then it dropped out of sight

General Kammler appeared on deck, accompanied by the commander of the submarine, Captain Heinz Schaeffer, whom Wilson had previously met in the Harz Mountains when Schaeffer was inspecting the new XXI electric submarines. Both men climbed up the ladder to the quay and walked straight to General Nebe.

Kammler talked in a low voice, glancing repeatedly along the docks. His shadow trailed out along the wet stones and

touched Wilson's feet. Nebe turned away and murmured something to his sergeant Kammler took a flashlight from his pocket and flashed it three times.

Wilson glanced along the dock, where another truck was approaching. The truck shuddered as it started to slow. Kammler walked up to Wilson and introduced him to Schaeffer. They shook hands as the truck driver changed gears and turned in toward them.

The SS troops remained silent - a line of men along the hangar, all of them with their weapons in their hands slanted over their chests. They were as still as they were silent. Their discipline was remarkable. The sergeant stepped back and bellowed an order, and the troops performed a precise about-turn and froze facing the wall. Wilson heard their guns rattling. Their snapping boot heels left an echo. The truck stopped, overlooking the harbor, and its ramp was thrown down.

A shocking noise split the silence, almost deafening Wilson. The soldiers lined up along the hangar wall were suddenly jerking and screaming. Wilson glanced up at the truck and saw a barrel spitting flame. The machine gun was roaring and rattling as the men died and fell. When Wilson blinked, there was silence. A gray smoke drifted lazily. The high wall of the hangar was filled with holes and splashed with fresh blood.

All the men lay on the ground, sprawled across one another, their pupils reflecting the lamps beaming down on their faces.

Schaeffer turned away, but Kammler looked almost bored. Nebe took his pistol from its holster and then cocked its hammer. He nodded to his sergeant and they both approached the pile of bodies. Nebe fired the first shot. His sergeant fired the second. They took turns, bending over the bodies, the gunshots reverberating eerily while the morning light brightened. The coup de grace seemed to take a long time, though it didn't take long at all. When it was finished, Nebe turned away and gently waved his free hand.

Some men jumped out of the truck. The machine-gun barrel clanged. Nebe returned his pistol to its holster and walked

away from the bodies. There was no sweat on his brow. His dark eyes were unrevealing. He simply nodded at Kammler and Schaeffer, and they walked down to the submarine.

Wilson waited until Ernst Stoll had returned, wanting to check his reaction. Stoll glanced at the pile of bodies, at the blood on the walls and ground, then said -unemotionally, 'Now there are no witnesses to the number of the submarine. We've also wired the road leading onto the quay. I think we should go now.'

'We are going,' Wilson said, 'but you have to destroy the evidence. The submarine's leaving now, since the light will show us up, but we're going to wait just outside the harbor until you get to us. Will you do that?'

'Yes,' Stoll said.

Wilson, who knew a disciple when he saw one, just nodded and turned away, then climbed down the ladder to the submarine.

Having landed in one piece, Bradley marched for an hour with the 82nd Airborne Division and arrived at the camouflaged SS bunker as sunlight bled through the mist. He ran across a windblown field, crouched low, a survivor- then all hell broke loose. German machine guns and bazookas opened up, and he found himself right in the thick of it.

It was a brief but bloody battle, because the Krauts refused to give in, but eventually the paratroopers succeeded by sheer dint of numbers to take control of the bunkers.

Bradley was still with them, very glad to be alive, but he didn't forget what he had come for and asked to question the prisoners. There weren't all that many - the fields and bunkers were strewn with corpses - but that simply made it easier to find out what he wanted to know.

'I don't know what we were guarding,' the first SS prisoner said. 'I can only state that I was disgusted to be asked to risk my life to protect an American scientist I thought that was too much.'

'And where did the American scientist go?' Bradley asked.

'With all the others,' the SS sergeant said in disgust. 'With all the runaway generals and traitors - to the harbor of Kiel. To the submarine dock.'

'When?'

'Half an hour ago.'

'Oh, my God!' Bradley exclaimed, then turned to the commander of the 82nd Airborne Division. 'We've got to get down there right away. That son of a bitch is escaping.'

'My orders were to capture and hold this bunker,' the commander told him. 'I've been given no authority to go to Kiel. Sorry, Bradley. Can't help you.'

'I could go out there and steal a goddamned jeep.'

'I'm not looking, Colonel.'

Bradley hurried outside, feeling as if he were going mad, impelled by the need to fit a face to the man who had haunted him. It had been nearly fifteen years - so long that he'd turned gray and lost his wife and found Gladys... and fought a war he was too old to fight and become an obsessed man.

Yes, obsessed - just like his quarry, though in a different way. As he climbed into the jeep and turned the ignition on, he was convinced that he'd go out of his mind if he didn't get to the end of this.

He had to fit a face to the man whose dreams had made him inhuman.

A genius.

A mutant.

Bradley still could not accept it. As Gladys had said, he was a moral man. He believed that man was both good and evil, a creature of moral choice, and he had to know if someone like Wilson could be as natural as air.

He had to know if Wilson's lack of humanity had been formed in the womb - perhaps by his intelligence - if Wilson's inhumanity, his extraordinary lack of feeling, was as innocent as sunlight or rain, as helpless as a child being born, as alien as Mars.

He had to know if Wilson mirrored his own darker side.

'Goddamn you!' he said aloud as he drove away from the

bunkers. 'I won't let you stay invisible any longer. I'm gonna make you real.'

Then he drove down to Kiel, down that steep, narrow road, seeing the boats out at sea, the water geysering up around them, the bombs falling from the fat-bellied planes flying out of the clearing mist It was the same everywhere - the whole world was at war - and the beautiful earth, its clean air, was being ruined for all time. Death and destruction, smoldering ruins and flame and smoke - Man's genius, his creativity, his science, had sowed what was now being reaped. Not Man, but men - individuals - those like Wilson - and the rubble of Europe, the conflagration of this mighty conflict, was the product of scientific genius used without moral constraints or commonplace feelings.

This was Wilson's inheritance.

Bradley had to see his face, to know if evil was innocent, and he drove like a lunatic into the docks.

He only saw the wire stretched across the road when it was too late to stop.

The wire snapped and flew past him on a sheet of scorching flame as the distant Baltic Sea turned upside-down and his body exploded. He saw whirlpools of light, heard his heartbeat in silence, returned through a sibilance, a ringing, and saw the world turning over. The sea, which had been the sky, became the Baltic Sea again, and he saw the wrecked ships, the other debris of the many air raids, then rolled onto his belly and felt the pain devouring his skin.

'Oh, God.' he groaned. 'Jesus.'

He was hurt pretty badly, but refused to give up. Black and blistered, burning hot and cold, in anguish, almost crying, he crawled away from his upturned jeep, from the fierce, scorching heat, toward the water glittering blackly in morning light The smoke billowed around him, stung his eyes, choked his lungs, and each time he coughed, he was whiplashed by a spasm of pain. He was hurting so bad he wanted to die, but he just couldn't stop. He simply had to see what he had come for and that kept him going.

'Goddammit!' he gasped, keeping himself aware, fighting

the urge for oblivion. Think of Wilson! Remember!'

So he managed to crawl forward, along the quay, by the docks, the stones covered in expelled shells and reeking of cordite - and wet, as he suddenly realized, not with rain, but with blood.

Whose blood?

What the hell... ?

He shuddered and gasped and put his head down, trying to think, listening to the bombers rumbling overhead, the gunfire in the distance. The war was still raging, coming closer to its bloody end, and he couldn't believe how far he had traveled to arrive at this nightmare.

The stones beneath him were wet with blood.

Whose blood?

'Goddammit,' Bradley whispered to the wet stones. 'Gimme a break here!'

The pain whipped him again and he sobbed and then gritted his teeth. When he raised his head, he turned slightly to the side and looked out to sea.

There was a submarine out there.

At first he thought he was imagining it, but then he saw it more clearly, still on the surface, just outside the harbor, obviously preparing to go to sea but not yet submerged.

Bradley knew who was on it

He sobbed with frustration, clenched his fist, and hammered the wet stones.

Then, when he heard approaching footsteps, he looked up again.

An SS officer was walking toward him, holding a pistol in his right hand, his shadow stretched obliquely across the quay in the morning's pale light. He stopped by Bradley's head, looked down at him, then knelt beside him and took hold of his hair to jerk his head up.

He placed the barrel of his Luger pistol against Bradley's temple.

'Who are you?' he asked.

'Mike Bradley. An American.'

'It's an American uniform, I grant you, but your German is excellent'

'I'm an American. Believe me. I'm a member of OSS.'

'The Americans haven't got this far yet, so what are you doing here?'

Bradley started to reply, almost blacked out with pain, recovered and pointed weakly at the distant submarine. 'Is he out there?'

'Who?'

'You know who. That son of a bitch, Wilson.'

'Your compatriot.'

'No!'

'Your friend. Your national hero. The man we Germans now revere. You want Wilson. You've come here alone for him? You must want him a lot.' 'I do.'

'Tell me why.'

Bradley didn't know what to say. There was no way to explain it. Besides, this handsome, civilized SS officer was going to blow his brains out.

'He's a traitor,' Bradley tried.

'Not enough,' the German replied. Tou have the look of someone obsessed, so tell me why you want Wilson.'

Bradley, who thought he was dying, needed to confess. 'I have to see his face,' he said. 'I've wanted to see it for years. I have to fit a face to the man to know what he's about. It's as ample as that.'

He thought he heard the German sighing. He looked up and saw him smiling. The German removed the pistol from Bradley's temple and aimed it at the warehouse.

'You want to know what Wilson's about?' he said. Then look in there, my friend.'

Bradley managed to raise his head. He looked into the warehouse. At first he couldn't see - it was pretty dark in there - but then his eyes adjusted to the gloom beyond the doors, and he saw an open-topped German truck, piled high with some rubbish.

No, not rubbish.

Piled high with the bullet-riddled, bloody corpses of uniformed SS troops.

'Jesus Christ!' Bradley whispered.

He shuddered with revulsion and a touch of disbelief, then the German jerked his head up again and waved the Luger in front of him.

'Bradley?' he asked, confirming the name. 'Mike Bradley of OSS?'

'Yeah,' Bradley said. 'Right'

'And you've been pursuing Wilson for a long time?'

'Nearly fifteen years,' Bradley said.

The German gave a low whistle. That's a long time, Mr Bradley. And although you're in a very bad way, you still look determined.'

'I am,' Bradley told him. 'I won't give up on this, believe me.'

'We'll remember that, Bradley.'

'Goddammit,' Bradley said. 'I've got to see that bastard. Take me out there, then throw me overboard. I want to see him that bad.'

'Your tenacity is admirable, Bradley. You will not be forgotten.'

The German holstered his pistol, released Bradley's head, then stood up and walked away a few feet and knelt down again. He took a cigarette lighter out of his tunic pocket, lit something on the ground, and when he stood up, Bradley saw the fuse cable running back toward the warehouse. Set alight, it spluttered and sparkled as it started its journey.

'Oh, my God.' Bradley groaned.

The German walked back, knelt beside him, and smiled at him. He looked handsome in his SS uniform, but his smile was a dead thing.

'I have to go now, Mr Bradley. Mr Wilson awaits me. My name is Ernst Stoll - Captain Stoll, of the SS - and if you manage to survive the explosion, I hope you'll remember me. Naturally, I will tell Wilson about you ... and he has a long memory. Auf Wiedersehen.'

Captain Ernst Stoll stood up and walked casually across the quay, where four other SS officers, all lieutenants, had been waiting for him. They let him climb down the ladder, obviously to a boat below, then they followed him down, one by one, leaving Bradley alone.

He glanced at the burning fuse. It was racing toward the warehouse. He looked back at the harbor, saw the submarine in the distance, then noticed a rubber dinghy heading toward it, carrying five men.

Obviously Stoll and his officers.

Bradley almost wept with frustration. He was so close yet so far. He thought of Wilson and cursed, thought of Gladys and nearly smiled, then turned his head to look at the burning fuse. It reached the warehouse, then the truck piled with corpses.

My last memory on earth, Bradley thought. Wilson's truckful of corpses.

He held his breath and prayed silently.

Wilson stood with Nebe and Kammler on the deck of the submarine and thoughtfully watched the men on the distant quay. Apart from Stoll, there were only four men. They worked long and very hard. They piled the bodies of their comrades onto the back of the truck and then drove the truck into the hangar. The docks seemed very quiet. The lamps beamed down through the mist. There was an explosion near the road at the end of the docks, and a man who was most likely Stoll walked along there to check. He knelt down for some time, stood up, walked back and forth. Allied planes rumbled overhead as Stoll's four men emerged again.

They were not in the truck, because they had left it inside the hangar. Stoll joined them and they clambered down the ladder and dropped into the dinghy. The oars splashed in the water. The distant lamps showed desolation. After what seemed like a very long time, the men arrived at the submarine. They were all helped aboard. Stoll seemed steady as a rock. Wilson stared across the water at the

docks and saw the clouds of mist thinning.

The explosion was catastrophic. The whole hangar disintegrated. The flames shot up in jagged yellow lines that made the thin mist look silvery. The noise was demonic. A black smoke billowed up. The flames swirled and turned into crimson tendrils that embraced one another. Then the smoke drifted sideways, revealing great piles of rubble. The flames leapt across the charred, broken beams and stained the quay with great shadows.

The flames burned a long time. The harsh wind made them dance. They were still burning brightly when Stoll nodded at Wilson and they went belowdecks. The hatch above them was closed and the submarine, with much moaning and groaning, submerged in the Baltic Sea.

The real journey began.

EPILOGUE
Roswell, New Mexico
July 2,1947

'The space age is beginning,' Bradley told Gladys. 'It began when we shipped the first captured German V-2s to New Mexico in 1945 and when, in March the following year, the first US V-2 launches began at the White Sands Proving Ground under the direction of our old friend, Wernher von Braun, now under contract to the United States. Since then about fifty V-2s have been launched, most of them successfully. Meanwhile, the Soviets, who got Peenemiinde and to whom we kindly handed over Nordhausen shortly after capturing it, have started a similar rocket development program and are preparing to launch their first V-2 from a range near Volgagrad, better known to us as Stalingrad. And apparently, back here in the good ol' US of A, improved rocket motors, using liquid self-igniting fuels and based on the V-2 research, are about to go into production with civilian aviation organizations given USAF contracts... And all that in two years!'

'Give it a rest, Mike,' Gladys said. 'Let me fill up your glass.'

'A man's gotta have a hobby,' Bradley replied. He handed Gladys his glass and glanced out of the window at the desert, flat under a starlit sky. They were living not far from the late Robert H. Goddard's Mescalero Ranch and his old rocket launching site, Eden Valley, and Bradley often felt inspired by the location, given what he was doing.

They'd moved here when they got married, shortly after Bradley's release from the hospital, and now, when he was

not involved in the drafting of contracts between the many US Air Force and civilian aeronautical establishments in the area, he was conducting his own investigations into Wilson's whereabouts and his possible connections with the recent spate of sightings of so-called UFOs, or flying saucers.

It kept him busy. It helped him forget the pain. As they had told him in the hospital, he would have to live with the pain for a long time. He owed Wilson that as well.

Gladys handed him the refilled glass, kissed his forehead, then took the chair facing him. Her hair was getting grayer every day, but her smile was still radiant. He loved her and loved being married to her; he'd gained that much, at least.

'Feeling okay?' she asked him.

'Sure.'

'When are we going to New York to see your kids? I sure like those visits.'

Bradley shrugged, then winced. Even shrugging could hurt like hell. 'Christmas,' he said, remembering the submarine in the harbor of Kiel, the icily sardonic SS captain, the fuse spluttering toward the truck piled with corpses, then the stupendous explosion ... 'We'll go see them at Christmas. They're looking forward to seeing you again. We'll have a real family holiday.' He'd awakened hours later, pulled back to life by pain, and found himself half buried under rubble with a lot of bones broken. He'd been rescued, of course - the Allies and Soviets had met in Kiel - but he'd spent the next six months in a US Army hospital in Frankfurt, then been shipped home, to New York, for a long and painful convalescence.

All that, and he still hadn't seen Wilson, didn't know what he looked like. It was hard to take.

'What are all those notes?' Gladys asked him, indicating the pile of papers on his desk.

Bradley had a sip of whiskey. 'I'm just finishing off my research on the members of Projekt Saucer... on what happened to them.'

'Anything interesting?'

'So so. It's known that Rudolph Schriever and his team were trying to construct a flying saucer in the BMW plant near Prague, were hoping to test it in 1945, but had to destroy it in the face of the Soviet advance. When the Soviets took Prague, the saucer team all went their separate ways. As far as I can gather, Habermohl was captured and has disappeared into the Soviet Union; Miethe surrendered to the Allies and now works for the A.V. Roe Aeronautical Company in Malton, Ontario; and Schriever managed to make his way back home and has recently, from the safety of his home at Hokerstrasse 28 in Bremerhaven-Lehe, been telling the press that the flying saucers now being seen all over the place are based on his original Projekt Saucer designs.'

'Schriever doesn't mention Wilson?'

'Nope. Not a word.'

'And the others have vanished from the face of the earth.'

'More or less,' Bradley said. 'My only clue is that damned German submarine, U-977, which docked at Mar Del Plata, Argentina, on August 17, 1945. According to its commander, Captain Heinz Schaeffer, it had put out from Kiel harbor in late April 1945 and arrived in Argentina after an epic voyage of nearly four months. According to the Argentine authorities, their inspection of the submarine had revealed nothing unusual; however, given Peron's fondness for Nazis, we have to treat what they say with some skepticism. Captain Schaeffer was later handed over to an Anglo-American commission for intensive interrogations, during which he was asked if anyone of, quote, political importance, unquote, had been aboard his submarine during its final voyage. Naturally he denied all knowledge of everything.'

'But you have your doubts.'

'Well, we certainly know that an awful lot of fanatical Nazis have been given sanctuary in Argentina and Paraguay. So if Wilson was on that submarine - which he certainly was

if it was the same submarine that I saw leaving Kiel harbor - it's possible that he disembarked at Mar Del Plata and went on to his final destination, wherever that might be, under the protective cloak of the Argentine government. And certainly there are rumors that a former Nazi named Ernst Stoll is currently living in seclusion in Paraguay.'

He glanced out the window again at that flat, dark desert stretched out under a starlit sky, and thought of Goddard's first rocket tests all those years ago, not too far from there. He shook his head, mystified by his own questions, then drank some more bourbon.

'You know,' he said, 'it sometimes really scares me. In April 1945 Wilson disappears with his designs for a highly advanced saucer-shaped aircraft, then, on June 24 this year, a part-time pilot, Kenneth Arnold, reports seeing nine saucer-shaped objects flying over Mount Rainier in Washington State. Since then similar objects have been observed all over the place - but mostly over New Mexico, right here where we live. Why?'

Gladys gave that familiar, laconic grin. 'One theory is that they're of Soviet origin,' she said.

'Well, the Soviets did capture the Peenemiinde facility and a lot of its documentation and products - and they did ship more than six thousand German technical specialists of all kinds to various research centers throughout the Soviet Union - so we certainly know that they're working with the V-2 rockets and other advanced German secret projects.'

'So the theory,' Gladys continued, 'is that the flying saucers originate in the USSR and have been sent here to spy on our top-secret installations.'

'Which theoretically explains the preponderance of UFO sightings in New Mexico.'

'Exactly,' Gladys said. 'Right now New Mexico contains more of our postwar defense installations than any other part of the United States, including atomic research, aircraft, missile and rocket development, and a lot of highly

advanced radar-electronics and stratospheric flight experimentation. The top-secret Manhattan atom bomb project is in Los Alamos. The White Sands Missile Range and Proving Range at Alamogordo is the most important of its kind in the United States. And we even have the only combat-trained atom bomb group in the world at this time: the 509th Bomb Group of the US Army Air Force Base, right here in Roswell, where Goddard flew his first real rockets. So, yes, if those flying saucers are spying on us, they'd certainly want to come here.'

The Soviets or Wilson's group,' Bradley said dreamily. 'It sure as hell makes you think ...'

He was just about to have another sip of his whiskey when the telephone rang. He picked it up and gave his name.

'Bradley,' a familiar voice said tersely, 'you better get your ass over here.'

Bradley immediately recognized the voice as that of First lieutenant William B. Harris, Flight Intelligence Officer of the Roswell Army Air Base. 'What's up?' he asked, glancing automatically at Gladys.

'We've just been informed that a saucer-shaped aircraft crashed on the plains of San Augustin, between Magdalena and Socorro, New Mexico, about forty minutes ago.'

Bradley glanced at his wristwatch. It was just going on ten-thirty p.m.

'It's probably just a Rawin weather balloon.'

'No,' Harris said firmly. 'There are none up tonight. Besides, we tracked this thing on radar until it went down - and it was certainly no weather balloon. Also, the flight controller at the private airfield at Carrizozo, about thirty-five miles southwest of the crash site, called a few minutes before the crash to inform us that a saucer-shaped aircraft had flown over at an altitude of approximately four to six thousand feet, at a speed of about four hundred miles per hour. Some goddamned farmer's already been out there and called from his home to say that what crashed is some sort

of metallic, saucer-shaped object about twenty-five or thirty feet in diameter. He also said that there are dead bodies in the wreckage.'

'Jesus Christ!' Bradley whispered.

'And right now,' Harris continued, 'at the insistence of General Hoyt Vandenburg, deputy chief of the air force, an intelligence team from the 509th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force is on its way to the crash site to pick up the pieces. Once they get it, you can rest assured that it'll be flown out to either Carswell AFB, Forth Worth, or Wright-Paterson AFB in Dayton. So if we want to see what the hell it was, we better get out there fast.'

'Where'll I meet you?'

'Right outside the main gate.'

'I'm on my way,' Bradley said. Excited, he put the phone down and stood up, saying to Gladys: 'It's too good to be true. Something saucer-shaped has crashed near Socorro. I'm meeting Bill Harris at the main gate of Roswell Army Air Base, then we're going to drive the hell out there - so don't wait up, honey.'

'But I can't sleep without your battered bones beside me.'

Bradley grinned. 'Glad to hear it.' He bent over and kissed her full on the lips, then straightened up and looked down at her. 'I owe that son of a bitch Wilson one thing,' he said. 'I found you when I was trying to find him. That's a pretty good trade-off, right?'

'I'm glad you think so,' she said.

He grinned and waved his hand, then walked out of the living room, grabbed his coat, and hurried out to his car and drove into the night.

The land was flat and featureless, windblown, with the dust swirling eerily, but the sky above it contained an enormous moon and a spectacular display of stars. There were very few clouds -just some candy floss, here and there - but enough to cast shifting shadows on the desert floor.

Bradley drove fast, too excited to be careful, and enjoyed the feeling of power, of magical omnipotence, that came

with being isolated from the world and moving through it at great speed. He loved the desert at night, its stark, lunar beauty; loved the play of shadow and lights on its barren floor, which made it seem like a living thing.

So, he was enjoying the drive and feeling excited ... Then he began to feel odd, no longer alone ... aware of some unseen presence.

'What the hell... ?'

He spoke aloud to break the silence - or the silence contained within the beating wind - and automatically glanced at his rear-view mirror.

He saw only a cloud of billowing dust churned up by his wheels.

Nothing else ... just the darkness ... the stars seeming to move away ... the sky unfolding radiantly in his wake as the car barreled forward. Nothing else in the mirror.

Yet his heart started racing.

He glanced left and right, convinced that something was out there. He saw nothing and glanced up, where there was nothing unusual, and so concentrated on the road straight ahead, aware that he was sweating.

'Dammit, Bradley,' he said. 'Imagination - that's a dangerous thing.'

Talking to himself... talking aloud to calm his nerves. There was nothing out there but moonlit darkness, starlit sky, shifting shadows ...

No, something was out there. What was that? Something moving. A flashing light. Growing bigger. Approaching... Yes, dammit, approaching!

He saw the light, then it was gone, though it hadn't flashed on and off. It had flown from east to west at tremendous speed, then maybe shot upward - so fast it just disappeared.

Where was it now?

Bradley felt his skin crawling. His fear was an embarrassment. He was aware of something out there, couldn't see it, but could feel it, and his hands became slippery on the

steering wheel when his heart raced in panic.

He tried to convince himself that he was imagining it... then, as his helpless fear deepened, something flashed in his eyes.

He almost swerved off the road, but blinked and straightened out. He squinted into the darkness, trying to see between the headlights. To the side, a pool of light brightened on the road beside the car, keeping abreast of it, speeding along and growing brighter and wider until it covered the whole road.

Bradley glanced up and was blinded by dazzling light. Then he lost control.

'Shit!' he exclaimed, his voice reverberating in his head as he fought with the wheel. The car swerved off the road, out of the light, then back onto the road and into the light again. 'Jesus Christ! What the—'

The light disappeared abruptly. The car barreled into the darkness. Its headlights had gone out and Bradley frantically worked the switch. Then a bass humming sound, an infrasound, almost physical, filled the car and tightened around his head as the engine cut out.

Bradley slammed on the brakes, went into a skid, straightened out, and was slowing down when something passed above, shot into the darkness ahead, then became an enormous, burning globe that froze right in front of him.

The car came to a halt. It just rolled to a stop. Bradley sat there, hardly believing what he was seeing, but too stunned to move.

He was looking at an enormous, glowing, saucer-shaped object that was hovering in midair along the road, almost as wide as the road. It had a silvery, metallic appearance, had no surface protuberances, and seemed to possess a perfectly seamless surface beneath that eerie green glowing.

Bradley sat in the car, too stunned to move, mesmerized by that thing out there. Then that thing, the flying saucer, sank lower and settled on the ground. It didn't appear to

have any legs - it just settled down on its base - then the bass humming sound increased, tightening around Bradley's head, and he saw a panel opening up in the base of the saucer.

First one, then two, then three black-clad figures dropped down and spread out across the road and walked toward him.

Bradley was terrified.

He didn't know why - they were just people, after all. As they advanced deliberately upon him, he saw only that they were dressed completely in black, looked otherwise human, but were possessed of a frightening, calm intensity that seemed terribly unreal.

He wanted to get out of the car and flee, but he felt paralyzed.

Then the infrasound faded away and the tightness left his head. He immediately reached for the ignition key and turned it, but heard only a dead click. He dropped his hand as if he'd been scorched. His heart was still racing dangerously. He licked sweat from his upper lip and moved his gaze, taking in the three men.

One stopped right in front of the car, the other went to the far side, and the third walked around to stop by Bradley's door.

When he bent down to look through the window, Bradley wanted to scream.

'Roll the window down, Bradley.'

The man's voice was very soft. It was also oddly flat. It was the voice of a man with few feelings and a lot of authority. Bradley did as he was told. He didn't seem to have a choice. That voice, though quiet and unemotional, would brook no disobedience. Bradley rolled the window down, his hand shaking, then stared at the man.

He had silver-gray hair, unnaturally smooth white skin, coldly handsome features, and hypnotic blue eyes.

'You're Mike Bradley,' he said.

'Yes,' Bradley replied.

'You were with OSS during the war.'

'That's right,' Bradley said.

The man smiled without warmth. 'I believe you wanted to see me, Bradley. I'm told that your need to see me was an obsession that would not let you rest. Why was that?'

Bradley felt calmer now - not too good, but in control. He felt paralyzed, but the fear was less intense and allowed him to think.

'You're Wilson!'

The man smiled again, this time as if amused. 'Why did you go to such lengths to find me? What did you hope to find?'

'An answer,' Bradley said.

'An answer to what?'

'I had to know if such a genius could be human or was some kind of mutant.'

'Observe - I am human.'

'No, you're not - you're not like us. You exist on some plane beyond humanity, where feelings don't count.'

'Feelings aren't important. They belong back in the caves. Where we're going - where the human race must go - only logic prevails. Science, Mr Bradley, not emotion, is what will guide us to glory.'

'You're evil.'

'No, I'm not. To be evil, one must have feelings. Extreme feelings, I grant you - but feelings nevertheless - and since my mind has taken me beyond those, I cannot be evil. I am what I am, that I will be. I am nature's child also.'

'Nature can be brutal.'

'Nature is. There's no good or bad in it.'

Bradley studied Wilson's face. He wanted to find the evil in it. He saw nothing but blue eyes that were brilliant with intelligence; handsome, unrevealing features; skin too smooth to be natural.

Otherwise, there was nothing.

'Your world is dying, Mr Bradley - the world of wasteful emotions. The new world, my world, is approaching and

can't be held back. It's a world of pitiless logic, of truth, and that's the way we must go. Science will take us there.'

He reached into the car and pressed his fingers to Bradley's forehead. 'Stop pursuing me,' he said. 'It will do you no good. You will only be treated as a crank and have a very unfortunate life, Think of your wife, Bradley. I know her, I believe. Consider your married children and don't make them endure your humiliation - since you can't stop me anyway. My flying saucers won't be hidden. They'll fly the world with impunity. Those who report seeing them will be ridiculed and, where necessary, silenced. Retire, Bradley. Think of your children. Enjoy your retirement. Now relax... Auf Wiedersehen.'

Bradley felt that he was dreaming. In his dream the fear returned. He kept thinking of his children, of that warning, and he knew he would stop here.

He would not go to Socorro. He would burn all his research. He knew, even as Wilson smiled and departed, that his search had come to an end. He would retire to guarantee his children's safety and let others do what they would.

Wilson walked from the car, between the other two men in black, and disappeared back into his flying saucer while Bradley just sat there. The hatch in the base moved up again, became part of the seamless body, then Bradley heard the bass humming sound, almost felt it - and as his head started tightening and his skin became numb, the flying saucer started glowing, its silvery body brightening magically, then became encased in a cocoon of pulsating white light and rose off the ground.

Bradley heard the noise, felt it, was surrounded by it and became part of it, as the saucer ascended slowly, gracefully, even majestically - then suddenly shot upward, but stopped again, as if by magic, to hover above him.

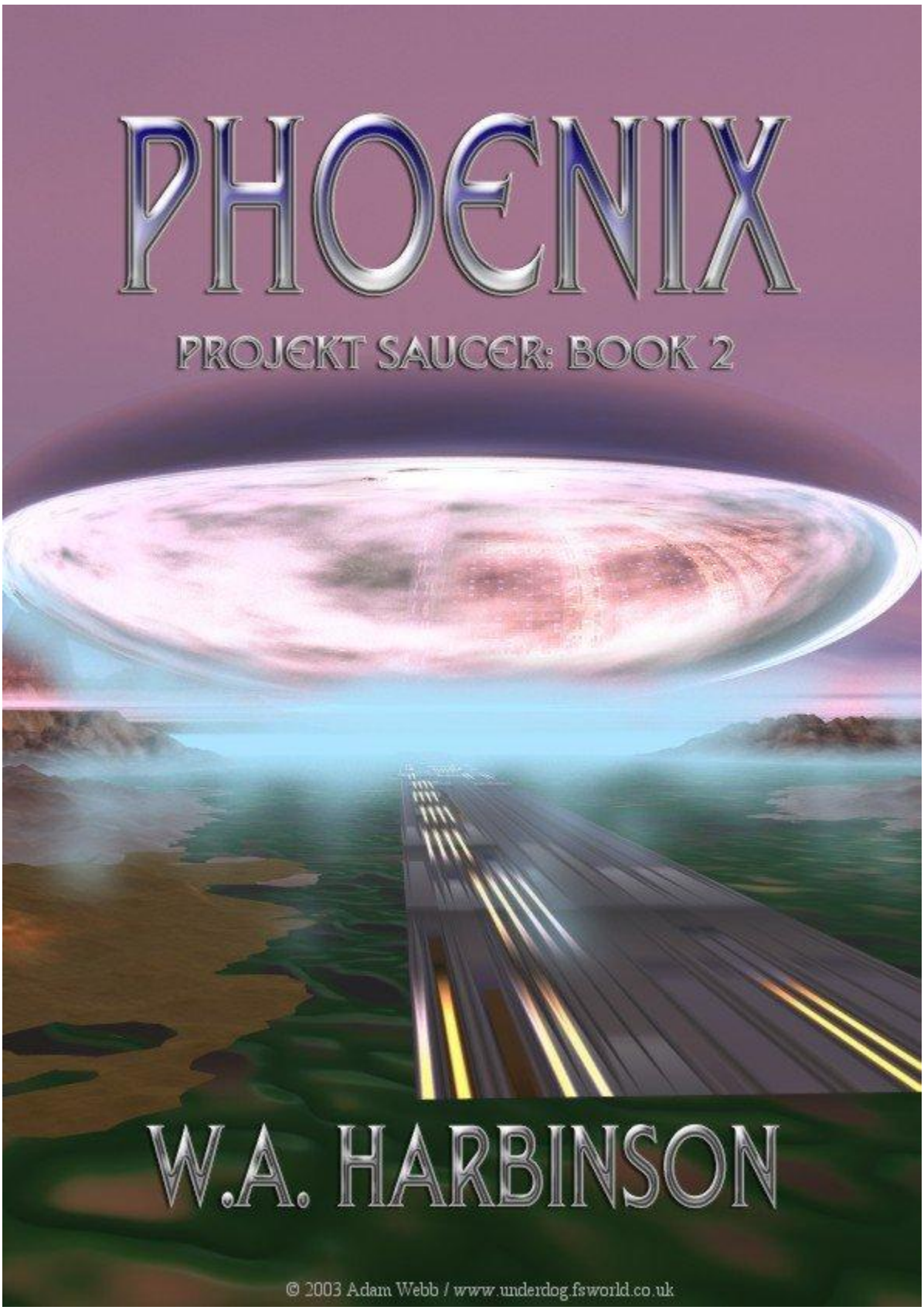
The infrasound cut out abruptly, allowing Bradley to move, and he climbed out and stood beside his car and looked directly above him. The saucer was high up, about

the size of a dime, and it seemed to be spinning on its vertical axis and filling the sky with light. Then it shot up even higher, shrinking rapidly, but still shining, until eventually it merged with the stars and suddenly winked out.

Bradley saw the moon and stars, the vast web of the cosmos, and he thought of Gladys and his children and grandchildren, feeling fear for their future. Determined to protect them, he climbed into his car, turned it around, and headed back in the direction he had come from, through the dark, windblown desert.

He had the feeling that the flying saucer was still somewhere out there, gliding eerily through the night, keeping him under surveillance ... and he knew that that feeling would haunt him for the rest of his days.

It was best to be silent.

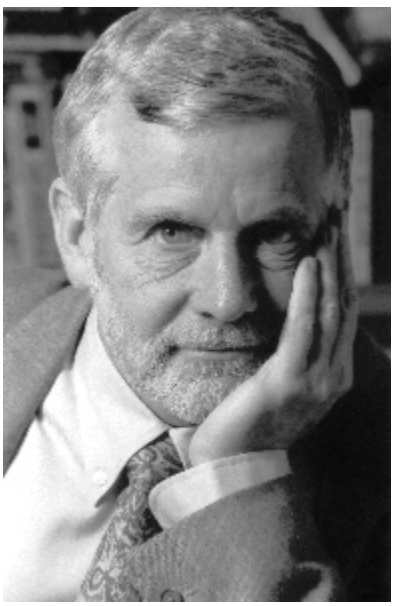

PHOENIX
PROJEKT SAUCER: BOOK 2
W.A. HARBINSON
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FOREWORD

THE ULTIMATE CONSPIRACY CONTINUES…

W.A.Harbinson first exposed the nightmarish truth about UFOs – a truth so terrifying that it could only be presented as fiction – in his international bestseller *Genesis*. Now he has taken the themes and many of the characters from that groundbreaking work and developed them into further dimensions of cosmic horror with other astounding novels in the PROJEKT SAUCER series. *Phoenix*, the second self-contained *Projekt Saucer* epic, takes the story on from the end of the Second World War and through the postwar years of humankind's first tentative explorations of space. During this historic period, the sinister Earthly forces behind the UFO conspiracy begin to show their hand more openly –and start to exert a deadly stranglehold on the destiny of the whole Earth…

PHOENIX*:** THE SECOND BOOK OF THE EPIC ***PROJEKT SAUCER SERIES.



W.A.Harbinson was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1941. He left school at fourteen, studied mechanical engineering, then joined the Royal Australian Air Force. While serving in the RAAF he drafted his first novel, *Instruments of Death*. In 1980 he completed *Genesis*, the epic, bestseller novel that became the inspiration for the *Projekt Saucer* series. (*Phoenix* is chronologically the second novel in the series.) Harbinson has also written short stories, radio plays and non-fiction books. He presently divides his time between Paris, France, and West Cork, Ireland.

Also by W.A.Harbinson

Novels

Projekt Saucer, Book 1: *Inception*
Projekt Saucer, Book 2: *Phoenix*
Projekt Saucer, Book 3: *Genesis*
Projekt Saucer, Book 4: *Millennium*
Projekt Saucer, Book 5: *Resurrection*

Revelation
Otherworld
Eden
The Lodestone
Dream Maker
The Crystal Skulls

Non-fiction

Projekt UFO: The Case for Man-Made Flying Saucers

PART ONE

Chapter One

SOCORRO, NEW MEXICO
JULY 2, 1947

When that thing flew overhead Marlon Clarke could hardly believe what he was seeing. As he had been doing too often lately, he was sitting out on his porch, in his old rocking chair, slugging beer from the bottle, muttering under his breath and gazing out over the parched lands of his failed farm, flat and eerily desolate in moonlight. He was just a small farmer who'd had a bad few years and he liked to sit out there in the evenings, feeling bitter and murmuring angry words to himself, getting drunk enough to sleep without too much anxiety. Tired and thinking of bed, he had just glanced at his watch and noticed that it was ten-thirty when the whole porch shook a little, his last bottle of beer fell over, and he heard an exploding noise right overhead.

Shocked back to the real world, his heart racing too fast, he looked up to see a glowing, saucer-shaped object screeching, wobbling, spinning and pouring steam or smoke as it flew at tremendous speed across the night sky on a descending trajectory.

Before Marlon had a chance to get a grip on himself, the glowing object fell towards the Plain of San Augustin, between Magdalena and Socorro, about five miles from his farm, then turned into a growing fan of white and red flames in a billowing cloud of dust. The explosion came a second later, as the fan of flames grew bigger, illuminating the rising cloud of dust and obliterating the stars.

The blast rocked Marlon's house.

Startled into a state of near sobriety, he got out of his rocking chair as the fan of flame shrank back to a tiny flickering that soon disappeared, letting the star-studded night sky return.

'Kee-rist!' Marlon exclaimed softly. Instantly, on an impulse, both fearful and curious, he grabbed a bottle of whisky from the floor of the porch, hurried down the steps, clambered unsteadily into his battered old truck, and tore off towards the scene of the crash.

As he drove across the moonlit plain, through pale moonlight and the shadows of cacti and sagebrush, he controlled the steering wheel with one hand, held the bottle in the other, drank too quickly and felt his heart racing. It was the whisky, he guessed, but it was also what he had seen: that glowing, saucer-shaped flying object of the kind he'd heard so much about lately.

'Jesus!' he whispered to himself as the old, battered truck growled and rattled

across the flat, windblown plain. ‘Jesus H... I don’t believe...’

He kept glancing outside the truck, growing more apprehensive, half expecting to see another of those objects gliding under the moonlight. He even thought of turning back, but his curiosity kept him going, and he convinced himself, even as his fear was growing, that it had just been an airplane.

He was wrong.

On the broad, flat plain near the town of Magdalena, about halfway between the road and the distant Black Mountain, he saw a dark pile of still smouldering debris. Driving off the road, he bounced over the rough, sage-strewn plain until he came to the location of the crash. Stopping the truck, he had another drink of whisky, wiped his lips with the back of his hand, then looked out at the smouldering debris.

It was the wreckage of a large, saucer-shaped craft, about half of it smashed to hell, the remainder a dull grey in the moonlight.

What looked like three scorched corpses were still strapped into the central cockpit of the crashed object.

‘Lord Almighty!’ Marlon exclaimed softly.

He was too scared to get out, but he had a good look, making sure that his eyes were not deceiving him. The object was round all right, shaped like two plates, one inverted and placed on top of the other. It was about twenty-five to thirty feet in diameter, obviously made of a metallic substance, and had smooth sides that rose gracefully, seamlessly to a smashed-up, transparent, domed cockpit. The charred bodies were still strapped to their seats.

That's when Marlon grew really scared. Blinking, rubbing his eyes, he looked out again.

The three corpses were burned beyond recognition. They were wearing grey-coloured one-piece suits, or coveralls, which were charred black, in tatters and still smouldering like the pieces of metal scattered widely around the broken, circular craft.

Nauseated by the smell of roasted flesh, Marlon looked beyond the crashed object to the distant mountain range. It was black in the night, but covered with stars, its sides streaked with moonlight that also fell across the flat Plain of Magdalena. Marlon looked around him, expecting to see something else, but there was nothing out there but empty land and the wind's constant whispering.

Taking a final look at the charred bodies in the crashed flying saucer, he shivered with revulsion and fear, then turned the truck around and burned back to his ranch.

When the men from the Roswell Army Air Base came to see him, Marlon was surprised by how many there were. They arrived in a jeep and troop truck as the sun was rising over the horizon to flood the flat plain with light. Marlon was still sitting in his rocking chair, more drunk than ever, when the armed troops jumped out of the truck to form a semi-circle around the yard, some with their backs turned to the house, others facing the empty plain, all holding their weapons at the ready.

More frightened than he had been by the sight of the crashed saucer, Marlon was wiping his dry lips with the back of his hand when a man in a plain grey suit, accompanied by a uniformed Air Force officer and two others in plain clothes, descended from the jeep and approached him. Stepping up onto the porch, the two in plain clothes hurried past Marlon and entered his house without his permission, slamming the mesh-wire door behind them. As Marlon was about to get out of his rocking chair and protest, the Air Force officer removed his peaked cap, revealing stark black hair and warm brown eyes in a slightly plump, friendly face. He offered a natural, easy smile.

'Mr Clarke?'

'Darn right,' Marlon said. 'And when I called, I didn't expect...' He nodded back over his shoulder, indicating the two men who could now be heard noisily searching his home.

'I'm sorry, Mr Clarke, but it's necessary. I'm First Lieutenant William B.Harris of the Eighth Air Force, stationed at Roswell Army Air Base. The two men in your house are members of the intelligence team of the 509th Bomb Group, also at Roswell. And this… ' he indicated the unsmiling man in the plain grey suit... 'is CIA agent, Jack Fuller, who's flown here all the way from Langley, Virginia.'

'You called about a crashed saucer, I believe,' Fuller said in an oddly threatening tone of voice.

'Right. It crashed last night, about ten. I was expecting you people a lot sooner. I've bin sittin' here all night.'

'I'm sorry about that,' First Lieutenant Harris said, 'but I had to wait for Mr Fuller to arrive.'

'All the way from Langley, Virginia,' Marlon said, glancing at the unsmiling Fuller who was, he noted, still under thirty, but had eyes as grey and wintry as Antarctica. 'You musta taken me serious.'

'It's strictly routine,' Fuller informed him, sounding as cold as he looked. 'It's just one of the rules. All the flying saucer scares we've had since last month – '

'The Kenneth Arnold sightings.'

'Right. They're mostly false alarms, but they have to be checked out. That's why I'm here.'

'This is no false alarm.'

'You actually saw the saucer?'

'Sure did. It's out there on the Plain of Magdalena with three dead bodies in it.'

Fuller glanced at Harris, then down at Marlon's whisky bottle. 'Have you been drinking, Mr Clarke?'

'What do you think?'

'I think you were drinking last night - you have a reputation for it - and just *imagined* you saw those dead bodies. I think you saw a crashed weather balloon, related it to all the flying saucer stories that have been in the papers since the Kenneth Arnold sightings, and let your imagination get the better of you.'

‘The hell with that,’ Marlon said, outraged. ‘I know what I saw there last night - and it wasn’t any goddamned weather balloon. It was big and made of metal and had three dead bodies in it. They were burnt all to hell.’

‘Come with us, Mr Clarke.’

Before Marlon could protest, Fuller took him by the shoulder and tugged him to his feet. Marlon jerked his head around, indicating the noisy search still going on in his shack, but Harris told him not to worry and walked at his other side as Fuller led him between the armed troops to the jeep and coaxed him up into the rear seat. Fuller sat beside him, Harris sat up front, then the driver took off along the road that ran as straight as an arrow across the flatlands, towards Magdalena.

Marlon's stomach was churning. The sight of the armed troops had scared him, the people searching his house more so, and now he was confused as well as frightened, not too sure if he had done the right thing in making that phone call. Jack Fuller, the CIA agent seated beside him, was only half Marlon’s age, but had a cold-eyed, obscurely threatening manner, never smiling, just watching. He was making Marlon feel as guilty as hell, though he didn't know what for. He had simply tried to behave like a responsible citizen - reporting the crash and what he had seen - and now this Fuller was making him feel like a criminal, or even a madman. Thinking of all the stories he'd read about UFOs in the past few weeks (ever since the June sightings by Kenneth Arnold, the papers were full of them), he started wondering if he *had* imagined the whole thing.

Marlon desperately wanted another stiff shot of whisky, but the bottle was back on the porch where it could do him no good.

They covered the five miles in about ten minutes and soon were bumping over the flatlands, towards the crash site, which was, Marlon noted, now surrounded by armed troops just like his house. The sun was up and the heat made Marlon sweat; he was also sweating with nervous tension when the jeep braked to a halt, its wheels churning up a cloud of dust that spiralled around him and the others to be carried away on the moaning wind.

Marlon didn’t have to get out of the jeep to express his surprise.

Fuller turned unyielding eyes upon him. ‘Is this what you saw, Mr Clarke?’

It was not. Now, in the centre of that large circle of armed troops, where the flying saucer with the three dead bodies had been, Marlon saw only some white-smocked technicians picking up a thin scattering of silver-foil and narrow balsa-wood beams. There was no sign of the large flying saucers. No dead bodies. No ambulance.

‘This isn’t what I saw,’ Marlon said. ‘What I saw was – ’

‘This is what we found,’ Fuller told him. ‘The remains of a crashed Rawin weather balloon. Easily mistaken for flying saucers, Mr Clarke. We sometimes see what we want to see.’

‘What do you mean by that?’

Fuller glanced at First Lieutenant Harris. ‘One of the worst lightning storms we’ve had in a long time,’ Harris explained with a gentle smile, ‘took place about seventy-

five miles south-west of here last night, about the same time as this weather balloon crashed. Since then, we've had lots of reports of unidentified flying objects in the vicinity. Most turned out to be natural phenomena caused by the storm. In other words, false alarms.'

Marlon felt more confused, but he knew what he had witnessed. No way were those pieces of silver-foil and balsa wood part of what he had seen here last night.

'That thing I saw last night was big - very big - and it had dead bodies in it.'

'It was night,' Fuller told him. 'You were drinking. You saw what you expected to see. Did you get out of your truck?'

'No, but...'

'So you'd been sitting out on your porch, drinking half the evening, then you saw this saucer-shaped object falling from the night sky about five miles away. Remembering all the stories you'd read in the papers this past few weeks, about so-called flying saucers, you assumed that's what you'd seen, drove out here to find it, and maybe got scared when you *did* find it and imagined the rest.'

'With all due respect, sir, that's bullshit. I know what I saw.'

'You were drunk and frightened.'

'I'm more drunk now than I was last night, but that don't mean I'm imagining all this.' Marlon waved his hand to indicate the ring of armed troops and the white-smocked men picking up pieces of silver-foil and balsa beams to load them into the army truck nearby. 'And I'm telling you that what I saw last night was no weather balloon. It was at least twenty-five feet wide and had – '

'Dead bodies in it.' Fuller sighed. 'So where are the dead bodies, Mr Clarke? Where's the large, presumably metallic, flying saucer?'

'That's right. It was metallic.'

Fuller smiled in a mocking way and pointed to the men carrying the debris of the weather balloon. 'Silver-foil,' he said. 'It would look metallic in the dark. The moonlight, the drifting dust, your state of mind, the drink, combined could have made you see all the rest. Enough said, I think.'

'Well, maybe...' Marlon felt confused and nervous, no longer sure of his senses, and wished he could have a stiff drink to put his thoughts in some order. Okay, so he was drunk, but he wasn't that dumb... and when he noticed a lot of tyre tracks leading away from just beyond this much smaller area of wreckage, heading towards Roswell, he was convinced that another team of men from the Roswell Army Air Base had cleared away the real wreckage and taken it back to the base.

Frightened, he decided to keep his nose clean and get involved no further. After wiping his dry lips with the back of his hand, he deliberately shook his head from side to side, as if chastising himself. 'Dammit, I guess you must be right. I sure as hell hung one on last night. I guess that *could* explain it.' He glanced against at the tyre tracks that started beyond the perimeter of armed troops, then at the truck into which the white-smocked men were putting the last of the debris from the weather balloon. 'A weather balloon?' Harris nodded and smiled at him. 'Well, I'll be damned,'

Marlon said like a real country yokel. ‘It’s amazin’ what a man sees when he’s drunk. I feel a right goddamned fool now.’

‘No need,’ Harris said, raising the peak of his Air Force cap to offer a genuine, friendly smile. ‘You’d be surprised at what people think they see at nights - and these weather balloons, they fool a lot of people.’

‘Sure fooled me. Say, you haven’t got a drink in that there jeep?’

Harris smiled more broadly. ‘Nope, I’m afraid not. But you’ve still got that bottle on the porch and we’re going back now.’

‘Yeah, let’s do that.’ Pretending to be more drunk and tired than he was, Marlon glanced at the CIA agent, Jack Fuller, whose grey gaze was coolly searching, then at the white-smocked men who were still placing pieces of debris into the truck. Comparing the size of the craft he had seen last night and the much wider area of scattered debris with what he was seeing now, he was more convinced than ever that his senses had not deceived him as Fuller had suggested.

No, those tyre tracks clearly visible beyond the ring of armed troops belonged to the trucks that had taken the debris of the flying saucer, as well as its dead occupants, backed to the Roswell Army Air Base. This coldly handsome young CIA agent, Fuller, and the friendlier Air Force First Lieutenant Harris were undoubtedly covering up the real crash. Convinced of this, Marlon became even more determined to keep his mouth shut. He was therefore relieved when the driver turned the jeep around and headed back to the ranch.

See no evil, hear no evil, Marlon thought, keeping his gaze fixed resolutely on the road ahead.

It was best to be silent.

Marlon awoke in the early hours of the morning, haunted by the remnants of bad dreams and frightening realities. At first confused about where he was, hardly remembering going to bed, he saw his bedroom in darkness, stars framed by the window, then recalled that crashed flying saucer and the three strange, scorched bodies. He groaned aloud, hearing something - *feeling* something - then remembered waving goodbye to Fuller and Harris as they drove away from his house, having grimly warned him to forget flying saucers and accept that what he had seen was a crashed weather balloon.

‘Shit,’ Marlon said, hearing something - *feeling* something - then realised that he’d been awakened by a strange bass humming sound that seemed physical and made his head hurt. ‘Shit!’ he said. ‘What the hell...?’

The sound was growing louder, as if descending on his roof. As it did so, the whole house shook to the pulsations of a dazzling light that had suddenly obliterated the stars as it poured in through his window.

The house shook more violently as the pulsations became more rapid and the light blinded Marlon. The bass humming sound grew louder and more... *physical*, threatening to crush his skull.

He jerked upright on the bed and covered his ears with his hands, letting out a scream of anguish and terror.

The noise cut out abruptly and the pulsating light disappeared, leaving normal darkness, and... unnatural silence.

Marlon lowered his hands, staring fearfully at the window. Hearing and seeing nothing other than starlit darkness, he jerked the sheet from his sweating body and slid off the bed. He put his pants on, picked up his shotgun, then went to the window and looked out. Still seeing nothing unusual, he padded back to the front door and stepped out onto the porch.

A large, silvery, saucer-shaped craft was resting on the ground at the end of Marlon's moonlit yard. It appeared to be seamless and had no protuberances other than four retractable legs.

It looked just like the crashed flying saucer that Marlon had seen on the Plain of San Augustin.

Even as a wave of fearful disbelief swept over him, making him drop the shotgun, which made a godalmighty clattering, the saucer suddenly gave off a bass humming sound that shook him to his bones, vibrated slightly, and became surrounded by an aura of pulsating white light. A transparent dome rose up from the saucer's raised centre to reveal three human-shaped silhouettes inside. Then a beam of dazzling light shot from the saucer, almost blinding Marlon.

Crying out and covering his eyes with his hands, he fell back against the wall of the house. The light shone through his fingers, showing the blood beneath the skin, and the bass humming sound pressed in on his skull. Marlon slid down the wall, whimpering in pain and terror, until he was resting on the porch with his chin on his raised knees. Then the light faded away, the bass humming sound cut out, and he looked up as a trap door opened silently in the bottom of the saucer, tilting down to the ground.

Three men, all dressed in black to match the night, dropped out, one after the other.

They spread out across the yard to advance upon Marlon.

Something about those three men in black told him that they had come to take him away and that he could not escape.

Marlon just sat there, paralysed by terror, until the men stepped up on the porch and closed in around him. Then something exploded in his head and he sank down through spinning stars.

Chapter Two

Captain Dwight Randall, of the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, or the ATIC, was not feeling too happy when introducing himself to First Lieutenant William B. Harris, Flight Intelligence Officer of the Roswell Army Air Base. Back in Wright-Patterson AFB, in Dayton, Ohio, Dwight's wife, Beth, nursing their first child, Nichola, was also nursing her resentment because again he was on a trip away from home. She knew that he had no choice, being compelled to obey orders, but that hadn't helped him when he waved her goodbye for the third time in the four weeks since Nichola had been born. Dwight had optimistically promised her that he would be at home at lot more, at least during the first few months of their new baby's life, but unfortunately the recent, unexpected spate of UFO sightings had taken precedence over domestic matters. Now, as Dwight returned the salute of First Lieutenant Harris, then shook his hand, he felt guilty that he was here instead of in Dayton, looking after his family.

'Please, Captain,' Harris said, indicating the chair at the other side of his desk, 'take a seat. Can I get you a coffee?'

Dwight glanced out the window at the distant aircraft hangars, then shook his head and sat in the chair. 'No, thanks. I've drunk gallons since leaving Wright-Patterson, so I'll beg off for now. Do you mind if I smoke?' Harris just spread his hands in the air and offered a natural, charming smile, so Dwight lit up, inhaled, blew a smoke ring, and watched it drifting away... like a flying saucer. 'So,' he said, 'I've been sent by the ATIC to investigate the so-called Socorro sighting of last week. Do you resent my intrusion?'

'No, sir,' Harris said. 'My intelligence training didn't include flying saucers, so any help I get will be appreciated. It's also good to know that the Air Force, which has so strenuously denied the existence of the phenomenon, now has some tangible evidence.'

'One of the functions of the Air Technical Intelligence Centre is to gather data on Unidentified Flying Objects. The fact that most of them turn out to be natural atmospheric phenomena may explain our former reluctance to accept the reality of the UFOs.'

It was a disingenuous statement. What Dwight could not tell Harris is that contrary to the Air Force's own publicity, it was in a state of near panic over a whole series of recent UFO sightings, particularly those over Muroc Air Base - the top secret Air Force test centre in the Mojave Desert - on July 8, just two days ago and six days after the Socorro sightings.

The first UFO flap had actually occurred in 1946 when, throughout the summer and fall, thousands of 'ghost rockets' appeared in the skies over Scandinavia and Western Europe. Mostly seen at night, they were reported as being 'cigar-shaped' and with flames issuing from the tail. Estimates of their speed ranged from that of a 'slow

airplane' to 500 miles per hour. In the month of July alone, the Swedish military received more than 600 reports, which encouraged the Swedish general staff to declare the situation 'extremely serious.' Then, when sightings of the unidentifieds spread out from Sweden to Finland and close to the Soviet border, the Americans also took the phenomenon seriously - certainly enough to express their fear that the rockets might be secret weapons developed by the Russians with the help of the captured German technical specialists and material.

Their fears were in no way eased by the knowledge that whereas the mysterious 'Foo fighters' had not shown up on radar, the ghost rockets certainly had, and therefore could not be classified as hoaxes, misidentifications or the products of mass hallucination.

The Soviets denied any knowledge of the rockets, but US suspicions remained unabated while the rockets continued to fly and be reported from as far afield as Greece, Turkey, French Morocco and Spain, before gradually fading away the following year.

However, on June 21, 1947, only a couple of weeks ago, a harbour patrolman, Harold Dahl, accompanied by his fifteen-year old son and two crewmen, was on harbour patrol near Maury Island in Puget Sound, off Tacoma, Washington, when he observed six objects shaped like 'inflated inner tubes' hovering about 2,000 feet above his boat. Five of the objects were circling about the sixth as it descended to about five hundred feet above the boat, where, appearing to hover magically, it was seen more clearly. The object appeared to be about a hundred feet in diameter, metallic, with no jets, rockets, wings, or propellers, but with a 'hole' in the centre, or base, symmetrically placed portholes around the perimeter, and observatory windows on its underside. After discharging what appeared to be a cloud of aluminium-coloured debris, which littered the sea, where they gave off clouds of steam, suggesting that they were hot, the circular craft ascended to rejoin the others, then they all flew at high speed toward the open sea and soon disappeared.

Three days later, on June 24, an American businessman, Kenneth Arnold, reported that when flying his private Piper Club airplane near Mount Rainier in the Cascades, Washington, searching for the debris of the Marine Corps C-46 transport that had crashed against the south shoulder of Mount Rainier the night before, he observed nine disk-shaped, apparently metallic objects flying in 'a diagonal chain-like line' and making an undulating motion 'like a saucer skipping over water.' According to Arnold's report, the objects performed impossible manoeuvres in the sky, before flying off at supersonic speed to disappear in the direction of the Canadian border.

As Arnold had been a deputy sheriff and was a reputable businessman, as well as an experienced mountain air-rescue pilot, his story was taken seriously and the term 'flying saucer' came into being. It was therefore used widely over the next few weeks when the media spread Arnold's story nation-wide and encouraged a spate of similar sightings, many of which were hoaxes, some of which were by trained observers and seemed highly credible.

By this time the US military authorities, while publicly ridiculing the reported sightings, were secretly in a state of panic over their own plague of UFO sightings: the first, on June 28, over Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama; the next, on June 29, near Alamogordo, New Mexico, right over the top-secret White Sands Proving Ground; then, on July 8, a whole spate of sightings of spherically shaped, white aluminium-coloured objects flying over Muroc Air Base, the supersecret air force test centre in the Mojave Desert. Because those particular sightings were made by trained technicians and pilots, and because the reported objects were appearing increasingly over top-and-supersecret military research bases, a growing suspicion in intelligence circles was that the men and material deported from Nazi Germany to Russia had led to a dangerous Soviet lead in space technology. And now one of the damned things had crashed and all hell had broken loose.

'Anyway,' Dwight continued, 'the so-called Socorro sighting has caused a hell of a stir in the media and placed us in an uncomfortable position. I believe you're the one who compiled the first official report on it.'

'Yes, sir. I take it you've read it.'

'About a dozen times,' Dwight told him. 'I kept re-reading it because I couldn't believe my own eyes.' He withdrew Harris's report from the briefcase on his lap, leafed through it, then looked up again. 'You say the UFO appeared to have suffered damage in a lightning storm near Roswell, but managed to fly on to Magdalena, where it crashed on the Plain of San Augustin. It was a real flying saucer - or at least a disc-shaped aircraft -and the wreckage contained three dead bodies. Naturally the report came as a shock. Are you sure...?'

'I stand by that report,' Harris said, brushing a lock of dark hair back from his brown, candid gaze and offering a slight, nervous smile. He looked like an honest, reliable officer, but clearly he was uncomfortable over this matter. 'What that farmer told me, I was able to confirm with my own eyes: a crashed flying saucer with three dead bodies in it.'

'Marlon Clarke was the farmer.'

'Yes, sir.'

'A known drunkard who was drinking at the time.'

'Not that drunk - and I confirmed with my own eyes what he'd told me when he phoned us shortly after finding the wreckage.'

'You say the bodies seemed human.'

'They were burnt beyond recognition and I couldn't examine them thoroughly, but they certainly *seemed* like human beings.'

'This is quite a story, lieutenant, but not one I'd want public. How the hell did it get out to the press?'

'Not guilty. The story was picked up by Johnny McBoyle, reporter and part owner of Radio KSWS in Roswell. McBoyle personally investigated the case and found that a lot of people had reported seeing the UFO flying overhead. Others reported hearing a loud banging sound as the object flew through that lightning storm over Corona -

presumably when it was first damaged. Others in Magdalene reported hearing an explosion from the Plain of San Augustin - when the object crashed. As soon as I heard that McBoyle was going to put the story out on the teletype, I blocked the message with one of my own - sent anonymously, of course - telling him not to transmit. That scared him enough to make him cancel his transmission. Unfortunately, the following day, our enthusiastic young public information officer, Lieutenant Walter Haut, acting on odd bits of information coming into Roswell, issued a press release without the authorisation of myself or the base commander. His vague story of a crashed saucer - no mention of the dead bodies -was subsequently published in the Roswell *Daily Record* of July 8 - the day after the crash. Hunt has been reprimanded and will probably be posted out of here.'

'Alas, too late to kill the story.'

'I'm afraid so.'

Dwight turned over another page in the report, then looked up again. 'The saucer wreckage and dead crew members have been removed from the scene of the crash?'

'Yes, sir. We did that immediately. At the insistence of no less than the Deputy Chief of the Air Force, General Hoyt Vandenburg, the three charred bodies and the debris from the crash were picked up by an intelligence team from the 509th Bomb Group and transported in strict secrecy to Carswell AFB, Fort Worth, Texas. There's no trace of it left at the crash site.'

'Subsequently you paid Clarke a visit.'

'Yes, sir. On the instructions of CIA agent Jack Fuller, we scattered the pieces of a Rawin weather balloon around the crash site and went through a charade of picking them up for examination when Fuller and I took Clarke back out there. We insisted it was the balloon that had crashed and that Clarke had simply imagined the dead bodies. Clarke finally pretended to believe us, but I don't think he did.'

'I better have another talk with this Clarke.'

'You can't. He vanished the day after the crash and hasn't been seen since.'

'*Vanished?'*

'Completely. We've searched high and low, but we can't track him down. Neither could the Roswell *Daily Record*. He's vanished into thin air.'

Dwight leaned forward in his chair, suddenly feeling cold and frightened. 'Christ, you must have *some* idea of what happened to him. This is a small, intimate community, Lieutenant. Someone must know *something*.'

Harris simply shrugged and raised his hands in a gesture of defeat. 'No-one knows anything. When we checked Clarke's shack, we found his bed unmade - suggesting he'd slept in it the night before. His old truck was still parked out the back. The only clue to his disappearance was what might have been a group of footprints in the earth, leading from the steps of the porch to just outside the front yard, where they stopped abruptly. There were no signs of tyre tracks, but a circular patch of brush, about twenty-five feet wide, was flattened and slightly singed in an odd way - I mean, not from the sun. A real mystery there.'

‘A circular patch of brush, about twenty-five feet wide - approximately the same size and shape as the crashed saucer.’

‘Right. It bears thinking about.’

‘What’s the story on Bradley? It says here that as soon as you received word of the crash, you invited former intelligence officer, now UFO authority, Mike Bradley to go with you to view the crash. Bradley, normally obsessed with flying saucers, surprised you by not turning up and by later refusing to discuss his reasons. Has he talked to you since?’

‘I haven't been in touch with him since.’

‘Can we drive out and see him right now?’

‘Yes. He lives out in Eden Valley, near Robert Goddard’s old rocket-launching ground. It’s not a long drive.’

‘Okay, let’s go.’

Dwight slipped the report back into his briefcase and got to his feet while Harris phoned through for a jeep to come around and pick them up. The jeep was waiting for them by the time they got outside. Dwight glanced up as three F-86 jet interceptors roared over the great semicircular hangars along the edge of the runway, under a cloudless blue sky. He did it automatically, perhaps looking for a flying saucer, and felt instantly foolish when he realised what he had done.

Sitting beside First Lieutenant Harris in the rear of the jeep being driven by a U.S. Air Force corporal, Dwight put his head back, closed his eyes, and let the beating wind cool his face as they left the base and headed for Eden Valley, just outside Roswell. Opening his eyes again, he saw the El Capitán Mountain rising from the foothills near the southwestern horizon and, to the east, the sunlight slopes of the Caprock where, within living memory, the Comanche Indians, Spanish explorers, and even Billy the Kid had roamed. It therefore seemed incredible that this same area was already filled with highly advanced defence installations, including atomic research, aircraft, missile and rocket development, and a lot of highly advanced radar-electronics and stratospheric flight experimentation. Not far away, in Los Alamos, was the top-secret Manhattan atom bomb project. The White Sands Missile Range and Proving Range, at Alamogordo, was the most important of its kind in the United States. Also, the only combat-trained atom bomb group in the world was the 509th Bomb Group of the US Army Air Force Base, located right here in Roswell and given high prominence in Harris’s report. This area was also, incidentally, the one producing the most UFO reports in the whole country, most of them by professional pilots and military observers.

Dwight sighed, thinking of the recent spate of saucer sightings that had overturned his life in the past month: first the Harold Dahl and Kenneth Arnold sightings in Washington State, then the spate of sightings over various top-secret military establishments right here in New Mexico. Recalling those sightings, he realised that he was getting into something truly unknown, perhaps even dangerous.

He was also working too much for his own good, which was upsetting Beth.

Imagining her back in their small house in Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio, breast-feeding baby Nichola, he swelled up with love and concern for her. Then, to distract himself from his feeling of loss, he went back to reading First Lieutenant Harris's report.

Harris had included a brief resumé of Bradley's career, so Dwight knew he was about to meet an impressive man. Bradley had been a biplane pilot during World War I, spent a good many years as a successful Wall Street lawyer, became a member of OSS during World War II, and was known to have been involved in a major intelligence operation in occupied Europe. The exact nature of that operation was still top secret, though it certainly concerned German secret weapons. Badly wounded in an explosion at Keil harbour during the last days of the war, Bradley had recovered, been discharged from OSS, married a former Roswell *Daily Record* reporter, Gladys Kinder, and moved back to Roswell with her. Now, when not making a living by the drafting of contracts between the many US Air Force and civilian aeronautical establishments in the area, he was conducting his own investigations into UFO sightings.

Bradley's interest in UFOs, Dwight was convinced, related directly to what he had discovered during his intelligence gathering in Germany during the war. Why he had rejected First Lieutenant Harris's invitation to check out the Socorro UFO crash site was therefore a matter for some concern.

'Apart from the formal resumé contained in your report,' Dwight said as the jeep crossed the sun-scorched flatlands between Roswell and Eden Valley, 'what do you know about Mike Bradley?'

'He's been to the base a few times to discuss UFO sightings with me. He's intelligent, good humoured and, given his background, unpretentious. A lot of experience in his face, a kind of air of quiet authority, but also something guarded, even secretive. He never talks about the war. Says his work is still classified. I wouldn't call him the obsessive type, but he's certainly obsessed with UFOs. That's what keeps us in touch.'

'And his wife?'

'A terrific lady. Bit of a local character. Used to be a reporter on the Roswell *Daily Record* and was known to be as tough as any man. Still is, in fact. Likes to wear Stetsons and high-heeled boots. Pretty sharp with her tongue, too.'

'How did she meet Bradley?'

'He was out here in 1931, trying to run down a physicist -called Wilson, as I recall – who'd worked for Robert H. Goddard on his rocket experiments in Eden Valley. Reportedly, Gladys was briefly involved with Wilson and Bradley went to see her about him. I don't know if anything occurred between them here in Roswell, but certainly they met up in London, England, during the war, after Bradley's wife had been killed at Pearl Harbour. Bradley and Gladys seem unusually close and are popular locally.'

'When did Bradley's obsession with UFOs begin?'

‘For him it’s more specific than unidentified flying objects – it’s flying saucers. He’s been interested in them as long as I’ve known him. We first met a few weeks after he arrived here with Gladys, which was about four months after the war, about November or December, 1945. I met him at a welcome home party given for Gladys by her old buddies on the Roswell *Daily Record*. As soon as Bradley learnt I was the Flight Intelligence Officer at Roswell, he pinned me to the wall to enquire if I ever received reports of saucer or disc-shaped aircraft. This, mind you, was about twenty months before the first sightings by Harold Dahl and Kenneth Arnold. Of course I’d never had reports of any such thing - at least not until last month - and when I asked him why he wanted to know about them, he just murmured vaguely about his interest in unusual airplane configurations. After that, he regularly asked me if I’d received any unusual reports, but until last month, I’d nothing to give him.’

‘Then, remarkably, when you had that report on a crashed saucer, he failed to show.’

‘Right,’ Harris said. ‘Damned amazing - and he won’t tell me why.’

‘Maybe this time we’ll be lucky,’ Dwight said as the ranch-style house on the edge of Eden Valley came into view.

‘Yeah,’ Harris said. ‘Maybe.’

The driver braked to a halt by the gate of the front yard, causing a cloud of dust to boil up around the jeep. Dwight slipped out his side of the vehicle, waving the dust from his face, then was dazzled by sunlight as he walked up the yard path, beside First Lieutenant Harris. When Harris rang the bell, a woman came to the door. She was tall and lean, wearing a long belted dress with high-heeled boots, and had a head of short-cropped, greying brown hair, which made her seem slightly mannish. Her grey eyes were disconcertingly steady over a full-lipped, sardonic smile.

‘Bill Harris!’ she exclaimed as her gaze flicked inquiringly to Dwight. ‘What brings you here?’

‘We’ve come to see Mike.’

‘Who’s your friend?’

‘This is Captain Dwight Randall, of the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, based at Wright-Patterson AFB, in Dayton, Ohio. He’s here to investigate the Socorro sighting.’

‘Mike doesn’t know anything about that.’

‘Dammit, Gladys,’ Harris said, smiling with considerable charm, ‘stop giving us a hard time and at least invite us in for a coffee.’

‘It isn’t coffee you want, Bill.’

‘Okay, it isn’t coffee we want. But can we at least step inside and talk to Mike?’

‘What about? He knows nothing about the Socorro sighting. As you know, he didn’t go to the crash site with you.’

‘Yeah, I know,’ Harris said. ‘And what I now want to know is - why? He’s been hounding me about saucer-shaped aircraft since he came to live here - and then, when one actually crashes, he doesn’t turn up when he’s invited. Why?’

‘Who is it, Gladys?’ The man asking the question appeared in the doorway behind Gladys. In his early fifties, he was short but muscular in an open-necked sky-blue shirt and denims. Though grey-haired, he was handsome, but the skin on the right side of his face was livid from severe burning caused by the explosion at Kiel harbour in 1945. ‘Bill!’ he said, sounding pleasantly surprised. ‘Hi! Come on in.’

Gladys rolled her eyes, but opened the door and stepped aside. ‘This,’ she said, indicating Dwight, ‘is - ’

‘Captain Randall, of the Air Technical Intelligence Centre,’ Dwight said, holding out his hand. ‘Call me Dwight.’

‘Dayton, Ohio?’ Bradley asked, shaking his hand.

‘Correct.’

‘Welcome to Roswell.’ He started leading them into the living room, but when Gladys mentioned that they were here about the Socorro sighting, he stopped in his tracks, blocking their way. ‘The Socorro sighting? Why come to see me? I know nothing about it.’

‘That’s the point,’ Dwight said. ‘First Lieutenant Harris here tells me you’re fascinated by disc-shaped aircraft, or flying saucers, and yet you didn’t turn up at the crash scene when you were invited. Why was that, Mister Bradley?’

‘I just didn’t feel inclined.’

‘You hound First Lieutenant Harris for a year-and-a-half about disc, or saucer-shaped, aircraft and then, when he tells you one has crashed, you don’t feel inclined? Do you expect us to believe that, Mister Bradley?’

‘Why not? I just lost interest in the subject.’

‘But when I rang you,’ Harris said, ‘you didn’t sound like you’d lost interest. In fact, you sounded real excited and said you were going to meet me at the main gate of the air base to join me on the trip to the crash site. So what stopped you, Mike?’

Bradley glanced at his wife, then turned a closed gaze back to Harris. ‘I’m sorry, Bill, but I just changed my mind. The reasons are personal.’

‘You must have changed your mind shortly after he rang you,’ Dwight said. ‘What kind of personal reason could make you change your mind so quickly?’

Now Bradley wasn’t smiling. ‘That’s my business, Captain.’

‘And you still insist you’re no longer interested in UFOs?’

‘You’re not deaf,’ Gladys said aggressively. ‘You heard what he said.’

‘I heard, Mrs Bradley, but I find it hard to believe.’

‘That’s your problem.’

Dwight turned back to Mike Bradley as Harris became embarrassed. ‘Would you mind at least telling me what stirred your interest in UFOs in the first place?’

‘Like a lot of folks, I was intrigued by the Kenneth Arnold sightings.’

‘Which took place a month ago. First Lieutenant Harris tells me you’ve been interested in disc, or saucer-shaped, aircraft from the moment you first came to Roswell, at the tail end of 1945 - about twenty months before the recent sightings.’

‘Okay, I’ll admit that.’

‘Long before there was any talk of so-called flying saucers.’

‘Right,’ Bradley said, looking uncomfortable.

‘Which means you picked up the interest during, or just after, the war. Is that also correct?’

‘I can’t answer that question.’

‘Because the job you did for OSS was classified?’

‘Correct,’ Bradley said. ‘Now, I think - ’

‘You better leave,’ Gladys said. ‘My husband doesn’t want to discuss this any further.’

Dwight ignored her. ‘What happened on the night of July second, Bradley, after First Lieutenant Harris called you about that crashed saucer. What stopped you from turning up to see what you’d been so desperate to find?’

‘I’ve nothing more to say,’ Bradley responded, his face more flushed than the livid flesh on his right cheek.

‘Whatever it was that stopped you, it also made you give up your UFO investigations. Isn’t that the truth, Mr Bradley?’

‘Goodnight, gentlemen. Goodbye.’ Bradley turned away and disappeared back into the house as Gladys, with a grim, no-nonsense expression, pushed them out through the front door. ‘You heard the man,’ she said harshly. ‘Now get the hell out of here.’

‘Does the name “Wilson” ring a bell, Mrs Bradley?’ Dwight boldly asked her.

She looked startled, then blushed.

‘Back in 1931, when you first met your husband, he was investigating a scientist called Wilson, who’d worked right here, in Eden Valley, with Robert H.Goddard. I believe you knew Wilson, Mrs Bradley.’

‘I don’t know what you’re talking about,’ Gladys said, then slammed the door in their faces.

Dwight stared at the closed door in amazement, then at the uneasy Harris.

‘Well, I’ll be damned,’ Harris said. ‘I knew Bradley wouldn’t be keen to talk, but I’ve never known him or Gladys to be *that* unfriendly.’

‘They’re both frightened,’ Dwight said. ‘They’re just trying to cover it up. Come on, let’s get out of here.’

They stepped down off the porch, climbed into the jeep, and let the corporal drive them away, back across the parched flatlands on the edge of Eden Valley. Dwight thought of the rockets that Robert H. Goddard had launched from this desolate area, then tried making the connection between Goddard, whom Bradley had visited once or twice with regard to the mysterious Wilson, and Bradley’s later obsession with disc-or-saucer-shaped flying objects. He came to a blank wall.

‘Bradley was obsessed with UFOs,’ Harris said like a man in a trance of bewilderment. ‘I just can’t figure what’s scared him.’

‘*You’re* scared,’ Dwight informed him. ‘First a flying saucer crashes, then it’s spirited away to Carswell, then the only civilian witness to its existence disappears, and now Bradley and his wife have clammed up and won’t discuss UFOs. So you’re

scared... with good reason.'

'Yes, sir, that's right, I'm scared. What about you?'

'Yeah,' Dwight confessed, glancing up to be dazzled by the brilliant, vast, empty sky. 'I'm scared too, I guess.'

Chapter Three

Wilson, Ernst Stoll, Hans Kammler and Artur Nebe were together in the underground viewing bay as the *Kugelblitz II*, a twenty-five-foot diameter, piloted flying saucer, descended at hovering speed through the deep well formed by a circle of soaring, ice-capped mountain peaks. Its lights were flashing kaleidoscopically around its sharp outer edge, but its bass humming sound, the infrasounds of its power source, which could tighten a human skull at a certain intensity, was blocked off by the thick plate-glass window of the viewing bay. Eventually, the saucer started settling gently on the steel-plated landing pad constructed at ground level in the cavernous space hacked out of the snow-covered Antarctic rock.

The base seemed to be underground, but was actually at ground level and hidden from the view of pilots flying overhead by an umbrella of soaring, snow-capped mountain peaks. However, working from this valley floor, beginning during World War II, Wilson's *Slavenarbeiter*, or slave labour, under the ruthless supervision of the former SS officers, Stoll, Kammler and Nebe, had worked night and day at hacking their way into the base of the mountain to create aircraft hangars, workshops, laboratories, the first two of what would be many landing pads for the flying saucers, offices, staff accommodations, and underground quarters for the slave labour.

The slaves had originally been shipped out from the occupied territories of Nazi Germany and, more recently, abducted from various countries and flown here in Wilson’s flying saucers. Only two were operating right now, but more were being constructed. Within five years there would be a whole fleet of them, each one better than the last, with no end to their technological evolution in sight. If not feeling pride (a redundant emotion) Wilson certainly felt satisfied as he watched the saucer rocking lightly on its base before finally settling down.

Its bass humming sound receded into silence, then its flashing lights winked off one by one. The arc lights powered by self-charging generators and fixed high up on the walls of solid rock, to illuminate the gloomy, cavernous landing area, gave the saucer’s metallic grey surface a silvery sheen. It looked alien and beautiful.

The other saucer was at rest beside it, but covered in a tarpaulin. Both were surrounded by white-coated technicians and slaves, men and women alike, dressed in identical, dark grey coveralls that just about kept out the biting cold. It was not the Antarctic cold, since that had been reduced by the installation of phase-change solar-heat pumps that could store enough energy to also get the colony through the long Antarctic night; but it remained cold enough to be uncomfortable for the unfortunate labour force.

Now, as the *Kugelblitz II* settled down on the landing pad on its four retractable hydraulic legs, the technicians, armed guards and *Slavenarbeiter* moved in to surround it. As the latter placed steel stepladders along the sloping sides of the saucer, to begin checking and polishing its seamless sides, a trap-door opened in the base,

sloping downwards, and a slim man dressed in a pinstripe suit lowered himself to the landing pad and looked around in a dazed, disbelieving manner, before the armed guards closed in upon him. A second man emerged from the saucer almost immediately, this one big, bulky and wearing dirty bib-and brace coveralls. He, too, looked around him as if dazed, until he was surrounded by the armed guards and led away with the first man.

'Good,' Kammler said. 'They caught both of them.' Blond and blue-eyed, he glanced at the dark-eyed Nebe, who merely nodded solemnly and stroked the pistol strapped around his waist. Both men, like Wilson and Ernst Stoll, were wearing heavy roll-neck pullovers under thick coats and trousers. All of their clothing was coloured black.

Wilson nodded and smiled. He was feeling good today. He needed advanced prosthetic replacements for his artificial elbow joints and the man they had captured could do the job - that and many others. Sometimes it all seemed so simple. Faith could move mountains.

The two men surrounded by guards moved out of view far below, approaching the lifts that would carry them up to the upper level of the colony, occupied by Wilson and his most senior staff, including those now grouped around him. He glanced at Ernst Stoll, once an enthusiastic rocket engineer, then an SS policeman, now an embittered, therefore malleable, administrator responsible for the collection and welfare of the slave labour. Stoll was looking down at the parked flying saucer, showing little emotion. He had left his heart and soul in conquered Germany; now he lived for this colony. Wilson was satisfied.

'Let's go and greet them,' he said, turning away from the window and leaving the viewing bay through doors that led into a gloomy corridor hacked out of the inside of the mountain. The corridor led into a larger, brighter room, which also overlooked the landing area for the saucers, but contained comfortable armchairs and settees on an Italian-tiled floor partially covered by large Moroccan carpets. The wall overlooking the landing area was mostly thick plate-glass framed by ugly reinforced concrete. The back wall had been hacked out of the mountain and was simply the original rock covered in concrete and damp-proofing black paint. The two side walls were also of reinforced concrete, but contained steel-plated doors, one of which was for the lift, with a row of indicator lights above it. As Wilson entered the room with his entourage behind him, the lights came on one by one, indicating that the lift was ascending. The light stayed on at the marking for the fifth level.

When the lift doors opened, the two captives emerged, being prodded by the automatic weapons of two guards wearing old SS uniforms. The slim, grey-haired man in the pinstripe suit and tie was, Wilson knew, Dr Paul King, of the Powered Limbs Unit of West Hendon Hospital, London, England. The bigger man in the dirty brace-and-bib coveralls was the farmer, Marlon Clarke, who had witnessed the crashed flying saucer near Magdalena, New Mexico. The sophisticated Dr King, while clearly bewildered and frightened, was in control of himself; the other one,

Clarke, was terrified and practically dribbling.

'Dr King?' Wilson said, as if this meeting and the circumstances were routine.

'Yes,' King replied, his voice admirably calm, though his eyes betrayed confusion and fear. 'Who are you? Where am I?'

'My name is Wilson. You will address me as that. You're in a colony located inside a mountain in Neu Schwabenland, or Queen Maud Land, in Antarctica. You are here as my prisoner.'

Clarke started sobbing, uncontrollably, like a child, wiping the tears from his cheeks with a grubby hand as he stared down at his own feet.

'Oh, Christ,' he said. 'Oh, Jesus, I don't believe... Oh, God help me, I'm dreaming.'

'No, Mr Clarke, you're not dreaming. Nor are you imagining things. This is real. We are real. What's puzzling you, Dr King?'

'Something about your face.'

'I'm seventy-seven years old, doctor, but look fifteen years younger. My face lacks a certain mobility due to crude plastic surgery. I also need improving in other ways, which is why I need you.'

'Oh, Jesus,' Clarke sobbed. 'Why me? What the hell am I doing here?'

'You've been brought here,' Wilson informed him, 'because you were unfortunate enough to witness the debris of a crashed flying saucer and its three dead crew members. We can't permit you to talk about it, so you're here to be silenced.' Clarke burst into tears again as Wilson turned to the other man. 'As for you, Dr King, you're fortunate enough to be one of the world's leading specialists in research into the myoelectric control of external prosthetics, or artificial limbs. You'll therefore be invaluable to this community and need have no fear if you co-operate.'

'Co-operate?' King asked as Marlon Clarke sobbed hysterically beside him. 'What do you mean?'

'This is a secret community devoted to science,' Wilson explained, 'with no moral impediments to progress. We'll do anything necessary, no matter how ruthless, for the advancement of the technology we're creating. We're a society of masters and slaves, scientists and their servants, and we live beyond the reach of so-called civilisation and its antiquated moral constraints. You are either for us or against us, Dr King - willing worker or slave. The choice is all yours.'

'I think I'm dreaming,' King said. 'I just can't accept this.'

'Don't be as foolish as him,' Wilson warned, indicating the sobbing Clarke, 'by putting this down to imagination or dreaming. This is real, Dr King, and it cannot be stopped. Outlawed by the world we may be, but we're well out of reach. The saucers are my creation and just the tip of the iceberg. My ultimate purpose is a new kind of man, both physically and mentally: the mythical superman made real in a world based on logic, not emotion. We're a unique community, Dr King, and you will be part of it.'

'What if I refuse?'

‘You don’t have a choice. Either you do it willingly or we compel you to do it. We have our ways, Dr King, and you can’t escape from here. Outside this mountain is the Antarctic wilderness. Where would you go?’

As the full implication of what Wilson was saying struck home to Clarke, he sobbed more profusely and visibly started shaking. When Wilson nodded, one of the guards took hold of Clarke’s elbow and managed to steady him. Dr King, though clearly frightened, remained in control of himself and stared about him in wonder.

‘I take it you’re human beings,’ he said, turning back to Wilson, ‘and not creatures from outer space.’

Wilson smiled coldly. ‘Alas, yes, we’re all too human.’

King glanced at Stoll, Kammler and Nebe, then nodded, indicating the armed guards. ‘You look like a bunch of Nazis to me.’

‘I’m an American,’ Wilson said, ‘but one without political allegiance. These men, it is true, were in the SS, but all that is behind them now. There are no nationalities here; we’ve all disowned that. Here, our only religion is science. We don’t worship false gods.’

‘I know I’m not dreaming,’ King said, ‘but I still can’t accept this. I don’t know who you are or how long you’ve been here, but you won’t be able to stay. Sooner or later, the West will learn about you and put a stop to your madness.’

‘Some of them know we’re here,’ Wilson said, ‘but they can’t get us out. No one can get us out of here. No one has the technology.’

‘I don’t believe that,’ King said.

‘It’s true,’ Wilson insisted. ‘The US government knows we are here, but they can’t get us out.’

‘You mean they’ve already tried?’

‘Yes. Last January they launched the biggest Antarctic expedition in history, Operation Highjump, led by the explorer and naval officer, Rear-Admiral Richard E.Byrd. The resources of the assault force, which was disguised as an exploratory expedition, included thirteen ships, two seaplane tenders, an aircraft carrier, six two-engine R4D transports, six Martin PBM flying boats, six helicopters, and a total of 4,000 men. When this supposedly invincible assault force reached the Antarctic coast, it docked, on January 12, near Queen Maud Land, or Nue Schwabenland, then divided up into three separate task forces. When the expedition ended, in February, a lot earlier than anticipated, there were numerous stories in the press about Rear-Admiral Byrd’s references to enemy fighters that came from the Polar regions and could fly from one Pole to the other with incredible speed. The machines to which he was referring are the kind that brought you here and were created by me in Nazi Germany. As for Admiral Byrd’s mission, it was deemed a disaster and the United States has since declared that it’s withdrawing from the Antarctic for at least a decade. They know they can’t get us out of here. They don’t have the technology.’

Dr King did not reply, but he licked his lips and glanced about him, still in a state of disbelief, trying to accept the reality of this nightmare as the farmer, Marlon

Clarke, sniffed back his tears and looked frantically around him, his eyes stunned by dread.

Ever curious about human emotions, since he had so few himself, Wilson decided to take the confused, disbelieving Dr King and terrified Marlon Clarke on a tour of the colony.

'Come,' he said. 'Follow me.'

Confident that neither King nor Clarke would try to escape, since there was nowhere to go, Wilson nodded at the armed guards, who put up their weapons and left the room through the door leading to the corridor. Wilson then entered the lift, followed by Dr King and the dribbling Clarke, then Stoll, Kammler and Nebe. Stoll pressed the button for the third level. When the lift had descended and the doors opened again, Wilson led the group out into a clamour of hammering, pneumatic drilling, and echoing voices.

Another tunnel, being hacked out of the mountain, was being walled and roofed with reinforced concrete and steel wiring. As Wilson led King and Clarke through churning dust in the arc-lit gloom, it was clear that the work was being done by the filthy men and woman who slaved under gunpoint and to the cracking of the whips of other guards.

'This all started in Nazi Germany,' Wilson explained. 'Contrary to popular belief, the Antarctic continent has many unexplored, ice-free areas, many of which are well hidden from view by vast ice sheets and mountains. In other words, Dr King, we are not quite underground, though we're hidden by high mountain peaks. We're carving the rest of the space we need from the interior of the same mountain.'

Gradually accepting that all of this was real, Dr King was glancing about him, with awe as well as fear, at the many unfortunates slaving in this dust-filled, arc-lit, rocky hell.

'Nazi Germany,' Wilson continued, 'had a genius for the construction of immense underground production plants and factories, most completed with the ruthless use of captured slave labour. Indeed, most of the underground research centres of Nazi Germany were gigantic feats of construction, containing air-shafts, wind-tunnels, machine-shops, assembly plants, launching pads, supply dumps, accommodation for all who worked there, and adjoining camps for the slave workers - yet few German civilians knew that they existed.'

A whip cracked and someone screamed. Dr King twitched but walked on, though Clarke, growing ever more terrified, released an audible groan.

'Take Peenemümde, for instance. The full enormity of that research complex can only be gauged from the fact that apart from its wind tunnel - the most advanced in the world, containing its own research department, instrumentation laboratory, workshops and design office - it also had its own power station, docks, oxygen plant, airfield, POW camp for specially selected prisoners who provided cheap labour, and social and medical facilities associated with a town of 20,000 inhabitants. It was therefore the prototype for the even larger underground factories to be built secretly

in Germany and Austria, notably at Nordhausen in the southern Harz mountain range of Thuringia, which is where I created my first piloted flying saucer, the *Kugelblitz*. Do you know about Nordhausen, Dr King?'

'No, I'm afraid not.'

'It was an immense rocket research and construction facility, consisting of a series of linked tunnels carved out of the Kohnstein Mountain, near the town of Nordhausen. The parallel tunnels were 1,800 metres long. Leading off them were fifty side-chambers, a main work area of 125,000 square metres, and twelve ventilation shafts that had been bored down from the peak of the mountain. Work at converting the tunnels into a mass-production facility for rockets began in September 1943 with the use of 2,000 engineers and 15,000 inmates from the nearby concentration camps. The slaves were kept in a separate camp located in a hidden mountain valley, less than a kilometre from the entrance to the tunnel. A new underground complex, to be linked to Nordhausen by another network of tunnels, was in the process of being built sixteen kilometres under the ground around the town of Bleicherode, twenty kilometres distance. Between them, Nordhausen and Bleicherode constituted the first of the SS underground factories - virtually living towns - and what the Nazis were doing there, under the earth, we are now doing here, in the Antarctic.'

'I can't imagine how you managed to get so much equipment and so many of these unfortunate wretches here,' King said, glancing around him at the sobbing, sweating captives now slaving in abominable conditions.

'The labour force and equipment were shipped in submarines, in the course of many voyages, over a period of years, throughout the war, when other Nazi boats and submarines were protecting the South Atlantic coastline of Antarctica. Bear in mind that the normal U-boat of that time could cover 7,000 miles on each operational cruise. Also, the Germans had submarine tankers spread across the South Atlantic Ocean at least as far as south of South Africa, and any one of those tankers, which had a displacement of 2,000 tons, could supply ten U-boats with fuel and stores, thus trebling the time that those submarines could stay at sea. It took a long time, but we managed to get enough men and equipment here before the war ended. We should have enough to last a couple more years, by which time we will have more and bigger saucers to fly in what we need.'

The tunnel led into another large viewing bay in which the plate-glass windows had yet to be inserted. Far below was a workshop of massive dimensions, with jibs and cranes, whining machines, and sheets of a metallic substance, dull grey and different shapes, being swung to and fro. There were many workers down there, also, as well as long work benches, steaming vats, blast furnaces, screeching electric drills, and the ribbed bodywork for other, larger saucers. The walls of the workshop were solid rock, hacked out of the mountain's interior, but the vast ceiling was reinforced concrete, as was the floor.

'The workshop's 300 feet long and 138 feet wide,' Wilson explained. 'Its roof is

eighty feet high and made from twenty-three-feet thick reinforced concrete. To pierce it, you'd need a bomb weighing about twelve tons and striking the ceiling at a speed of Mach 1, the speed of sound. In order to construct it, we needed 49,000 tons of steel and concrete for the roof alone. Hundreds of jacks were used to raise the roof slowly, inches at a time, with the walls being built up beneath it, as it was raised. The enormous amounts of steel, cement, sand and gravel needed were brought in by U-boat and airplane over a period of years, like the rest of the material and the labour force. The site used about 5,000 workers, who were shipped here from the occupied territories, mostly from concentration camps. At any one time there were always at least a thousand men at work. This went on around the clock in twelve-hour shifts, and my guards had no hesitation in executing anyone too ill or exhausted to do it. For this reason, we managed to complete the construction of the workshop in a year. With logic, Dr King, and not emotions, men can do the impossible.'

Dr King gazed down on the skeletal saucer prototypes and the great steel plates being swung to and fro. 'So it was one of your flying saucers that crashed at Socorro, New Mexico.'

'No,' Wilson said. 'Not one of ours.'

King started to respond, obviously wanting to know about the other saucer, but before he could do so Wilson waved him into silence and led him and the others across a catwalk, through another, shorter tunnel, eventually entering a steel-plated room which had rows of frosted glass cabinets on the shelves and naked, dead bodies inside them.

Clarke stopped walking when he saw the bodies, letting out another groan, but the dark-eyed Artur Nebe, who still had his hand on his pistol, roughly pushed him onward. Dr King merely gave a slight shudder, but continued walking behind Wilson. They soon emerged from the tunnel to another room, a laboratory, its steel-plated walls climbing to a ceiling of chiselled rock that was part of the interior of the mountain.

Here, the members of staff looked perfectly normal, men and women in white smocks, reading and writing, peering down through microscopes, checking printouts, gauges and thermometers, working quietly, intently. More appalling, however, were the specimens in the cages and glass jars: human heads, artificially pumping hearts, floating brains and intestines. There were also cabinets containing artificial joints and various prosthetics.

'Oh, Jesus!' Clarke groaned. He covered his face with his hands, started shaking even more, and became so weak that he had to be propped up by Ernst Stoll. Clarke started sobbing again.

'Take him away,' Wilson said. 'Might as well prepare him immediately. Stoll, come and see me in five minutes. I'll be in my office.'

'Yes, sir,' Stoll said. He and Kammler then slipped their arms around Clarke and practically carried him out of the laboratory, leaving only the dark-eyed, expressionless Artur Nebe with Wilson and Dr King. The latter was gazing around

him in amazement, but not shock, as prosthetics were what he had been working on in the hospital in England.

'A familiar sight?' Wilson asked, pleased to see that Dr King was in control of himself.

'The prosthetics, yes. The rest of it, no. We work under certain moral restraints, as you've already noted.'

Wilson smiled thinly. 'The work that goes on here,' he explained, 'is not only for the production of advanced prosthetics and organs. Its ultimate goal is life extension, first through the transfer and replacement of bodily parts, eventually by discovering the secrets of longevity. Right now, we need primitive life extension through prosthetic replacement, which is where you come in. Your work will involve human prosthetics and the creation of cyborgs: half man, half machine. I'm sure you'll find it highly satisfying.'

'You realise I think you're insane.'

'I'm not. I'm just logical.'

Dr King was not swayed by Wilson's brand of logic. 'I'm fifty years old. I have a family and friends. Even were I to accept that I can't escape from here, I'd still find it psychologically impossible to adjust to the loss of everything I've known, loved and need. In short, even if I tried to co-operate, I don't think I'd succeed.'

'You worry unnecessarily. We have ways of indoctrination. Drug therapy, combined with psychological persuasion, will aid your adjustment while letting you retain all your faculties. That process of indoctrination begins today.' Dr King just stared at him, blinking too much, turning pale. 'Are you frightened?' Wilson asked.

'Yes, I'm very, very frightened.'

'You won't be for long.'

Wilson nodded at Artur Nebe, who removed his pistol from its holster and indicated the nearest doorway with it. Dr King licked his lips, then walked out, followed closely by Nebe. Wilson sighed, then stepped into another lift and ascended to the level directly above - the highest level so far, though others were planned.

Emerging from the lift, he entered a sunlit, dome-shaped room, its white-metal walls gleaming, enormous windows running around the walls, framing the dazzling sky and snow-capped mountain peaks of the Antarctic wilderness. Between the windows were doors, steel-plated, all closed, computer consoles jutting out just above them, their lights flashing on and off. The room was fifty feet wide. There was a desk in the middle. On the desk was an intercom, a microfilm viewer, a pile of books, notepaper, pens and pencils, a panel of switches. There were chairs in front of the desk, all leather, deep and comfortable; there was no other furniture in the room. The floor was laid with plain tiles which, in combination with the steel-plated walls, made the room cold and sterile.

Wilson walked across the floor, his footsteps reverberating, passing the desk and stopping at the window, to look out over his kingdom of snow and ice, the impossibly blue sky. He only turned away from that view when the door opened and Ernst Stoll

entered. Stoll stopped by the chairs at the desk, but he didn't sit down.

'You wanted to see me, sir?'

'Yes.' Wilson remained at the window, gazing steadily at Stoll, aware that he wouldn't like what he was about to hear. Stoll was in his middle thirties, but looked older, no longer handsome, ravaged by the loss of his family and idealism during the war. Now loathing the outer world, having nothing to return to, he was devoted to Wilson and his work with this Antarctic colony. He would not want to leave.

'The colony is expanding rapidly and requires more workers,' Wilson said. 'The original labour force is dying off and for that reason, also, we need more workers. We also need human specimens for our laboratory experiments. Finally, we need smaller people for use in the saucers, either in human form or, given time, as cyborgs. We can find a plentiful, constant supply of the small Ache Indians of Paraguay. That country remains sympathetic to the Nazis and will welcome your overtures.'

'I'm to go to Paraguay?'

'More than that, Ernst. Not for a mere trip. You must give up direct participation in the running of this colony and instead take up residence in Paraguay. There you will cultivate a close relationship with General Stroessner, organise the purchase, collection and shipment of the Ache Indians, and keep constantly vigilant for signs of betrayal by Stroessner or his government. In other words, you will leave here for good and settle in Paraguay.'

Stoll was dismayed. 'I don't want to leave here, sir, and I certainly don't want to settle in Paraguay. While it's true that the country has become a haven for Nazi refugees, most of them live in protected enclosures in the jungle and go mad with boredom.'

'You won't be bored, Ernst. I promise you that. You'll be busy rounding up Ache Indians and liasing between the Paraguayans and me. You'll be in frequent contact with us here; and will receive regular visits from myself and others. You'll also be our main contact with the rest of the world, which will include a lot of travelling and meetings. So I'm certain that you'll find it far from dull and might even enjoy it. This work is important, Ernst.'

'I'd rather stay here, but if you insist...'

'I insist. I don't trust anyone else, Ernst. Kammler and Nebe are men who like intrigues and live by betrayal. I want them here, where I can keep my eyes on them. You're the only one I'd trust outside the colony, so it has to be you.'

'I'm honoured,' Ernst said, as stupid about Wilson as he had been with Himmler during the war. 'When do I leave?'

'Not immediately. Right now, that country is in the middle of a minor revolt, which I believe will be defeated by President Morínigo. While this is going on, and causing great confusion, we're having long and frustrating negotiations with that corrupt army general, Alfredo Stroessner. We don't expect to have matters resolved too soon. I'd think in six or seven months from now. Say early next year. Is that satisfactory?'

'Yes, of course.'

Wilson smiled thinly and shook his hand. ‘Good, Ernst. I’m pleased.’

Ernst nodded solemnly and left the office, having foolishly believed everything Wilson had told him.

Yet what Wilson had told him was essentially correct - at least regarding the work required. Where he had misled Ernst was in telling him that life in the jungles of Paraguay would not be dull. In fact, it would be hell, which is why Wilson had chosen Ernst. Kammler and Nebe would both have refused to go. Ernst, then, with his perverted idealism, was the natural choice.

Pleased with himself, Wilson took the lift from his office back down to the third level. Once there, he made his way to the steel-plated laboratory with the ceiling of chiselled rock and gruesome collection of human heads, artificially pumping hearts, floating brains, intestines, and all kinds of prosthetics. Passing the men and women in white smocks, he entered the operating theatre, where the unfortunate Marlon Clarke, now almost mindless with terror, even though slightly sedated, was strapped by his legs, arms and forehead to a surgical bed and surrounded by silent, white-smocked surgeons.

‘Oh, please,’ Clarke whimpered tearfully. ‘*Please*!’

Wilson leaned over him, to smile coldly at him. ‘We wish to remove your head while you’re still fully aware, in order to check if we can preserve it in its conscious state. Your neck has been anaesthetised, so you shouldn’t feel a thing, though you’ll be aware until the very last moment of exactly what’s happening. Treat it as an experience.’

He then stepped back to observe as the leading surgeon switched on the electric guillotine and moved it on its pulley into place over the throat of the pop-eyed, sweating, violently shaking Marlon Clarke. As the surgeon proceeded to surgically remove Clarke’s head, Wilson calmly looked on, curious to see how the unfortunate man would react before death blotted out his mind.

Chapter Four

This place is the pits, Fuller decided as he parked his jalopy in front of the hospital annex in Fort Bliss, New Mexico, which was now being used to house the German rocket scientists under contract to the US Air Force. Fuller was an urban man who hated the country, and having driven the eighty miles from the White Sands Proving Ground, located between Alamogordo and the site of the first atomic explosion, across eighty miles of desert relieved only by endless sagebrush, he was convinced that he had passed through a world inhabited only by mountain lions, coyotes, wildcats, and rattlesnakes. He was therefore relieved to be in Fort Bliss, El Paso, within sight of the Organ Mountains (which, he had been informed, reminded the German scientists of the Bavarian Alps), though was *not* thrilled to step out of his car into more dust and scorching heat.

How he longed to be back in Langley, Virginia, with his CIA pals.

As he walked up to the door of Count Werner von Braun's rooms in the wood-frame building, an Army Stinson L-5, a small liaison plane, flew overhead, reminding him that this was a military base and that the Kraut scientists housed here, including von Braun, were reportedly conducting, in collaboration with the Americans, a highly secret research project for the government.

Things sure change quickly, he thought with unsullied cynicism.

Ringing the doorbell located beside the mesh-wire screen, he reminded himself that the man he was about to meet was not an American, but a former Nazi scientist who had created the V-2 rocket that had devastated London and Antwerp during the war. Now classed as a civilian with civilian staff, von Braun remained in charge of 117 of his own German scientists, engineers and technicians, albeit under the supervision of US Army Major James P.Hammill, a physicist and German-speaking Fordham graduate. The Germans had come into America in 1945 as so-called Wards of the Army, thus requiring no entry permits, all signing one-year contracts with the Army. These were soon changed to five-year contracts, and now the Krauts, while still quartered in this hospital annex, were acquiring automobiles, wearing sombreros and cowboy boots, going to movies and night-clubs, and sending their kids to schools in El Paso.

A better life than we're having, Fuller thought as the front door opened and a well-fleshed, handsome face appeared behind the mesh-wire screen. Defeat has its rewards.

'Yes?' Count Werner von Braun asked.

'Sam Fuller, from Langley, Virginia.'

'Ah, yes, the CIA. You're expected. Come in.'

He opened the mesh-wire door to let Fuller enter. Inside, the house, or conversion, was neat, if rather spartan and obviously not meant to last. Soon, as Fuller knew, von Braun would be moving to Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Alabama, as director of

research-and-development projects of the Army Ordnance Guided Missile Centre.

Another reward, Fuller thought as he and the imposing German shook hands.

'Please,' von Braun said, indicating a soft chair in the living room. 'Be seated.' Fuller sat. 'I'm afraid my wife isn't here at present. A drink. Some tea? Lemonade?'

'Beer?'

'This I have,' von Braun said, his great bulk looming large over Fuller, casting its shadow upon him. 'One moment, please.' When the German disappeared into the kitchen, Fuller had a good look around. No TV set yet, but the radio was on: Benny Goodman's orchestra and a lady singing the swinging 'Bi Mir Bist du Schörn', which made Fuller want to snap his fingers and dance. A copy of *Forever Amber* was on the table, in the shadow of a vase of fresh flowers. Clearly someone was perfecting his or her English with popular music and fiction. Von Braun soon returned with a tall glass filled with beer, which he gave to Fuller, and a bottle of Pepsi Cola for himself. 'I am sorry it's not German,' he said. 'American beer is not good, no?'

'No,' Fuller said. He sipped his lousy American beer. Von Braun sat in the sofa directly facing him, his thick legs outspread. He had the build of a wrestler and the ease that came with huge egos. He would not be pushed easily.

'Nice place,' Fuller said.

'You know that's not true. It is adequate, but better than we deserve - and, of course, temporary. I look forward to moving on.'

'You like it in America? Apart from the beer, I mean?'

'At first I was lonely. A lot of us, we were lonely. But recently we were joined by our parents, wives and children. Three hundred in all. Included in these were my parents, the Baron and Baroness Magnus von Braun - whose ancestral estate in Silesia has been confiscated by the Russians - and I have also been joined by my bride. I was given leave to marry her in Landshut and bring her back here. The Americans are generous.'

Damn right, Fuller thought. And an eighteen-year-old bride, a second cousin, at that. 'We're not so generous with our own citizens,' he said without the trace of a smile.

Von Braun smiled for him, though his gaze remained cool. 'No, I suppose not.'

'Where's your wife now?' Fuller asked.

'I thought our conversation would bore her,' von Braun said, 'so I sent her out for a walk.'

Which means she can't say the wrong thing, Fuller thought. Some fat pumpkin we have here.

He sipped some more beer. His throat felt dry in this dusty hole. 'What do you most like about America, Count von Braun?'

'American sport. Joe DeMaggio and Rocky Graziano.' Von Braun shrugged. 'Apart from that, I only like my work. Now what do you want to know, Mr Fuller?'

Fuller smiled, admiring von Braun's bluntness. A 28-year old hard case from Brooklyn, New York, Fuller was the child of moderately wealthy, uncaring parents, a

clear-eyed product of Harvard, and a veteran of many relationships and one failed, childless marriage. Not a man for finer feelings, he admired those who were nimble on their feet and ruthless in pursuit of what they wanted. This von Braun, though built like a wrestler, clearly had those attributes.

'I've come to enquire about your rocket construction programme. The V-1 and V-2.'

Von Braun sighed. 'I've been over this so many times. There is nothing secret about it anymore. It is all in the files.'

'It's easier for me to talk to you than try to get at the classified files. I have clearance for this, but not for your records. That's why I'm here.'

Von Braun sighed again, sipped some Pepsi Cola, then rested the dripping bottle on his lap. 'So what do you want to know?'

'You were, I believe, one of the founder members of the German amateur rocket society, also known as the Spaceship Travel Club.'

'Yes. The *Verein für Raumschiffart,* or VfR. It came into being in 1927 when a group of space-travel enthusiasts took over an abandoned three-hundred-acre arsenal, which they called their *Raketenflugplataz,* or Rocket Flight Place, in the Berlin suburb of Reindickerdorf. From there they actually shot some crude, liquid-fuelled rockets skywards.'

'When did you join it?'

'About 1930, as I recall. By then the VfR included most of the rocket experts of the day, including Rudolf Nebel, Hermann Oberth, Willy Ley, Max Valier, and Klaus Riedel. I was very proud to gain admittance to that august company.'

'How did you end up in the German army?'

'I know what you're implying, but it's not true,' von Braun said with no sign of anger. 'I was never a Nazi. In April 1930, the Ordnance Branch of the German Army's Ballistics and Weapons Office, headed by General Becker, appointed Captain Walter Dornberger to work on rocket development at the army's Kummersdorf firing range, approximately fifteen miles south of Berlin. Two years later, after many experiments to find the most promising method of propulsion and the most stable means of flight, the VfR demonstrated one of their liquid-fuelled rockets to Dornberger and other officers at Kummersdorf. In 1933, when Hitler came to power, the VfR was taken over by the Nazis and become part of the Kummersdorf programme. Many of the German engineers, including myself, were therefore conscripted in a very real sense. We were, and remain, scientists - not soldiers.'

'You ended up in Peenemünde, working on the V-1 rocket programme.'

'Yes, but the prototype was known as the A-2.'

'Is it true that much of the German rocket research was based on the work of the American rocket scientist, Robert H.Goddard?'

'A genius shamefully ignored by his own country. Yes, it's true. We all revered Goddard and based our work on his brilliant theories. While in the United States those theories were being received with indifference and even contempt, we in

Hitler's Germany was spending fortunes on rocket research that was, by and large, based on Goddard's work. As early as December, 1934, two highly advanced A-2 rockets, constructed at Kummersdorf, gyroscopically controlled, and powered by oxygen-and-alcohol fuelled motors, were launched from the island of Borkum in the North Sea and reached an altitude of one-and-a-half miles. Those stabilised, liquid-fuelled rockets were, at the time, the only known, serious challengers to the rockets of Robert H.Goddard.'

'But the work didn't end there.'

'No. In March 1936 we demonstrated some more motors at Kummersdorf, including one with an unprecedented 3,500 pounds of thrust. Those demonstrations so impressed the German Commander-in-Chief, General Fritsch, that permission was given for us to build an independent rocket establishment in a suitably remote part of Germany, where research and test firings could be carried out in the strictest secrecy. The chosen site was near the village of Peenemünde, on the island of Usedom, off the Baltic coast. The rest is now history.'

'According to an Operation Paperclip report, when the V-2 rockets were inspected by Allied scientists in the captured Nordhausen Central Works at the close of the war, they were found to be remarkably similar to the rockets of Robert H.Goddard.'

'Of course. The most notable features of the propulsion unit were the shutter-type valves in the fixed grill, the fuel injection orifices incorporated in the same grill, the combustion chamber, spark plugs and nozzle. We stole those from a Robert H. Goddard patent that was reproduced in the German aviation magazine, *Flugsport* - in January 1939, as I recall.'

'In 1944 many Allied pilots were being harassed by what appeared to be balls of fire which were under some kind of remote control. The pilots called them "Foo Fighters". Were they connected in any way with your work or Goddard's early experiments?'

'No, I don't believe so. I had heard that they were some new kind of German secret weapon, radio-controlled from the ground, and designed either to foul the ignition systems of the bombers or act as pyschological weapons, to confuse and unnerve Allied pilots. Certainly they were not designed or constructed at Peenemünde. However, given that they might have utilised some of our technical innovations, it's possible they were created by rocket engineers other than my own.'

'Such as?'

Von Braun shrugged. 'We were scattered far and wide.'

'What about Kummersdorf or Peenemünde?'

'Not at the latter; possibly at the former. There were actually two rocket research centres at Kummersdorf, separated by an old firing range. We were transferred from the original site to the new site at the other side of the firing range, then another development team took over our old site.'

'Anything unusual about it?'

Von Braun smiled knowingly. 'You mean the reports about a traitorous American

physicist?'

'Wilson. You know about him?'

'Not much,' von Braun said, shaking his head. 'I never met him or saw him. I only heard reports about his extraordinary presence as part of a research team involved in a top-secret project. I never found out what the project was, but certainly ideas and innovations were swapped across the firing range. The other establishment was even more heavily guarded than ours.'

'Do you think Wilson had anything to do with the so-called Foo fighters?'

'There were rumours about disc-shaped aircraft. Frightened whispers. No more than that. Certainly nothing of that nature was tested while I was at Kummersdorf.'

'Do you believe disc-shaped aircraft were on the German agenda?'

'Yes. I myself didn't believe that such a craft could be made workable - I believed in rockets, not flying discs - but certainly Germany has a long history of research into vertical-rising, spherical or disc-shaped aircraft. In fact, the idea itself was first conceived by a German: the 19th century mathematician and aeronautical theorist Wilhelm Zachariae.'

'A theorist,' Fuller said impatiently, now listening, also, to the Glen Miller orchestra on the radio and wondering what had caused the famous band leader's unexplained disappearance over the Atlantic. 'Were his ideas ever put into practice?'

'Yes. As early as 1939 Dr. Alexander Lippisch, at Messerschmitt, Augsburg, was developing his Delta-Rocket Jet ME 163 and testing its circular wing in the wind tunnel of the AVA company at Göttingen. Meanwhile, Arthur Sack, of Machern, near Leipzig, had for years been obsessed with the idea of disk-shaped aircraft. He tested various models at the model-airplane competition at Leipzig-Mockau in July 1939, with disastrous results. A larger, piloted model, the AS 6, was constructed at the Mitteldeutsche Motorenwerke factory in Leipzig and failed to fly during its test flight at the beginning of February, 1944, on the airfield at Brandis, near Leipzig. He tried again at Brandis in April 1944, but the airplane barely lifted off the ground. Shortly after, the Allied advance brought Sack's experimentation to a halt for all time.'

'Any more?'

Von Braun sighed, obviously finding the subject tiresome. 'Not much. Viktor Schauberger claimed to have designed and constructed a small, remote-controlled flying saucer in 1940 in the Kertl aircraft company in Vienna. Reportedly, during a test conducted three years later, the saucer went through the ceiling, but by and large it was otherwise unworkable - like most of the other prototypes. Then there were the so-called flying wings, or all-wing airframes, of the Horten brothers, which excited the interest of your intelligence, but which in fact were of value purely for research into wind velocity and drag. Finally, as you doubtless know, by the closing months of the war there were many rumours in German aeronautical circles about the imminent appearance of radically different airplanes, without wings, tails, rudders or other surface protruberances, and powered by special turbines or jet engines. I think it unlikely that such projects were completed - if indeed they ever existed in the first

place.'

'Which gets us back to the rockets.'

'I'm afraid so,' Von Braun said.

'What about Nordhausen, towards the end of the war? Were there other rocket engineers in that area?'

'You mean Wilson again.' Von Braun was sourly amused by Fuller's interest. 'More rumours,' he said. 'We heard that another group, heavily guarded by Artur Nebe's most ruthless SS troops, had been shipped in from Kummersdorf to Kahla, which was not very far from Nordhausen. There were also rumours that a jet-propelled aircraft of unusual configuration, but possibly spherical or disc-shaped, had been test-flown over Kahla in February 1945. The results of that test, if indeed it took place, were not known, but in early April the Kahla complex was evacuated, as was Nordhausen, and that was the last I heard of Wilson.'

Fuller knew the rest. At the end of the war, Germany's scientific papers were hidden, and eventually found, in tunnels, caves, dry wells, ploughed fields, river beds and even dried-out cess pools. Also found across the length and breadth of Nazi Germany and its occupied territories were the well known V-1 flying bombs and V-2 rockets, as well as lesser known, but equally formidable, heat-guided ground-to-air missiles, sonic-guidance torpedoes, the highly advanced U-XX1 and U-XXIII electrical submarines, ME-262 jet-fighters, rocket planes that flew even faster than the Messerschmitts, the beginnings of an Atom Bomb project, and the prototypes for other, vertical-rising jet aircraft. Because of this, there was a race between the Allies and the Russians to capture as many of the rocket scientists and engineers as possible, as well as the invaluable technical documentation. Deals were thus struck between the conquerors and their former enemies, particularly with regard to those involved in rocketry and other advanced weaponry.

Along with 150 of their best men, General Dorberger, Walther Riedel, and Werner von Braun came to the United States to work on secret government projects. The Russians, however, also gained a wealth of documentation and material, including the V-2 rockets, buzz bombs, ocean-spanning surface-to-surface and surface-to air missiles found in Peenemünde; about seventy percent of the 12,000 tons of technical equipment stranded on the docks at Lübeck, Magdeburg, and the Gotha plant. They also captured 6,000 German technical specialists, including Dr Bock, Director of the German Institute of Airways Research; Dr Helmut Gröttrup, the electronics and guided-missile expert; and a particular aeronautical engineer, known only as 'Habermohl' and reported to have worked under the American, Wilson.

'Why are you so interested in this Wilson?' von Braun asked while glancing impatiently at his wristwatch. 'Has he vanished completely?'

'Yes.'

'He was probably killed by the Nazis.'

'That's what was reported, but we don't think it's true. We have reason to believe that Wilson, when in Nazi Germany, was indeed working on highly advanced,

supersonic aircraft of unusual configuration, possibly spherical or disc-shaped, and that he might still be doing so in a location I'm not allowed to disclose.'

'You mean the Soviet Union? The V-2 they launched recently?'

'No. Somewhere else. I can't say where it was. But I *can* tell you that my government is seriously concerned with what Wilson might be constructing at the present time. Which is why we were so keen to place you and your rocket scientists under contract, irrespective of negative public opinion.'

'I'm not sure I get your drift.' Von Braun's command of English was admirable, as was his gift for casually easing people out of his house. He simply sighed, glanced again at his wristwatch, then stood up and stretched himself, which made him look even bigger than he was. 'But I'm sure you know what you're about,' he added. 'Your intelligence is thorough.'

Fuller stood up as well, then walked to the front door. Von Braun, acting as if he had been shaken out of a trance, said, 'Oh, I see you're leaving! Please, let me.' He held the door open until Fuller had stepped outside and turned back to face him. 'So why did you risk negative public opinion to put me and my men under government contracts?'

'It's imperative,' Fuller said, 'that we get into space before Wilson does. Do you think you can do that?'

'Chuck Yeager has already broken the sound barrier,' von Braun said. 'So the answer to your question is "Yes".'

'Good,' Fuller said, then he nodded goodbye, walked down to the car, climbed in and drove out of Fort Bliss.

Chapter Five

Nichola Randall, already blonde and beautiful, was covered in mushy food and hammering the rim of her high chair with a rattle as if beating on a tin drum. At least that's what it sounded like to her dad, Captain Dwight Randall, who winced as he ate his Cornflakes, even though he could not be angry with her, not even this early in a bleak morning in January, 1948.

'Honey,' he said, 'I know you're just seven months old, but couldn't you quieten it down just a little bit? Between you and those damned airplanes taking off, I can hardly think straight.'

'Don't blame my daughter,' Beth said. 'Blame the US Air Force and their planes. Always making a racket.'

'*Your* daughter, I note,' Dwight said with a grin. 'I don't get a look-in. You'd think I'd nothing to do with her.'

'Stop fishing for compliments.'

'As for the US Air Force, don't forget it's our bread and butter. Here we are in a tract house in Dayton, Ohio, secure as little bunnies in their burrows. What more could we ask for?'

'A house outside Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. A little home of our own.'

'Time will bring us everything.' Dwight finished his Cornflakes and pushed his plate aside as another F-51 jet interceptor roared overhead. Nichola gurgled happily in her high chair, banging away with the rattle and smearing food over her face, but Beth rolled her eyes as if she couldn't bear it another minute. Still as slim as an adolescent in loose sweater and slacks, she had short-cropped auburn hair and the face of a lovely urchin, full-lipped and round-cheeked. They had only been married a year and were still in love, Dwight hoped, but Beth was increasingly frustrated by life on the base and by Dwight's heavy workload with the ATIC, the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, located here in Wright-Patterson AFB. If anything, his workload had become even heavier since the start of the UFO flap, last year. In the seven months since then, he had virtually worked around the clock and it was giving them problems. Now Beth, ironing the clothes by the window, was looking disgruntled.

'When are you going to get a few days off?' she asked.

'Soon.'

'You've been saying that for months.'

'Our new boss is arriving this morning, so I can't ask immediately, but as soon as he's settled in, I'll put in my request for some leave.'

'Promise?'

'I promise.'

The telephone rang. Carrying his cup of coffee, Dwight leaned across the table, kissed Nichola on her messy cheek, then picked up the phone.

'Captain Randall,' he said.

‘Hi, Dwight, it’s Bob,’ said his friend and sidekick at the ATIC, Captain Robert Jackson. ‘Are you awake yet?’

‘I’m just about to leave.’

‘I’m at the office already.’

‘Bully for you.’

‘I’m gonna make your day, Cap’n.’

‘Oh, how?’

‘We’ve just received a classified Memorandum for the Record from our Commanding General. It states that last September General Nathan Twining, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, wrote to Brigadier General George Schulgen, Commanding General of the Army Air Force, expressing his belief that the UFO phenomenon is something real, that it is not, quote, visionary or fictitious, unquote, and that the objects are disc-shaped, as large as aircraft and... wait for it... *controlled*.’

Dwight whooped with delight, making Beth stare at him, surprised. He couldn’t contain himself because for too long he had been working on a project that many thought was a waste of time, if not downright idiotic. Twining’s letter would give the project validation, as well as priority, and Dwight felt good about that. He therefore grinned like a schoolboy and gave a puzzled Beth the thumbs-up.

‘According to the memo,’ Bob continued, ‘the letter wasn’t intended to support the extraterrestrial hypothesis, but came about because US military fears that the UFOs might be Russian have been exacerbated by the knowledge that the Soviets tested their first A-bomb last November.’

‘Right,’ Dwight said. ‘I *thought* that might get them jumping.’

Bob chuckled. ‘Anyway, because of Twining’s letter, the Army Air Force is going to establish an official UFO investigation unit with a 2A classification. Called Project Sign, it’ll be located right here, in Wright-Patterson, with you in charge and me remaining as your sidekick. We’re to start it as soon as we can, but no later than next month, so you better get your ass over here, Cap’n.’

‘I’m on my way,’ Dwight said. Exultant, he hung up the phone, gulped the rest of the coffee, put the mug back on the table and tightened his tie. As he slipped on his jacket and reached for his peaked cap, he saw Beth’s sulky face.

‘Whoops!’ he softly exclaimed.

‘What’s up?’ Beth asked. When he told her, she said, ‘There goes our vacation. A 2A classification is second only to top priority. You’ll be working night and day with this new project. I’ll hardly see you at all.’

‘I won’t, I promise.’ He placed his peaked cap on his head.

‘Send me a postcard,’ Beth replied. ‘Let me know how you’re keeping.’

Dwight smiled uneasily, then gave her a hug and kissed her. ‘Don’t worry, I’ll be back in time for dinner. Have a good day.’

'Yeah,' Beth said flatly.

She was already returning to her ironing when he left the house and walked quickly, too eagerly, to the offices of the ATIC offices, located at Wright Field.

Saluting junior and senior officers en route, he looked fondly at the aircraft flying overhead, under grey clouds being pierced by weak sunlight. Recalling Beth's sulky face, he was ashamed of his own eagerness, but knew that it could not be helped. The truth of the matter was that he was too easily bored and, though still loving Beth, was having problems adjusting to the domesticity of marriage and fatherhood.

During the Second World War he had been a B-29 bombardier and radar operator, flying to India, China and the Pacific with the original B-29 wing. Though returning to college after the war, he had kept his reserved status, flying as a navigator in an Air Force Reserve Troop Carrier Wing. This had only increased his low-boredom threshold for normal life, so immediately upon receiving his degree in aeronautical engineering, he married Beth, whom he had met at college, then went back on active duty. He was posted straight to the ATIC, which was responsible for keeping track of all foreign aircraft and guided missiles, and he and Beth moved into married quarters here at Wright-Patterson.

Beth was the beloved only daughter of Joe McGinnis, an amiable car salesman and his good-humoured wife, Glenda, both Dayton residents. Their benevolent parenthood had turned Beth into a fine woman, a loving, loveable wife, but one not familiar with life on an air base. They had been here for a year now. During that time, Nichola had been born, but Beth was increasingly desperate to kick off the shackles of Air Force protocol and be nearer her parents in Dayton.

Like Mr and Mrs McGinnis, Beth was good-humoured and quick-tempered, which had made for some tempestuous moments when the first small, inevitable disillusionments of marriage were setting in. Unfortunately, Dwight's growing fascination with the UFO phenomenon, which he found more intriguing than the tracking of foreign aircraft and guided missiles, had revitalised his flagging interest in the peacetime air force, even as it increased Beth's frustrations by keeping him away from home more often. Trouble was brewing, he realised, and he didn't know how to deal with it.

His sidekick, Air Force Captain Bob Jackson, was in the operations room of the ATIC with their only assistant, a pretty blonde WAC corporal, Thelma Wheeler, from Huntsville, Alabama. Bob, in his late twenties like Dwight, was a recruiting officer's dream in his Air Force uniform, with short-cropped dark hair, a sleekly handsome face, and a ready smile that always made Thelma squirm with pleasure. When Dwight entered, Bob was sitting on the edge of the WAC's desk, obviously flirting with her while leafing through the morning's mail, but he looked up and grinned when he saw Dwight.

'Lo!' he said. 'Our supervisor has arrived! I *thought* that phone call would get you of bed.'

'I *was* already out of bed.'

'Tell it to the marines.'

Thelma touched her piled-up hair with exploratory fingers and asked, 'Would you two like a cup of coffee?'

‘Yes, thanks,’ they replied in unison.

Thelma pushed her chair back, stood up, and went into the small kitchen, looking attractive at this hour of the morning in her standard WAC skirt and blouse. Dwight thought there was something going on between her and Bob, but he couldn’t be sure of it. Right now, Bob was removing his admiring eyes from the door through which Thelma had disappeared and instead casting a more thoughtful gaze around the one room that constituted the operational centre of the ATIC.

It was a spartan office, with a few desks, lots of filing cabinets, typewriters, phones and a mountain of paperwork, most of it technical information sheets for official UFO reports. The walls were covered with incident maps, charts and graphs showing most of the reported UFO sightings, including the Foo fighters of World War II, the Scandinavian sightings of 1946, and the wave of American sightings that had started with the two famous incidents in Washington State in July the previous year.

So far, the coloured pins on the maps revealed no definite, or linking pattern, to the flight paths of the reported UFOs, apart from a general southerly direction of retreat. It wasn’t much to go on.

Grinning, Bob lifted a couple of sheets off the desk and waved them at Dwight, who immediately snatched them from him and started reading. The papers included a copy of General Twining’s original official letter, dated September 23, 1947, to the Commanding General of the Army Air Force; another letter from Major-General L.C.Craigie, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Matériel Command, dated December 30, 1947, instructing the Commanding General of Wright-Patterson AFB to form a project, to be codenamed Sign and classified 2A, for the serious evaluation of UFO reports; and finally, a Memorandum for the Record from the Commanding General of Wright-Patterson to Dwight, ordering him to set up the project forthwith from his present office in Wright Field.

Reading the letters with increasing exhilaration, Dwight saw all the words he had longed to hear from his superiors: ‘the phenomenon reported is something real... not visionary or fictitious... appear to be disc-shaped... as large as aircraft... controlled either manually, automatically or remotely... might be of foreign origin... possibly nuclear... collect, collate, evaluate and distribute all information... of concern to national security...’ These words had finally come from the very top to cast the UFOs out of mythology and bring them into reality. Dwight was overwhelmed.

‘Here’s your coffee, Cap’n.’

Dwight looked up with a start. Thelma was smiling at him and holding out a cup of coffee. When he took it, she gave the other cup to Bob, who was grinning wickedly at him.

‘Feels pretty good, right?’

‘Right.’

‘Christ, where do we start?’

‘Let’s go through all the reports.’

‘*All* of them?’ Thelma asked in dismay.

'Yes, Thelma,' Dwight confirmed, glancing sideways at her as she sat on the edge of her desk, hitching up her skirt to reveal her perfect knees, and looked despairingly at the thick files piled up on it. '*All* of them.' He turned back to Bob. 'Now, at last, the top brass will be taking an interest, so we better make sure we're prepared.'

'By isolating the major sightings from all the others and trying to find some pattern in them.'

'Exactly.'

'You're the boss,' Bob said.

The day passed so quickly, they hardly knew it was fading. While Thelma fed them on a constant diet of black coffee and, at lunchtime, sandwiches from the PX, Dwight and Bob went through most of the files of UFO reports, or technical information sheets, whittling out the weakest cases, selecting the strongest, and then exchanging those selected and going through them again. By 5.30pm Thelma was suggesting that it was time to finish work. By 6.30pm she was complaining that she didn't get paid overtime. An hour later she was pouring them more coffee and insisting that she was going to miss dinner. At 8.00pm she was finally allowed to leave, waving at Dwight as she did so, but smiling more meaningfully at Bob. By 9.00pm Dwight and Bob were facing each other over a mountain of reports and through a haze of cigarette smoke, summarising what it was they had to go with.

'Okay,' Bob said, puffing smoke from yet another cigarette, but now sipping whisky instead of coffee, 'the basic scenario is this... The UFO scare didn't really start last July. It appears to have started before it, during World War II...'

On December 13, 1944, Marshall Yarrow, then the Reuters special correspondent to Supreme Headquarters in liberated Paris, syndicated an article stating that the Germans had produced a secret device, thought to be an air defence weapon, which resembled the glass balls used on Christmas trees. According to Yarrow, they were coloured silver, seemed slightly transparent, and had been seen hanging in the air over German territory, sometimes singly, sometimes in clusters. A second article by another reporter, published in the New York *Herald Tribune* of January 2, 1945, described the devices as 'weird, mysterious "Foo fighter" balls' that raced alongside the wings of Beaufighters flying intruder missions over Germany. According to the reports of Allied pilots, the 'balls of fire' would appear suddenly and accompany the planes for miles. They seemed to be radio-controlled from the ground.

'Either because of the famous line from the popular Smokey Stover comic strip, "Where there's foo, there's fire",' Bob explained, reading from his notes, 'or simply because the French word for "fire" is *feu*, those eerie weapons soon became widely known as "Foo fighters".'

Official Foo fighter reports were submitted by pilots Henry Giblin and Walter Cleary, who stated that on the night of September 27, 1944, they had been harassed in the vicinity of Speyer by 'an enormous burning light' that was flying above their aircraft at about 250 miles per hour; then by Lieutenant Edward Schluter, a fighter-pilot of the US 415th Night-Fighter Squadron based at Dijon, France, who, on the

night of November 23, 1944, was harassed over the Rhine by ‘ten small reddish balls of fire’ flying in formation at immense speed. Further sightings were made by members of the same squadron on November 27, December 22 and December 24.

‘In a report published in the New York *Times* of January 2, 1945, US Air Force Lieutenant, Donald Meiers, claimed that there were three kinds of Foo fighter: red balls of fire that appeared off the aircraft’s wingtips, other balls of fire that flew in front of them, and “lights that appear in the distance - like a Christmas tree in the air - and flicker on and off.” Meiers also confirmed that the Foo fighters climbed, descended or turned when the aircraft did so. The Foo fighters were witnessed both at night and by day, yet even when pacing the Allied aircraft they didn’t show up on radar screens.’

Allied intelligence was concerned enough about the reports to establish a classified project in England, under the direction of Lieutenant General Massey, to examine them. Massey was able to confirm that the Foo fighters were balls of fire that flew in parallel formation with the Allied aircraft, often pacing them for great distances, at speeds exceeding 300 miles an hour, frequently causing their engines to malfunction by cutting in and out. While a few reports of crashing Allied aircraft suggest that Foo fighters caused the crashes by making the aircraft’s engines cut out completely, most reports indicate that this was unlikely: that the Foo fighters merely tailed the planes and caused psychological harm, rather than physical damage. They also flew away when fired upon.

‘But in the end, no official designation of the Foo fighters was given,’ Dwight said.

‘No,’ Bob confirmed. ‘Unable to solve the mystery, both the RAF and the US Eighth Army Air Force concluded that they were the products of mass hallucination. Subsequently, they did no more about them. In any event, sightings of the Foo fighters tailed off and ceased completely a few weeks before the end of the war.’

‘But the first post-war UFO flap came in 1946 with the appearance of so-called “ghost rockets” over Scandinavia and western Europe: cigar-shaped, with flames issuing from the tail, and mostly seen at night, often by airline pilots and radar operatives.’

‘Which led to speculation that both the Soviets and the Americans, utilising the men and material captured in the secret research plants of Nazi Germany, including those at Peenemünde and Nordhausen, were developing advanced saucer-shaped aircraft.’

‘That could have been possible,’ Dwight said. ‘Certainly, when World War Two ended, the Germans had several radical types of new aircraft and guided missiles under development. The majority of such projects were in their infancy, but they were the only known craft that could even approach the performance of the objects reported by UFO observers.’

‘Right,’ Bob said. ‘And it’s worth noting that whereas the mysterious Foo fighters didn’t show up on radar, the ghost rockets certainly did - so they couldn’t be classified as hoaxes, misidentifications or the products of mass hallucination.’

‘The Soviets denied any knowledge of the rockets.’

‘Sure, they did. But US suspicions remained unabated while those things continued to fly. They only faded away the following year.’

‘Then came the first known American sightings.’ Dwight said, glancing down at the notes he had taken from his own research. ‘Pilot Richard Rankin’s sighting of ten discs, about thirty to thirty-five feet in diameter, over Bakersfield, California, on June 14, 1947; the Maury Island sighting of six larger discs by Harold Dahl on June 21, 1947 over Puget Sound, off Tacoma, Washington; and three days later, Kenneth Arnold’s famous sighting of nine disc-shaped, apparently metallic, objects flying in formation and making an undulating motion, near Mount Rainier in the Cascades, also in Washington. In the latter two cases the UFOs flew off and disappeared in the direction of the Canadian border.’

‘Thus strengthening the belief that they could be American secret weapons, also based on captured German designs.’

‘In other words, both the Soviets and the Americans could be producing secret weapons, or aircraft, from designs and material captured during the war.’

‘Which would lend credence to the reality of the original Foo fighter.’

‘Right,’ Dwight said. ‘Then came last year's plague of UFO sightings over top-secret military bases.’ He glanced down at his notes again. ‘The first, on June 28, was over Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama. The next, on June 29, was near Alamogordo, New Mexico, right over the White Sands Proving Ground. Finally, on July 8, there was a whole spate of sightings of spherically shaped, white aluminium-coloured objects flying over Muroc Air Base, the supersecret air force test centre in the Mojave Desert.’

Bob nodded assent. ‘And because those particular sightings were made by trained technicians and pilots, and as the reported objects were appearing increasingly over top-and-supersecret military research bases, a growing suspicion in intelligence circles was that the men and material deported from Nazi Germany to Russia had led to a dangerous Soviet lead in space technology.’

‘Either them or extraterrestrials.’

‘Yeah, right,’ Bob said. ‘Little green men.’

‘Either way,’ Dwight summarised, ‘what we’re dealing with is a combination of small, fiery, probably remote-controlled discs and large, aircraft-sized, obviously piloted, so-called flying saucers.’

‘I guess so,’ Bob said.

Dwight sighed, put his feet up on the desk, then lit yet another cigarette. ‘It’s now probably too late to investigate the Maury Island and Kenneth Arnold sightings, but I certainly think we should re-examine the ones that took place over our own military establishments, particularly those at Muroc Air Base.’

‘That may be easier said than done,’ Bob pointed out. ‘I reckon we’ll have to be careful. I mean, even though we’ve now been given official sanction to go ahead with Project Sign, I don’t think we should forget that a lot of the personnel involved in

UFO sightings, either reporting them or investigating them, have got into hot water with their superiors, often for no apparent good reason.'

'Yeah,' Dwight said thoughtfully. 'That's always baffled me. Given that UFOs have been classified as a threat to national security, it's strange how much resistance there's been to investigating them - particularly from our own intelligence services. I mean, even that famous Socorro sighting of last year... Remember that?' Bob nodded that he did, but Dwight went on anyway, talking, really, to himself. 'First the Roswell Army Air Base public information officer, Lieutenant Walter Haunt, was reprimanded and posted to some shit-hole for releasing the story to the press; then First Lieutenant William Harris, the flight intelligence officer who helped me with my investigations, went the same route. To that you can add the disturbing fact that the major civilian witness to the actuality of the crashed saucer, local farmer Marlon Clarke, has disappeared completely. Last but not least, the former, highly decorated, OSS member and local UFO authority, Mike Bradley, refuses to even discuss the matter, which suggests that he's pretty frightened of something - or *someone*. So, yes, I think we've good reason to be concerned.'

'I don't wanna sound paranoid,' Bob said, pushing his chair back, placing his hands on his hips and stretching his spine, 'but we've already had two officers killed under suspicious circumstances while involved in UFO investigations. Only four months ago. August 1, 1947. Captain William Davidson and Lieutenant Frank Brown, both members of A-2 Military Intelligence of the Fourth Air Force. Engaged in an investigation of Harold Dahl and the Maury Island mystery. They were flying back to the Fourth Air Force, Hamilton Field, California, with a box containing the debris that had fallen from the damaged UFO into Puget Sound, when their B-25 malfunctioned and crashed, killing both of them. Even more surprising is that the only other two passengers on board, Technician Fourth Grade Woodrow D.Mathews and Master Sergeant Elmer L.Taff, neither experienced flyers, both of whom had, reportedly, cadged a lift at the last moment, managed to parachute to safety while our two highly trained intelligence officers failed to do so. That anomaly still hasn't been explained.'

'You think it was rigged?'

Bob shrugged. 'All I know is that two experienced intelligence officers died - and the only physical evidence for flying saucers we've had so far was lost in that crash.'

Dwight shivered, feeling cold. He glanced out the window, saw that it was dark, looked at his wristwatch and lowered his feet to the floor as if they'd been scorched. 'Shit!' he exclaimed. 'It's thirty after nine already! I should have been home for dinner three hours ago. Beth's gonna kill me!'

'The joys of marriage,' Bob said, putting on his peaked cap and buttoning up his jacket. 'I think I'll go and have a drink with a friend.'

'I hope it's not the delectable Thelma,' Dwight said, pushing his chair back, getting to his feet, and likewise preparing to leave. 'A good officer doesn't get involved with his staff, no matter how much he's tempted.'

‘I think I get the message, Dwight.’ Bob grinned and patted Dwight on the shoulder, then they turned out the lights and left the office, locking the door behind them. Once outside, Dwight looked across at the huge hangars, parked planes and silent airstrip of Wright Field, thinking of the other kinds of aircraft now haunting the skies. Now, when he saw a shooting star, his heart gave a leap. It was almost instinctive.

‘Project Sign,’ he said. ‘It sounds good. I think I’ll enjoy it.’

‘You will,’ Bob replied, ‘but Beth won’t. Good night and good luck, my friend.’

‘Tread carefully,’ Dwight said.

They walked off in opposite directions, Bob to have a drink, probably with Thelma Wheeler, no matter what Dwight said, and Dwight to return and face the music for being late to dinner again. As he headed away from Wright Field, the silence was broken by the deep rumble of an RB-29 coming in to land, reminding him that the air base never slept. Glancing up at the sky, which was a mosaic of cloudy patches and stars, he contemplated the possibility of equipping some RB-29s with the latest aerial cameras and using them to photograph unusual phenomenon by day and by night. The Air Matériel Command laboratories at Wright Field, he was convinced, would be ideal for the processing of such photos. Determined to put his idea into immediate practice, he turned into the silent streets of the married officers’s quarters, then entered his temporary home.

As anticipated, Beth was not amused. Dwight’s meal was sitting untouched on the table. Beth was reading a book, smoking a cigarette, and listening to Arthur Godfrey on the radio at the same time. She did not look up when Dwight entered.

‘Sorry,’ he said. When she didn't reply, he crossed the room and kissed the top of her head. ‘Really, I’m sorry.’

‘Your dinner’s cold.’

‘I noticed.’

‘Nichola’s in bed.’

‘I guessed.’

‘I didn’t get my postcard,’ Beth said, ‘and you seemed to be gone that long.’

‘Okay, Beth, that’s enough.’

‘Your work.’

‘Yes, my work. We have to set up this new project and we don’t have much time.’

‘No time for us, obviously.’

‘That’s not an issue, Beth. I was only a ten-minute walk from here. It shouldn’t be a big deal.’

Beth stubbed her cigarette out, closed her book, turned off the radio. Standing up, she said, ‘Maybe not to you, but I know what it means.’

‘What?’

‘More UFO investigations. Even more than before. Since those first sightings, last July, you’ve been travelling all over the place. Now that you’re in charge of the whole thing, it’s bound to get worse.’ She headed for the bedroom, then turned back

to face him. ‘And you like it,’ she accused. ‘That’s what maddens me the most. It’s not that you have to do it, it’s that you enjoy it so much. You’d rather be travelling and investigating UFOs than be at home with me and Nichola. I could hate you for that.’

‘That isn’t true, Beth.’

‘It is. And damned well you know it. Goodnight, Dwight.’

‘Goodnight.’

When she disappeared into the bedroom, Dwight poured himself a stiff drink, neat bourbon, and had it while sitting by the window, looking up at the night sky. He felt guilty because he knew that Beth was right, so the drink went down well. He was just finishing and contemplating bed when the telephone rang. It was Bob, sounding shocked.

‘When I left you,’ he said, ‘I went back to the office – ’

‘What for?’ Dwight asked, realising instantly that the office was the only place on the base where Bob and Thelma Wheeler could get together.

‘I forgot something... Anyway, what the hell’s the difference? What I’m saying is that I was back in the office when I received a call from a buddy at Fort Knox, Kentucky, informing me that Captain Thomas F.Mantell, an experienced pilot and Air Force hero during the Normandy invasion, was killed in a crash today - reportedly when trying to pursue a UFO over Godman Field.’

‘Oh, my God!’ Dwight blurted out, hardly able to believe his ears. ‘What made them think it was a UFO?’

‘I don’t have the full facts yet. Godman have promised a detailed report, but in the meantime all I’ve got is what I was told over the phone.’

‘Yes?’ Dwight demanded, feeling breathless.

‘There were a series of sightings this morning all over the area, beginning in Maysville, Kentucky, less than a hundred miles east of Louisville, where Godman AFB is located. The object was also sighted over Owensboro and Irvington, located in northwest Kentucky. The cumulative sightings, called in to the local police, indicated a circular, metallic object about 250 to 300 feet in diameter, heading in a westerly direction, towards Godman Field. Early that afternoon, the state police contacted Godman, but the control tower operators could confirm no similar sighting at that time. However, half an hour later, the assistant tower operator picked up the object, which was subsequently observed by the operations officer, the intelligence officer, the base commander, his executive officer, and a band of other ranking personnel.’

‘Christ!’ Dwight exclaimed.

‘A flight of four F-51 fighter planes, headed by Cap'n Mansell, was sent in pursuit and was observed disappearing in the southward wake of the UFO. According to the control-tower operators, by the time the four planes reached 10,000 feet, Mantell was well ahead and far above them. He reported to the control tower: “I see something above and ahead of me. It looks metallic and it’s tremendous in size. Now it’s starting

to climb." He then said that the UFO was above him, that he was gaining on it, and that he intended going as high as 20,000 feet. Those were his last words before he crashed. Losing contact with him, the other pilots returned to base, where they were informed that Mantell was dead. The UFO wasn't seen again.'

Bob went silent, though Dwight imagined he could hear him breathing heavily. He then realised that he, too, was breathing heavily and that his heart was racing. Taking a deep breath, he glanced up at the clouds and stars, then he let his breath out again.

'Make sure you get the full report,' he said.

'Sure,' Bob said. 'Goodnight.'

The line went dead and Dwight put his phone down. He thought of Beth in their bed, already concerned for him, and wanted to lie quietly beside her and press himself into her. Instead, he poured himself another drink and let it last a long time. He drank it while gazing up at the night sky, until it seemed to press down upon him, threatening to crush him. That sensation, he knew, was caused by fear. He would have to get used to that.

Chapter Six

'They weren't ours,' Wilson said as he gazed out from his office of steel and concrete near the summit of the mountain to the vast, white desolation of Antarctica. 'Neither the Maury Island sightings, nor those made by Kenneth Arnold over the Cascades, were of our saucers. The ones that flew back towards Canada belonged to someone else. Not to me. Not from here. We must look to America.'

He sipped his mineral water and placed his glass back on the table by the panoramic window. Hans Kammler, still blonde, handsome, and cold-eyed, gazed over Queen Maud Land, his beloved New Schwabenland, and smiled thinly, bleakly, to himself.

'Ah, yes,' he said, 'the Americans. Perhaps the Soviets as well. Our captured V-2 rockets were shipped from Germany to New Mexico in 1945. The launch of American V-2s commenced at the White Sands Proving Ground in March the following year, under the direction of that traitor, Count von Braun. We have since received a report confirming that North American Aviation are planning to go into the production of rocket motors under a USAF contract and will be basing their work on the original V-2 motor.'

'How ironic,' Wilson said, smiling, 'that the V-2 in turn was based on the rocket motors of America's own, badly neglected Robert H.Goddard, with whom I also worked when he was located in Roswell, New Mexico, now the location of the White Sands Proving Ground. It has all come full circle.'

'It's nothing to be pleased about,' Kammler said testily. 'The Russians have Habermohl and the Americans have Miethe, who also worked on Projekt Saucer. Miethe was formerly stationed with von Braun at Fort Bliss, New Mexico, but is now located at Alamogordo, the centre of American rocket development. God knows what he's constructing there.'

Wilson glanced at the launching pad far below, carpeted thinly with snow and shadowed by the encircling rock face soaring high above it. The Antarctic sunlight beamed down upon the latest 300-foot flying saucer like a torch shining into a dark well, making the machine's metallic grey take on a silvery sheen. The many men in black coveralls, who had been swarming all over the saucer, were removing the ladders and hurrying behind the shock-proof protective shields located in small caves hacked out of the rock. From this high, behind the thick, plate-glass window, Wilson could not hear the saucer, but he could see it rocking slightly from side to side, its heat turning the thin snow into steam as it prepared for lift-off.

'Yes,' he said, 'the original Projekt Saucer team are a problem. Now that pompous fool, Schriever, who managed to escape from Prague, is living back in his hometown of Bremer-Haven, West Germany, telling all and sundry that the Allies are building flying saucers based on the one he constructed during the war. Though the press is viewing him with scepticism, he is in fact correct. The Canadians and Americans are

both working on a flying-saucer development programme based on designs found in Germany at the end of the war. The Canadian project is being undertaken by the A.V. Roe Company in Malton, Ontario; the American one is hidden somewhere in the White Sands Proving Range, reportedly Holman AFB.'

Far below, the *Kugelblitz* Mark III lifted off the ground, swaying gently from side to side, then ascended silently, growing wider as it came up to Wilson's level. The higher it climbed, the more sunlight it caught, which turned it from dull, almost invisible grey to dazzling silver.

It looks alien and beautiful, Wilson thought. Or beautifully alien. We have done a good job this time.

'If their work is based on the Schriever designs, we have little to fear,' Kammler said.

'Not at the moment, but time could change that. Already the Americans and Canadians are more advanced than they should be. While grossly exaggerated versions of what Harold Dahl and Kenneth Arnold saw over the Cascades have enthralled the world, both men *did* in fact witness the test flights of a series of remote-controlled, pilotless discs, based on our original *Feuerball* and constructed at the A.V. Roe Company in Canada. A larger, piloted saucer is also being constructed there, as well as by a US Naval Laboratory team in that hidden location in the White Sands Proving Range. While reportedly neither machine is very good, both have had satisfactory test flights.'

'Witnessed by various pilots and other trained military personnel,' Kammler noted.

'Yes. As have ours,' Wilson said. 'Which means that the US and Canadian saucers have been mistakenly credited with the kind of capabilities that only our machines possess so far. This, at least, is to the good. The Americans think the more efficient saucers have been made by the Russians, who believe that the Americans made them. Thus, we can fly our own saucers with impunity, not having to worry if we're seen. By attempting to build their own saucers, based on our old designs, the Soviets, Americans and Canadians have actually given us greater freedom of movement. They should get an award.'

His smile was not returned by Kammler, a man of limited humour, so he concentrated on the 300-foot saucer as it reached the level of the window and hovered there, swaying gently from side to side, as if in salute. In fact, it was just testing itself. The steel covers on the raised dome were open, revealing the transparent pilot's cabinet with six crew members inside, but they would close when the saucer actually took off on its long flight to Paraguay, making it look like a seamless spinning top in flight. Now, as if obeying Wilson's instinctive nod of approval, the saucer dropped out of sight below the window, descending back onto its landing pad.

'Is Stoll ready to leave?' Wilson asked.

'Yes,' Kammler replied. 'Not too happy, but prepared to do his duty. I better go down and say *Auf Wiedersehen.*'

'Tell him I'll be down before take-off, after I've visited the laboratory and talked to

Dr King.'

'He responded well to his indoctrination. Particularly after hypnotic-drug treatment, which helped in changing his mind - for the rest of his life, I trust.'

'He's a man of considerable will power. He'll serve us well in the end. So, Hans, let's go.'

Pushing his chair back, Wilson glanced again across that vast, spectacular panorama of Antarctic wilderness, then stood and walked across the immense, dome-shaped room, with Kammler behind him. They took the lift down to Level 3. Leaving Kammler in the lift, to continue his descent to ground level where the flying saucer was parked, Wilson walked through a short tunnel hacked out of the rock and entered the laboratory containing its ghoulish collection of human spare parts and artificial replacements. By now, some larger glass cabinets had been built into the walls of bare rock and contained drugged, unconscious, and frozen human beings who had been abducted by Wilson's flying saucer crews. Wired up to machines that showed their declining heartbeat and brain waves, they would eventually freeze to death, though not before providing valuable information for the ongoing researches into longevity.

Surrounded by other white-smocked physicians and surgeons, Dr King was at a long table, examining a drained human torso which had a prosthetic replacement attached to the stump of one of its amputated arms. The interior of the prosthetic arm had been left open to reveal a complex of electric wiring that ran from the shoulder down into the artificial hand. A white-smocked assistant was applying electric charges to the prosthetic while Dr King checked the mobility of the twitching artificial fingers. He looked up and stopped what he was doing when Wilson approached him.

'Good day, Wilson,' he said, sounding calm enough, but not smiling.

'Good day. How's it going?'

King glanced down at the prosthetic arm fixed to the drained human torso. 'Not bad,' he said. 'I think we'll get there eventually. Working with human cadavers, instead of animals, short-circuits a lot of otherwise time-consuming experiments and aids progress tremendously. It's really quite exciting. I think we'll have working, myoelectric limbs before the year's out. They won't be all that good, but once we've got a working model, the rest of it will come even more quickly.'

'What about head transplants?' Wilson asked. 'Or even partial replacement of the face and head: the mouth, throat and jawbone. I mean for the development of cyborgs. For survival in outer space and on the seabed. To man the saucers indefinitely.'

King glanced at the guillotined human head now frozen in a small glass case on a nearby table; it was wired up to an EEG machine recording weak, dying brain waves. The eyes of the head were open, staring wildly, seeing only God knows what. It was the head of the unfortunate Marlon Clarke.

'A long way off yet,' Dr King said, 'but we'll get there eventually. At the moment,

we're concentrating simultaneously on many different aspects of the problem and discovering the biological and physical interrelationships between them. Experiments already undertaken in the animal laboratory have convinced us that animal gut, intestines and even skin can eventually be transplanted successfully into humans. Similarly, the heart and lungs might be used, but this will take longer. Regarding artificial bones, joints and sockets, it's my belief that the main alloys required will be of the cobalt and chromium variety: tantalum, titanium, niobium and molybdenum. Limited success has already been attained in the preservation of human heart valves, bone, blood and even the cornea of the eye.'

'Very good,' Wilson said. 'Have you been able to make any advances on what you were doing in the Powered Limbs Unit of West Hendon hospital?'

'Yes.' The doctor spoke precisely, but rather like one of the automatons he was hoping to create. 'In external prosthetics, the myoelectric control of limbs is racing ahead.' He waved a hand, to indicate the prosthetic arm joined to the limbless human torso on the table. 'As you can see.' Wilson nodded. 'Already we've perfected a hand-arm prosthesis in which all five fingers are capable of closing around objects of variable shape, though not yet with the precision of a human hand. We're also working on other advanced prosthetics, including myoelectric arms with interchangeable hands. From there, I hope to progress to a more sophisticated myoelectric arm that will be able to move at any angle, speed or force simply by being *thought* into action. Such an arm will pick up muscle signals generated to the natural stump, transmit them to a small amplifier, and use that to drive a compact electric motor. The machinery for all of this will be housed inside a flesh-coloured, fibre-glass casing that resembles a real arm.'

'Like the one on the table.'

'Correct.'

'But the head,' Wilson insisted, glancing at the wide-eyed head of Marlon Clarke, which may or may not have been aware of its own existence, though it wasn't likely to be sane any more.

Ignoring the head, Dr King pointed at the large glass cases containing unconscious, frozen human beings. 'Our biochemists and mechanical, electrical, chemical, and biomedical engineers are already exploring the possibility of collecting healthy human specimens, rendering them unconscious, and freezing them to just under the point of death for as long as possible. If we can perfect a workable form of cryonic preservation, even though the brains of these living cadavers will have ceased functioning, they'll still be respiring, pulsating, evacuating, and excreting bodies that could be maintained for many years as a source of spare parts and for medical experimentation of all kinds.'

'But the head,' Wilson said impatiently, glancing at the staring eyes of Marlon Clarke. 'Can we ever transfer the entire head from one human being to another?'

King nodded affirmatively. 'I think it can be done. In the other laboratory isolated animal brains are being kept in cold storage and others, less lucky' - here the doctor

smiled bleakly – 'are functioning, warm brains kept alive by hook-ups to blood machines or to live individuals of the same species. Right now we can't speculate as to what's going on mentally inside those disembodied brains, but our latest two-headed dog has survived for a week now and is eating, sleeping and performing its physiological functions normally, as if nothing has happened. In other words, it appears to accept itself as perfectly normal.'

'And longevity?'

'We'll require a steady supply of live foetuses. The heads will be cut off and then injected with radioactive compounds to enable us to study brain metabolism. We also need mature adults who can be injected with various diseases, including live hepatitis virus and cancer cells, to determine if the diseases can be so induced and suitable antidotes found.'

'We conducted similar experiments in the Nazi concentration camps,' Wilson informed him, 'but they didn't prove much.'

'You lacked knowledge and proper facilities,' King replied. 'I'm expecting much more here.'

'I think you're beginning to enjoy this, Dr King.'

'It's more exciting than my work at Hendon,' King said without the slightest trace of irony. 'Here, the possibilities are limitless. The mysteries of longevity will eventually be solved here - and the cyborgs will come even before that. You have no cause to worry.'

'I'm not the worrying kind,' Wilson said. 'Thank you, Dr King.' After casting a final, curious glance at the wide, staring, unreadable eyes in the guillotined head of Marlon Clarke, Wilson left the laboratory, crossed a catwalk, and glanced down a dizzying drop to the mass of men in black coveralls working on skeletal saucer structures in the immense, arc-lit workshop with walls of solid rock. He then entered a tunnel still being hacked out of the mountain's interior with the sweat of slave labour. Reminded, by the gloom, bedlam, dust and cracking whips, of the Nordhausen Central Works in the Harz mountains, he was glad to get through the nightmarish tunnel and emerge to the viewing bay overlooking one of the multiplying landing pads for the saucers. As this one was located directly below his office, located near the summit of the mountain, he found himself looking down on the 300-foot saucer that had ascended to his level during his discussion with Kammler - the one that was transporting Ernst Stoll to Paraguay.

Taking the lift down through the interior of the mountain, Wilson emerged to the cleared area that had become a landing pad, now covered in a film of powdery snow. The saucer was resting on its four hydraulic legs, with its exit door tilting out from the base to form a short flight of steps down to the ground - a recent, much welcomed innovation. As the raised, transparent dome was uncovered, Wilson could see the crew inside. Ernst Stoll and Kammler were standing near the front edge of the saucer, talking with the artificial smiles of men who secretly despise one another. They drew apart when Wilson approached them.

‘Well,’ Wilson said, ‘the day has come at last. It’s been a long wait. No regrets?’

‘No regrets,’ Stoll said. ‘Naturally, I’d rather stay here with you, but I’ll do what I have to.’

‘I’m glad,’ Wilson said, looking into Stoll’s dulled gaze and realising just how much he had changed since first they had met in Berlin in 1938. Since then, Stoll had lost his dream of becoming a rocket engineer, lost his faith in the Nazis, lost his wife and child - lost everything. Now he only had Wilson, who cared little for him but was all too willing to use him. Wilson glanced at Kammler, then nodded at the flying saucer. ‘Is it ready to leave?’

‘Yes,’ Kammler said. ‘We were just waiting for you.’

Wilson shook hands with Stoll. ‘Enjoy your work - and good luck.’

‘Thank you,’ Stoll said, releasing Wilson’s hand, shaking Kammler’s hand less readily, then ducking low to slip under the base of the saucer and clamber up the ladder into the machine. The ladder was drawn up electronically behind him, sealing the exit, then Wilson and Kammler moved back with the other men to take their positions behind transparent protective shields in the small caves hacked out of the rock. Artur Nebe, the deadly former SS officer, now in charge of Wilson’s security, was already there with some of his armed guards. He looked at Wilson with dark, inscrutable eyes, resting his hand, as always, on his holstered pistol.

‘Do you think he can be trusted?’ Nebe asked.

‘Yes,’ Wilson replied. ‘At least until he goes insane. Until then, just to be sure, we’ll visit him on a regular basis and check what he’s up to. I’m sure he’ll do the job well.’

‘Let’s hope so,’ Nebe said.

A high-pitched whistling sound came from the saucer, then it changed into an angry roaring. A cloud of steam caused by melting snow swirled around the glittering machine as it lifted off the ground, swaying from side to side, bobbing gently up and down. The saucer remained like that for a few seconds, swaying and bobbing magically, roaring angrily, turning the swirling snow into great clouds of steam that made the light from the arc lamps bend and quiver to form a dazzling web. The saucer ascended slowly, vertically, as if on invisible strings, until it had cleared the snow-capped peaks of the mountain, just above Wilson’s office. There it roared even louder and seemed to quiver like a bow-string, until suddenly it went silent, became motionless for a second, then shot vertically into the azure sky and almost instantly vanished.

‘Perfect,’ Kammler said.

‘And here comes the other one,’ Nebe said, his dark eyes glinting watchfully.

The other saucer, also 300 feet in diameter, had appeared out of nowhere to hover just above the snow-capped peaks and then begin its descent. It came down as gracefully as the first one had ascended and landed as lightly as a feather on the same launching pad. When it had whined back into silence, its trap door opened and angled down to the ground to form steps. A middle-aged man emerged, wearing a black

coverall and boots. He was followed by the five crewmembers, all dressed in grey coveralls. When Kammler stepped forward to receive the flight records from the crewmembers, the man in black walked up to Wilson and gave a slight, formal bow.

'Well?' Wilson asked him. 'Did it go well?'

'Yes, sir,' the man, Flight Captain Friedrich, replied. 'We flew over a few air bases without much success, but finally, at Godman Field, near Louisville, Kentucky, we were pursued by four F-51 fighter planes. One of them was more foolhardy than the others and pursued us to nearly twenty thousand feet. We let him catch up with us. When he was still climbing and just below us, as close as he dared come, we used your new laser weapon against him. It worked, sir. Beautifully. The F-51 cut out, went into a spin, and was splitting in two even before it crashed. We later heard on the radio that the pilot was killed. Air Force pilot Thomas F.Mantell. A World War Two hero. A good choice, don't you think?'

'You didn't exactly choose him,' Nebe coldly corrected him, 'but certainly, for our propaganda purposes, you couldn't have come across a better victim. Now the US Air Force will be very frightened indeed, which is what we require.'

'It's also good to know that the laser weapon developed in Kahla actually works,' Wilson said. 'We're pleased, Friedrich. You've done well.'

He squeezed Friedrich's shoulder, glanced at Kammler and Nebe, then turned away and walked back into the mountain.

Chapter Seven

Fuller made good use of his time before interviewing the former Projekt Saucer scientist, Walter Miethe. Forced by his assignment to return to New Mexico, he decided to learn as much as he could about the V-2 rockets before discussing them, and more important related matters, with the Kraut scientist now working for the Army's First Guided Missile Battalion, located in White Sands.

Driving out of town at dawn, past the bright orange-and-white signs saying ALAMOGORDO: HOME OF THE ATOMIC BOMB, CENTRE OF ROCKET DEVELOPMENT!, Fuller headed for White Sands, where a V-2 launching was to take place later in the morning. The drive took him across desert filled with nothing but sagebrush, past isolated gas stations charging twenty-five cents a gallon, to the 3,600 miles of even more parched desert, sand dunes, and cattle-grazing land, which encompassed the White Stands Proving Ground, surrounded by the distant, closely bunched peaks of the aptly named Organ Mountains.

Not particularly fond of ranchers, rattlesnakes, mountain lions or coyotes, Fuller was glad to reach the government's first rocket centre. He knew he was getting close when he hit Highway 70 and found it clogged with motorists trying to find a good vantage point for the launching. Rather than being classified, the V-2 launchings (or 'shoots' as they were commonly called), which took place every couple of weeks, were treated as gala occasions and used as military PR exercises on the local populace. Fuller was therefore not surprised, when he approached White Sands in the morning's dazzling light, to find himself in the thick of cars and buses coming in from Las Cruces, Alamogordo, and El Paso, bringing farmers, cowboys, housewives, young mothers with new-born babies, schoolchildren, Boy Scout troops, students from the international rocket school, ROTC men, National Guardsmen, and members of the Chamber of Commerce and civic clubs. Many of these would tour an assembly hangar and the White Sands Proving Ground Museum, housed in a long Army van, where a V-2 rocket was on display, see a movie about guided missiles, visit the launching site, then scramble for a good position in the camp viewing area, located approximately seven miles away.

American know-how, Fuller thought proudly.

He was even more impressed when he entered the White Sands camp and found it swarming with state and municipal officials, retired and active Mexican generals, ordinary GIs, naval ratings, Air Force engineers, and top brass from the Pentagon, West Point, and Annapolis.

'It's like the goddamned Fourth of July,' he said to Captain Edward 'Ed' Gunderson of the First Guided Missile Battalion, in his office near the Proving Ground museum. 'I thought all this would've been top-secret, but these folks are having a party.'

'It's kind of a festive day,' Ed said. 'The rocket shoots are still exciting. You can't

keep a shoot secret - I mean the rockets are so damned visible - so everyone's invited to come along. The real secrets are the payloads in the rockets - and the public don't see those.'

'What kind of payloads?'

'The permanent personnel of the Proving Ground are both civilian and military, so it depends on who's financing and sharing the individual rocket. In this instance, General Electric has thermometers on board because they're interested in the problems of heat transfer; the Naval Research Laboratory is sending up a spectrograph to measure the spectral qualities of light at high altitudes; and the University of Michigan is contributing an air-sample bottle, to suck in a sample of the atmosphere and then seal itself. Even Harvard University, would you believe, is sending up a packet of seeds to learn how cosmic radiation effects them. So while the rocket shoot isn't secret, the results of the tests certainly will be.'

'Who's most interested in the rockets?'

'Military men and scientists are equally interested, but for different reasons. The scientists are mostly interested in pure scientific research - an orbital satellite for the checking of weather and other atmospheric data is their long-term aim - but the military men – wouldn't you know it? - are after an atom bomb transported by guided missile. That says it all, doesn't it?'

Fuller's instinct was to say: 'Why not? We've got to protect ourselves from the Commies and other enemies.' But realising that this might antagonise his new friend, he said, instead, 'Yeah, I guess it does, Ed. So when do I get to talk to the Kraut?'

'Dr Miethe?'

'Yeah.'

'Right after the launch. He's out in the desert right now with one of the Recovery Officers, waiting to pick up the rocket's scientific instruments at the point of impact. You can see him right after that.'

'Can you take me out to the launching site?'

'Sure,' Ed said. 'No problem.'

They left the First Guided Missile Battalion HQ and drove in Ed's jeep to the launching site, burning along the camp's only paved road, which ran through seven miles of sagebrush and dunes, with the organ-pipe peaks of the mountains to the west, on the far edge of the otherwise flat terrain. The journey only took ten minutes, but the wind was hot and filled with sand, making Fuller feel dry-throated and sun-scorched by the time the V-2 appeared as a patch of glinting white in the distance. A minute later, the jeep was close enough to let Fuller see that the rocket, painted white but with a pointed, silver warhead, now raised into a vertical position, was being planted on a portable launching platform by a specially equipped truck. Ed drove on to where the rocket was and they got out of the jeep.

The V-2 looked lonely in the desert waste, even though about a hundred men, civilian and army, were gathered around it. The rocket was now straddled by a sixty-foot tall crane, which had platforms at different levels, where the launch crew were

working like beavers while GIs climbed up and down ladders, opening and closing the instrument panels, and, on the ground, the surveyors checked the vertical alignment. It looked like organised chaos.

'Come on,' Ed said to Fuller. 'Let's check out the blockhouse.'

'What's that?'

'Headquarters for the shoot.'

The blockhouse was an expansive, low concrete structure located about a hundred yards west of the launching platform, reminding Fuller of the pillboxes he had attacked as a marine during the war. Inside, it was blessedly cool and contained only instrumentation relating to the V-2, with lights flickering constantly on the consoles and other equipment making rhythmic clicking sounds. The thick, protective walls of the blockhouse contained three narrow viewing windows of thick laminated glass which, when Fuller looked, showed only the fins at the bottom of the V-2 being prepared for launching. There were also oxygen masks and bottles hanging on the walls.

'The rocket could keel over and fall into the blockhouse,' Ed explained reassuringly, 'cutting off our exit. The walls of the blockhouse are so thick they probably wouldn't cave in, but the masks would be needed to protect us from the toxic gases that could seep out of the rocket and fill this place before we could escape. Come on - only twenty people are allowed in here during a shoot and you're not invited. You can come with me as part of a field crew. They're stationed right across the Proving Range, in the desert and mountains. Their job is to keep track of the rocket's flight and phone their reports in to the blockhouse. You wanna come?'

'Hell, yes,' Fuller said. He hadn't enjoyed himself so much since fighting the Japs at Iwo Jima and was glad to get out of the packed, gloomy blockhouse. Once outside, he noticed that the GIs were no longer swarming over the raised V-2, but had been replaced by a lot of civilians, all on the third platform, about fifty feet up.

'The guys in charge of instrumentation,' Ed explained. 'Let's get in the jeep.'

They drove away from the blockhouse, heading into the desert, arriving a couple of minutes later at Radar Station D, an encampment of half-a-dozen trailers, containing radar and other equipment, located a mile east of the launch area. When Fuller got out of the jeep and looked back where he had come from, he saw heatwaves rising off the plain in front of the rocket.

Wiping sweat from his face, he followed Ed into one of the trailers. It contained the telemeter, which would transmit data on temperatures, wind pressures and cosmic rays during the rocket's eight-minute flight, and three special cameras, which would make a pictorial record of the flight. Men stripped to the waist and wearing shorts, their muscular bodies sweat-slicked, had taken up positions behind the cameras. As this meant that the shoot was imminent, Ed led Fuller back outside, where they could get a good view.

As zero hour approached, more people poured into the encampment, including a lot of full colonels. Instructions were being broadcast from a PA system that linked up all

the field stations. Shortly after, a pair of Stinson L-5 observation planes appeared in the sky, the countdown began and continued until it reached X-minus One. Then the seconds were counted off: 'Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one - *Fire*!'

A distant, bass rumbling sound soon became a mighty roaring, then flames shot out around the base of the rocket and turned to boiling black smoke. From where Fuller stood, it looked as if the rocket was on fire, about to explode, yet remarkably it didn't move immediately. Instead, the 1,900 pounds of explosive fuel built up beneath it, only gradually lifting it off the launching tower. The rocket rose slowly, dramatically, as if about to fall back again, but kept climbing in that leisurely manner out of spewing yellow flame and boiling smoke. When it broke free from the launching tower, spitting a red flame from its tail, the roaring washed over Fuller like a wave and the ground shook beneath him. He covered his ears with his hands and put his head back, looking upwards, feeling tremendous, almost sexual excitement as the roaring turned into the loudest noise he had ever heard and the rocket started putting real distance between itself and the Earth. Fuller's neck could bend no further when the rocket became no more than a flickering flame, curving up and away, until it disappeared altogether, leaving Fuller to squint into nothing but the vast, empty sky.

When he straightened his neck to look about him, he saw Ed's grin and raised thumb. Fuller felt extraordinary alive, completely physical, and at last had a very real sense of the world that was coming.

No wonder they're scared, he thought.

Fuller didn't like Commies, Japs or Germans, but he tried to be civil when he interviewed Walter Miethe later that afternoon in the headquarters of the First Guided Missile Battalion. The office was small and spartan, containing a desk and three chairs. There was nothing on the desk. Two of the chairs were at one side of it, with Miethe in one of them. Fuller, at the other side, had a good view of White Sands, its chapel framed by the window, which was open. The bawling of GIs playing on the basketball court came in loud and clear.

'Cigarette?' Fuller asked. Miethe shook his head, indicating refusal. He had black hair and eyes as dark as pitch, though they still revealed wariness. He was a man who had been asked a lot of questions and didn't want to hear more. 'Do you mind if I do?' Fuller asked, lighting up before Miethe could answer. 'No,' Miethe said. 'Of course not.' Fuller grinned. 'You don't smoke at all.' Again Miethe replied by shaking his head in a negative gesture. 'Filthy habit. Never start,' Fuller said, puffing smoke rings and watching them drift away, pretty close to Miethe's face. 'So you know why I'm here, right?'

'I can guess,' Miethe replied.

'You worked for an American called Wilson and we're trying to find him.'

Miethe sighed wearily. 'I'm sorry, I can't help you. I can tell you what I know about Projekt Saucer, but I don't know anything more about Wilson. He's probably

dead.'

'What makes you think that?'

'There were two saucer construction programmes: one by *Flügkapitan* Rudolph Schriever, the other by Wilson. The two saucer teams were separated in 1944. Wilson's team was placed under the command of SS Brigadier Hans Kammler and transferred under the supervision of Captain Ernst Stoll to Kahla, near the underground rocket construction plant at Nordhausen, in the Harz Mountains. I went with Schriever and his team to Prague, so I never saw Wilson after that. My closest associate on Projekt Saucer, Habermohl, was sent by Schriever to work on part of the programme in Breslau, where he was captured by the Soviets. As for Schriever, the last I saw of him was when he was running away from murderous Czechoslovak Partisans at the BMW Plant in Prague, when the Russians were advancing on that city. However, just before that happened, we received unofficial notification that Wilson's team had been evacuated from Kahla in April 1944 and that Wilson had been shot by General Kammler, to prevent him falling into the hands of the advancing Americans.'

'But you had no proof of his death.'

'No.'

'And you've heard nothing about him since?'

'Absolutely nothing.'

Fuller gazed steadily at Miethe's dark, wary eyes and wondered if he was telling the truth. Maybe, maybe not. Wilson was a shadowy figure, a teasing conundrum, but what Fuller had learnt about him so far had convinced him that the man was cunning and dangerous, with a long, deadly reach. Lots of people had reason to be scared of Wilson and Miethe might be one of them.

'Your recent boss, Werner von Braun, was in charge of the Nordhausen Central Works about the same time Wilson was in Kahla. Did he and Wilson co-operate?'

'I don't know. I wasn't there. I was with Schriever in Prague. However, I doubt that they had anything to do with one another. Indeed, I don't believe von Braun even knew that Wilson was in Kahla. Ernst Stoll, who was in charge of Nordhausen and Kahla during Kammler's many absences - Kammler was then overseeing the firing of V-1 rockets from the Hague - kept Wilson's presence in Kahla a tight secret. No one got in or out of Kahla, other than Stoll and Kammler, so I doubt that von Braun knew they were there.'

'What about the early days? You worked directly under Wilson in Kummersdorf, when von Braun was on the other side of the firing range. Did they co-operate then?'

'No. Von Braun knew about the American, but only through gossip. Though Wilson was compelled to pass on certain innovations to von Braun, this was not reciprocated and the two men never met. Then, of course, von Braun's rocket team moved to Peenemünde, leaving Wilson with the whole of Kummersdorf.'

'So how did you end up in Fort Bliss with von Braun?'

'When the Czechoslovak Partisans overran the BMW Plant in Prague, I managed

to make my escape. Like Schriever, I just fled across the fields until I lost my pursuers. After that, like thousands of others, I made my way back to Germany, by foot and by begging lifts, until I was captured - luckily, by the Americans, not the Russians.'

'Lucky indeed,' Fuller said.

'By that time,' Miethe continued, ignoring the sarcasm, 'Brigadier Hans Kammler had transferred von Braun and his men to an army barracks in Oberammergau in the Bavarian Alps. There, they were held behind barbed wire and under SS guard, until joined by General Dornberger, when they were allowed to move into the village of Oberjoch. The Americans had since transported me to the town of Reutte, in the Austrian Tyrol, for lengthy interrogation. Shortly after the Führer's death, on the second of May, 1945, Dornberger and his men, including von Braun, surrendered to the American 44th Infantry Division in Reutte and I was placed in custody with them. By June, I was on my way to America with von Braun and many of his V-2 specialists. Now...' Miethe shrugged indifferently. 'Here I am.'

'You like America?' Fuller asked him.

'I like my work,' Miethe replied, 'and here I can do that.'

Don't do me any favours, Fuller thought, outraged that American generosity could be treated with such contemptuous indifference. 'What about the beer?' he asked, grinning. 'You like American beer?'

'I don't drink,' Miethe replied.

Fuller lit one cigarette with the stub of the other, then sat back in his chair and blew smoke rings, watching them drift towards Miethe's face before dissipating.

'I've seen the drawings of Schriever's saucer,' he said. 'It looks just like the real thing.'

'The real thing?'

'Yeah. The ones that have been causing such a stir over the past year or so. Do you think there's any connection?'

'Yes. I agree with Schriever on that. He's been telling the West German press that the UFOs are man-made and based on our original German designs. I believe he's correct.'

'How good was Schriever's saucer? The one you tested in Prague in 1945.'

Miethe offered a superior smile. 'Not very good. It barely hovered above ground level, wobbling wildly, then it crashed back down.'

'So what makes you agree with Schriever?'

'Schriever was a pretender who always tried to get credit for ideas that he stole from the American. I don't agree that the present UFO scare is caused by saucers constructed from Schriever's designs, which in truth were incomplete; what I believe is that they're saucers based on Wilson's designs for a much better saucer known as the *Kugelblitz*. While even that saucer did not have the widely reported capabilities of the UFOs, it was highly advanced and could have been the prototype for the saucers now being sighted. Whether Wilson is alive or dead, it's my belief that enough of his

designs, if not the actual prototype, were captured by the Soviets or Americans - or both - to let them build more advanced models. It is my belief, then, that the UFOs are man-made saucers, constructed here or in Russia - maybe in both countries.'

Studying Miethe in silence for a moment, Fuller considered his options. One was to invite him for a drive into the desert, then slit his throat and bury him under the dunes. The other was to utilise his knowledge for the new saucer programme. Miethe knew too much already to be allowed to run loose, which meant that either he should be allowed to work for the US government or that he should be taken out totally - obliterated. Fuller had his own preference -a quick burial in the desert - but unfortunately he was hampered by his superiors and the country's long-term needs.

'What I'm going to tell you,' he said, 'will commit you for life. If you listen to what I tell you, I won't be able to pretend you didn't hear it. That means I'll have to take strong action if you try going elsewhere. If you want to spend the rest of your days working on saucer projects, then you better listen to what I say; but if you're frightened of making that kind of commitment, you better tell me to shut up. You understand, Miethe?'

The German stared steadily, suspiciously at him, then nervously wiped his lips with his hand.

'What if I don't listen?'

'You'll be free to return to Germany,' Fuller lied, thinking of that burial in the desert, 'which may well be the only choice you'll have, as you'll find no work here. Either you work for the US government or not at all - at least not in this country. So what way do you want it?'

Miethe was silent for a considerable time, but his pitch-black gaze was steady and intense, searching Fuller's face for hidden meanings. Eventually, taking a deep breath and letting it out, he said, 'You believe Wilson's still alive, don't you?'

'Yes,' Fuller said.

'And the saucers?'

'We now have our own, but they're not that advanced. We based them on designs found in Nazi Germany and have reason to believe they were done by Wilson. We think we can advance on what we've already got, but it's gonna take a lot of time and money. In the meantime, we have the other saucers to contend with, and certainly they're too advanced to be our own.'

'The Russians?'

'We know they got Habermohl and a lot of rocket scientists, but even if they were constructing their own saucers, they'd have the same problems as us: not enough time or money. In other words, if the Russians have saucers, they're not likely to be much more advanced than ours.'

'Which leaves Wilson.'

'Right.'

Now Miethe looked frightened. 'Do you know where he is?'

'We think we know approximately where he is, but I can't tell you where that is

just yet.'

'Because I haven't committed myself.'

'You committed yourself by asking about Wilson. Now you can't back out, Miethe.'

Shocked, Miethe straightened up in his chair, staring beyond Fuller's head, doubtless recalling his early days in Kummersdorf with the Machiavellian American. Fuller saw that Miethe was now truly frightened and would want his protection.

'If we're right,' he said, 'Wilson is far away... but he has a long reach.'

'With his saucers.'

'Correct.'

Miethe nodded, rubbing his sweaty hands on his pants, then bit his lower lip. 'So,' he said, sounding as if he was sighing. 'I am in. I am yours. What do you want with me?'

'You have a wife and children in Germany,' Fuller said. 'A boy and girl, twelve and ten years old respectively. Hans and Irena.'

'Yes,' Miethe said, looking even more concerned. 'Why do you - ?'

'You'll want them with you,' Fuller said. 'And you'll want them out of reach. A new flying-saucer project, based on a combination of Schriever's earlier designs and the more advanced designs found in Kahla, Thuringia - presumably Wilson's work - is about to be financed jointly by the US and Canadian governments. The contract was won by the A.V. Roe Company and construction will take place at their plant in Malton, Ontario. That's in Canada, not America, and we thought you might appreciate being there. Do you agree?'

'Yes,' Miethe said.

'Good. I'll make arrangements for your wife and kids to be flown out of Germany and you'll all go to Canada shortly after. Any questions, Miethe?'

'Not for now, Mr Fuller.'

Fuller nodded, stood up, and shook the German's hand. He wiped his hand on his pants as he walked from the room.

Early that evening, Fuller phoned his wife from his temporary accommodation in the officers's quarters of White Sands. The marriage between him and Belinda Wolfe had been a battlefield from the first day to the last and they had separated eighteen months ago, two years after the honeymoon. Belinda, the ravishing, brunette daughter of wealthy natives of Georgetown, Washington DC, had been unable to tolerate Fuller's blatant promiscuity, distaste for domesticity, love of danger, gratuitous cruelty with enemies and friends alike, and horror at the very thought of having children. Fuller and Belinda hadn't met since the acrimonious separation, though they had good reason to speak often by phone: the impending divorce. Now, when they spoke, Belinda told him that the divorce papers were coming through and she was thrilled to be rid of him.

'Thanks a million, Belinda.'

An hour later, Fuller was celebrating at a dance in the Rocket Room of the Officer's Club. High on a bellyful of lousy American beer, which he loved (those lousy, tasteless Krauts!), he enjoyed the live band, danced with a few ladies, then played the slot machines standing along the pine wall adorned with stag heads. Also playing was the wife of an Army Air Force captain who was on a two-week flying course at Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nevada. Fuller engaged her in conversation, bought her a few drinks, played Ping-Pong with her on the porch, then drove her out into the desert, where, under the dark-blue, star-filled sky, he fucked her brains out. When she recovered and was sobbing, filled with guilt and remorse, though displaying some confusion by saying she loved him, he dumped her well outside the base and told her to walk it off.

Ten minutes later, having packed to leave the next day, he fell into his bed in his room in the officers's quarters, went to sleep almost instantly, and dreamt about a V-2 rocket flying across the curved earth and being tailed by one of Wilson's flying saucers. He awoke with an erection that resembled the V-2, but his headache didn't permit him any pleasure, so he rolled out of bed. Wondering about the elusive thread that led obliquely from the V-2s to the UFOs, or flying saucers, he showered, put on his clothes, and left White Sands for good, gratefully heading back to the real world and its infinite mysteries.

Chapter Eight

Even in the desert of the Southwest, just north of Albuquerque, New Mexico, it was freezing at night. Squatting in the sand beside the other members of his UFO tracking team, looking up at the moon and stars, but seeing no unidentifieds, Dwight was torn between his excitement over what he was doing and depression caused by being away from home again, leaving Beth hurt and angry. It had been his own idea to send special patrols out into the desert around Albuquerque in a determined bid to resolve the mystery of the recent plague of green fireball sightings. A good idea from the point of view of the ATIC, not so good for the marriage.

The sightings had begun in November 1948, just three months ago, when a lot of folks around Albuquerque had reported seeing what seemed like green balls of fire flying across the skies. At first, because thousands of conscript GIs had recently been discharged from the army, taking souvenirs such as Very pistols, local Air Force Intelligence at Kirtland AFB had written the sightings off as flares. They were, however, forced to change their tune when, on the night of December 5, Air Force pilot Captain Goede and his co-pilot, flying a C-47 transport at 18,000 feet ten miles east of Albuquerque, observed a green fireball the size of a huge meteor flashing across the sky just ahead of them. Later, in their official report on the sighting, Goede and his co-pilot both insisted that it could not have been a meteor, as it had ascended from low altitude, near the slopes of the Sandia Mountains, then arched upward and levelled out, just like an airplane. A few minutes after that sighting, the captain of a Pioneer Airlines Flight also reported seeing a green ball of fire east of Las Vegas, New Mexico, when he was flying en route to Albuquerque. He, also, confirmed that the ascending flight of the green fireball proved that it could not have been a meteorite.

After that, the fireballs appeared practically every night and most of the reports landed on Randall's desk at the ATIC, in Wright-Patterson AFB. While analysing the reports with the help of Bob Jackson, Dwight arranged for Dr Lincoln La Paz, head of the University of Mexico's Institute of Meteoritics, to look into the sightings. Subsequently, La Paz reported that he had personally witnessed the green fireballs both from the ground and from an aircraft, in the company of some distinguished scientists from the AEC Los Alamos Laboratory, and was of the opinion that the green fireballs were not meteorites. Their green colouring was too vivid, their trajectories were too flat, they were not accompanied by the sound and shock waves of natural meteorites, and, finally, they were simply *too big*.

The worst row of Dwight's marriage to date had erupted when, after ten more nights of green fireball sightings, he came under pressure to find out what was causing them. Not considering the time of year, he asked for permission to establish three cinetheodolite stations near Albuquerque, in hopes of ascertaining the altitude, speed and size of the UFOs. Unfortunately, permission came in the form of a formal,

written order stating that the stations could only be set up and manned for a period of a fortnight, beginning in December and ending January - in other words, over the Christmas and New Year period.

Cursing his own stupidity, Dwight was then cursed out by Beth when he told her that he wouldn't be home for Christmas. Her Irish temper finally exploded and they had a dreadful row. Were this not torment enough, Beth then took Nichola to have Christmas with her folks in Dayton while Dwight and his three unhappy sighting teams set up their cinetheodolite stations in the desert around Albuquerque.

To make matters even worse, nothing was spotted.

In truth, Beth had never really forgiven him for their lost Christmas and New Year - particularly since no green fireballs or other UFOs materialised and it all seemed a waste of time. Now, here he was again, a mere four weeks later, in February 1949, in the middle of what he hoped was the most foolproof plan yet devised for the study of UFOs.

This time he had put together a dozen separate four-man sighting teams, with a radio operator, an instrument man, a timer, and a recorder. All the teams would be assigned a special radio frequency through which they could keep in touch with one another without being heard by outsiders. When a green fireball, or any kind of UFO, was spotted, the radio operator would immediately relay its presence to the other teams to enable them to track it simultaneously. While he was doing so, the instrument man would be measuring the UFO's angles of elevation and azimuth, the timer would be calling out the time, and the recorder would be writing the details down. By then comparing the records of the many different teams, the speed, size, altitude and flight characteristics of the UFO could at last be accurately ascertained.

Dwight was pleased with himself.

Nevertheless, he was also cold and depressed. Cold because the desert, so hot during the day, was as chilly as Antarctica by night - or seemed to be so. Depressed because the stormy waters of his marriage had not been calmed by this latest trip and, even worse, because, yet again, they had been here four nights in a row and nothing had shown up.

Dwight was even more depressed because he was head of Project Sign and yet had never seen a UFO in his life.

Sensibly, once it became apparent to Dwight's team that nothing was happening, they decided to take turns at guard to ensure that all of them would at least get some sleep, even if only for short periods. Now it was Dwight's turn, it was four in the morning, and he had another two hours to go before he could waken one of the others.

There they were scattered around him, three men in sleeping bags, looking as dead as the flat plain of the desert and the vast, starry cosmos. Dwight's eyes felt like lead and he had to fight to keep them open, which he did by concentrating on the sky while praying for something odd or exciting to materialise.

It could be an eerie experience. The nocturnal sky played many tricks. You looked up

at the stars, already dead, in the past, and you couldn't believe they weren't there, they seemed so damned real. Then, of course, the sky kept changing. Things were constantly on the move. Even a trained observer could be fooled by shooting stars, comets, meteors, lenticular and noctilucent clouds, dust and ice crystals, temperature inversions, corona discharges, plasmoids, ball-lightning, parhelia and paraselenae, or mock suns and sundogs, mock moons and moondogs, and even the ever deceiving planet Venus. In ancient times such phenomenon had been viewed as mystical visions or visitations by the gods of the sea or sky. In modern times they were often mistaken for UFOs, even by trained observers.

Just like me, Dwight thought bleakly.

Sighing, trying desperately to stay awake, he was just about to fall asleep when he thought he saw something.

Rubbing his eyes, he sat up straight, preparing himself for another trick. What he saw was a streak of light, very low on the horizon... Impossible to tell the altitude from here, but it was definitely *moving*.

Left to right - no: up and down - a streak of white light, then two lights. Perhaps two lights blending into one and advancing towards him.

He rubbed his eyes and looked again. Maybe just a shooting star. No, it was too low for that, so it had to be something else. Perhaps a temperature inversion. Lights from somewhere far away. The headlamps of a car that was moving uphill, its lights beaming into the sky, hitting a temperature inversion, and being sent on for miles to another temperature inversion that bent it again and relayed it back to Earth to form what Dwight was seeing...

No, not that. Not mock moons or moon dogs either. The light, maybe two lights - sometimes two, sometimes one - was growing longer and thinner, stretching out like chewing gum, as it advanced across the desert floor at very low altitude.

'Jesus Christ,' Dwight whispered, wondering if he should waken the others. 'What the hell..?'

No, not low altitude. Not a single light either. Two separate lights, now bobbing erratically, beaming down on the desert floor.

Damn it, they were close. Too close to be high up. They were only a couple of feet above the ground, maybe not even that. Approaching. Coming towards him. Not accidentally at all. Not bobbing - bouncing - a sort of rattling in there, too... Then settling down and beaming over the track that led right to Dwight.

A car engine and squeaking springs.

'God damn it!' Dwight whispered.

His three companions sat up. 'What the fuck - ?' a dim voice queried. 'I'll kill the bastard in that jeep,' Corporal Mathers said. 'Thought we had us a UFO.'

The jeep took shape in the night, even blacker than the darkness, its headlights blinding Dwight as it turned off the road again and headed straight for him and the others. He was shading his dazzled eyes with his hand when the jeep squealed to a halt right in front of him, churning up clouds of sand.

His friend and sidekick, Air Force Captain Bob Jackson, waved at him and jumped down to the sand.

'Hi,' he said. 'How's it goin'?'

'You came at four in the morning to ask me *that*?'

'Not exactly,' Bob said. He glanced down at the others, all sitting upright in their sleeping bags. 'Okay,' he said. 'Go back to sleep. This is not for your ears. Happy bedy-bize, boys.' When they had moaned and cursed and were settling back again, Bob looked directly at Dwight and said, more seriously, 'I'm sorry, but this can't wait.' He took Dwight by the elbow and walked him away from the others, out of earshot. 'You look cold,' he said. Before Dwight could reply, Bob withdrew a hip flask from his flying jacket and unscrewed the cap. 'Brandy,' he said. 'You're going to need it... And not just for the cold.'

Grateful, Dwight had a good slug of the brandy and felt it burning down inside him. He had another slug, felt it going straight to his head, took note of the wondrous lustre of the stars and handed the flask back.

'Okay,' he said. 'What the hell is this?'

'Your official Estimate of the Situation,' Dwight replied.

Dwight nodded his understanding. The UFO-related death of Captain Thomas F.Mantell over Godman AFB, Kentucky, in January last year, combined with the extraordinary UFO sighting made by Eastern Airlines Captain Charles S. Chiles and co-pilot John B. Whitted near Montgomery, Alabama, on the evening of July 24, had prompted Dwight, as head of Project Sign, to write an official, top-secret Estimate of the Situation. That Estimate had outlined the whole history of UFO sightings, including the fireballs, Scandinavian 'ghost rockets' and American sightings before 1947. It had concluded with Dwight's earnestly held conviction that the UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin.

'So why the brandy?' he asked, gazing with instinctive, growing despair over the star-covered, dark, barren desert.

Bob sucked his breath in, then let it out again. 'Our venerable Chief of Staff, General Hoyt S.Vandenberg, has rejected the report.'

'*What*?'

'On the grounds that it lacks proof.'

Dwight was stunned. 'Lacks... *proof*?'

Bob shrugged and spread his hands in the air as if begging forgiveness. 'That's what he said. It's on an official, top-secret memorandum. That... and something even worse.'

'What could be worse?'

Bob took another deep breath and let it out slowly. 'There's to be a whole new policy at Project Sign. In the future, Sign personnel are to assume that *all* UFO reports are hoaxes. Not only that, but we're to check with FBI officers, and with the criminal and subversive files of police departments, looking into the private lives of the witnesses to see if they're - quote, unquote - *reliable*.'

Dwight was livid with anger. ‘By doing that,’ he said, ‘we’ll be shifting the investigations away from the actual UFOs and on to the poor bastards who report them.’

‘You’ve got it, buddy. That’s absolutely correct. As for your official Estimate of the Situation, it’s going to be incinerated and our project will be renamed Project Grudge.’

‘Is that a sour joke?’

‘No, it’s not - though it may be a sign of General Vandenberg’s displeasure with us.’

‘What he’s saying in effect is that we’re to discourage further UFO reports and keep a low profile.’

‘Right.’

‘We now exist in name only - and that name is Project Grudge.’

‘How bright you are,’ Bob said.

He handed Dwight the hip flask. Dwight took it and walked out into the darkness and sat on the sand. He had a stiff drink, then another, trying to still his racing heart. Then he looked up at the vast, starry sky, which reduced him to nothing. Eventually, Bob came to sit beside him, trying to offer some comfort.

‘What the hell’s going on?’ Dwight asked him, unable to keep the bitterness from his voice.

‘It doesn’t need spelling out,’ Bob said. ‘It’s fair warning to us all that it’s no longer wise to open your mouth too wide about UFOs.’

‘Why?’ Dwight asked, feeling increasingly confused and nervous, looking up at the night sky.

‘You tell me,’ Bob said.

Chapter Nine

With some native guides and a modest contingent of General Stroessner's armed *Federales*, an unhappy Ernst Stoll had endured a seemingly endless journey from the dusty streets of Asuncion, along the Paraguay river by gunboat, to this jetty looming out over the muddy water. His guide, a young, gap-toothed Paraguayan called Juan Chavez, pointed proudly at the jetty and the cleared compound beneath it, as if that motley collection of thatched shacks and muddy enclosures would actually bring a smile to Ernst's face. Instead, Ernst removed his hat, wiped the sweat from inside it, spat on the deck near Chavez's feet, then put the hat back on and wiped his face.

'*Scheisse*,' he exclaimed, 'what a filthy hole!'

'Have a beer, *senor* Stoll. It will help cool you down. Do not let the sun dry you out. You need plenty of liquid.'

Juan Chavez was smiling, a sly, gap-toothed grimace, his dark, youthful eyes bright with mischief and the urge to be sly. Ernst nodded and took the beer, the bottle cold in his sweaty palm. He drank, wiped some beer from his lips and then glanced over his shoulder. A group of captured Ache Indians were at the aft end of the deck, all small, emaciated, their narrow eyes dulled by fear, dressed in rags and huddling close to one-another as if for protection. Two *Federales* were guarding them, wearing jackboots, holding rifles, both gaunt-faced and bored, chewing gum, their eyes hooded beneath tatty peaked caps, their uniforms threadworn. Ernst studied them at length, feeling only contempt, recalling his own disciplined, immaculate SS troops during the war. These *Federales* were not like that. They were a bunch of murderous morons. Corrupt and led by a corrupt leader, General Stroessner, they were men whose only purpose was survival in the most expedient manner. The scum of the earth.

'This is your first time in Paraguay, *senor*?' Chavez asked, smiling slyly to reveal his missing front teeth.

Ernst stared coldly at him. Chavez was still a teenager, but he looked twice his age. This was due to his missing teeth, the scars on his cheeks, and the cunning in his old man's brown eyes. He would make a good pimp.

God, Ernst thought, these people!

'Yes,' he said. 'I have never been here before. This is the first time.'

'You will have to get used to it, *senor*. Strangers often go crazy here.'

Ernst had another drink, cooled his forehead with the bottle, and then surveyed the widening clearing as the boat inched towards it. This was a waterside village, its jetty thrusting out from the tangled shrubs and liana at the edge of the forest, where the banks of red mud angled down to the dark, muddied river. Some men were waiting on the jetty, wearing filthy shirts and pants, nearly all with cigarettes in their mouths, not one of them smiling.

'Heaven on earth,' Ernst said sarcastically. 'I'm sure I'll be happy here.'

'You are staying long, *senor*?'

'Unfortunately, yes.'

'A lot of Germans, former soldiers, live in the jungle, so you may find some company.'

'That's nice,' Ernst said, though he wanted no German friends, having been warned by Wilson to avoid them and keep to himself. What would happen here must remain a secret, no matter how much that cost him in emotional terms. His own regular company could only be the scum of this village; his only form of relief the occasional visit from those in Antarctica. He would live here as if in a monastery, though with some compensations.

'I trust there are some women here,' he said.

'Ah, yes,' Chavez replied, grinning lasciviously. 'You can take your pick, *senor*.'

The gunboat growled and shuddered, turning in towards the bank; it inched forward and then bounced against the tyres along the edge of the jetty. Ernst glanced back over his shoulder. One of the Ache women was wailing. A *Federale* slapped her brutally across the face and screamed a torrent of abuse. The woman's wailing became a whimper. Ernst yawned and turned away. One of the crew had thrown a rope to a man on the jetty and the latter was tying it around an upright, bending low, shouting inanely. The boat's engine cut out. A crewmember removed the gate. A plank was thrown across the space between the deck and the jetty, then tied to some uprights to form a crude gangplank. Ernst moved towards the plank, wanting desperately to get off, but Chavez tugged at the sleeve of his shirt and motioned him back.

'No,' he said. 'First the Ache.'

Ernst stopped and stared at him, repulsed by that gap-toothed grin, but he stepped back as Chavez went to the *Federales* and bawled his instructions. The *Federales* were quick to move, venting their boredom on the miserable Indians, screaming abuse and kicking them to their feet, herding them towards the gangplank. The Indians were not so quick, weak from hunger, confused, so the *Federales* encouraged them along with vicious blows from their rifles. The women wailed and held their children, cowering from the swinging rifles, while their menfolk, uncommonly small and frail, tried in vain to protect them.

It was a familiar sight to Ernst. He recalled similar scenes from the war: the night they had left Kummersdorf and herded their slave labour, mostly wailing Jews, onto the trains in Berlin. He smiled at the recollection, feeling a stab of nostalgia, but managed to suppress it as the first of the Indians stumbled across the gangplank with their hands on their heads. Chavez was leading them down, his shirt unbuttoned and flapping loosely, his broad hat tilted over his eyes as he gave his instructions.

Ernst felt the sun's fierce heat as he studied the village, a drab collection of leaning huts made from palmetto trunks and vines, dogs and goats sniffing lethargically at the dust, babies lying on corn shucks. The poverty was total, the old and young emaciated, sunlight falling on scattered gourds, woven baskets and banana leaves, on the giant rat that raced across the clearing and vanished into the forest. Ernst looked along the jetty. The Ache Indians had just left it. They were now at the edge of the clearing with the

Federales surrounding them. Chavez was waving his hands, telling Ernst to disembark; so Ernst finished his beer, crushed the can, threw it overboard, watched it glinting as it bobbed along the river and was swept out of sight. Then he went to the gangplank, crossed without enthusiasm, above the muddy, oil-slicked water, and finally stepped onto the soil of what would be his new home.

God, he thought, what a piss-hole!

Chavez, an adolescent martinet, was standing beside an emaciated native in short pants and a torn, filthy shirt. Chavez waved Ernst forward. When he reached the pair, he noted that the man was elderly, had rheumy eyes, and seemed nervous.

'This is Salano Valentinas,' Chavez said. 'The head of the village. Anything you want, you ask him. He is here as your eyes, ears and hands.'

'Welcome, *senor*,' Valentinas said, his voice as rough as sandpaper. 'I trust you had a good journey.'

'Never mind my journey,' Ernst said. 'Just show me where I'll be staying.'

'Yes, *senor*, of course.'

He turned away to lead Ernst and Chavez across the clearing, past the captured Ache Indians, who were now being herded up into the backs of two trucks, the men being punched and thumped with the butts of rifles, the women and children wailing.

'What happens to them?' Ernst asked.

'They will be sold as workers and whores to those living in compounds in the jungle - mostly Germans, of course. Some of them are being taken to your compound. You can do what you want with them.'

'Does President Morínigo know about this?'

'I don't know. Maybe not. The *Federales* who collect them are controlled by Morínigo's hatchet man, General Stroessner. General Stroessner knows everything.'

More than you can imagine, Ernst thought, as they crossed the clearing, surrounded by the huts of palmetto leaves and vine, scattering goats and chickens, passing Indians roasting sweet potatoes, eventually stopping at a small, badly battered, open-topped truck that was parked at the edge of the narrow track snaking into the forest.

'I'm not staying here?' Ernst asked.

'No, *senor*,' Chavez replied. 'Your compound is ten kilometres away, hidden deep in the forest. There, even aircraft cannot see you. You will feel safe there.'

The headman, Valentinas, climbed up onto the open rear of the truck, Chavez took the driver's seat, and Ernst clambered up beside the latter. Chavez turned on the ignition, accelerated inexpertly, and then the truck lurched off into the forest, where the trees kept the sun out. Imagining that it would be cooler in the interior, Ernst was shocked to find that it wasn't: that the humidity was much worse, overwhelming him, almost making him gag. Feeling ill, he glanced about him, taking in the riot of vegetation, tangled vines and soaring trees in the chattering green gloom relieved only by shafts of sunlight beaming down on the steaming banana leaves. The narrow track was pitted with holes, coiling snake-like between the trees and disappearing ahead of them. Chavez was beaming with pleasure, clearly enjoying the drive; this made him look more like his

proper age, which was, Ernst surmised with disbelief, not much more than eighteen. The truck growled and coughed, bouncing roughly over potholes, racing through shafts of sunlight that beamed down through the trees and illuminated the steaming vegetation. Ernst was suffocating. He was sweating and felt feverish. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw the old man in the back, leaning forward with his chin on his raised knees, his rheumy eyes fixed on nothing.

My new companions, Ernst thought with revulsion. I'll go mad in this hellhole!

The drive seemed to take forever, an endless journey through heat and gloom, but eventually the truck burst into the sunlight of another cleared area. Lines of barbed wire formed a fence around an expansive wooden building, its sloping roof supported by tree trunks and covered in woven vines and banana leaves. Chavez drove the truck through the open gates in the fence and braked inside the compound, creating a cloud of dust.

'*Scheisse*!' Ernst barked, coughing to clear his throat of the dust as he climbed down from the truck. 'Are you trying to choke us, you fool?'

Chavez just laughed, then led Ernst and Valentinas across the clearing towards the big house with the open veranda running all the way around it, under a roof raised above the top rooms, which were open to the elements and obviously used only by the servants. The compound was busy, filled with men, women and children, most gathered around open fires, roasting sweet potatoes. Though watching Ernst's arrival with nervous curiosity, they made no move towards him.

'The barbed wire is electrified,' Chavez informed him. 'Make sure you don't touch it. So, *senor*, here we are!'

They climbed the steps of the veranda to stop under an awning of vine and leaves. A table and chairs had been placed near the entrance to the house. A native woman, too stout to be healthy, as ugly as a bat, stood by the table, wearing a white blouse and long skirt, a towel draped over her right arm. She bowed to Ernst. He simply grunted and glanced about him. On the table were two bottles of brandy, half a dozen empty glasses, and a cup filled with fat, white, wriggling worms.

Seeing what Ernst was looking at, Chavez grinned and picked up a worm. He watched it wriggling between his fingers for a moment, then bit off its head, spat it out and swallowed the rest of it. 'Koro worms!' he explained, picking the cup off the table and holding it out to Ernst. 'Try one, *senor*!' When Ernst shuddered with revulsion, Chavez chortled and put the cup back down. 'You will soon learn to enjoy them,' he said. 'You will learn to enjoy many strange things here. Please, *senor*, take a chair.'

Ernst took one of the wooden chairs by the table, placing his pistol and holster upon it. The native woman then knelt in front of him, to laboriously pull off his boots and wipe his feet with the towel. When this was done, she shuffled backwards, still on her knees, until Chavez barked another instruction at her. Standing upright, she filled the two glasses with brandy and handed them to Ernst and Chavez. The latter offered his gap-toothed smile and held his glass up in a toast. Ignoring him, Ernst drank most of the brandy in one thirsty gulp. Casting his gaze over the compound,

which resembled an untended farmyard, covered in smoke and filled with worthless human livestock, he realised that he was not thrilled to be here.

'So,' he said, not trying to hide his bitterness, 'this is it: my new home.'

'Yes, *senor*,' Chavez said.

'And this so-called headman – ' Ernst indicated Valentinas with a contemptuous wave of his hand – 'now works for me.'

'That is correct, *senor*. He will translate and tell you all you need to know. He will also take care of the supplies, which will be shipped in from Asuncion every month. He already has his instructions, *senor*, and will not let you down.'

'I hope not,' Ernst said.

Chavez finished his brandy and placed his glass back on the table. 'Now I must be off, *senor*. I go back to Asuncion. I work on the gunboat that sails regularly between there and here, so we will meet quite a lot. If you need me, just call. Goodbye… How you say it? *Auf Weidersehen*! Until the next time, *senor*.'

Chavez waved, sauntered in a leisurely manner back to the truck, climbed in and drove out of the compound with a lot of rattling and banging.

'*Dreck*!' Ernst muttered, feeling tired and impatient. Pouring another stiff brandy, he ordered Valentinas to gather together on the veranda the women selected as potential household staff. Valentinas brought a dozen of them, some young, others old. After inspecting them, as he had often done in Nordhausen - pinching here, prodding there, checking their teeth - Ernst rejected the eldest and most ugly, picking mostly the young to serve him, with one middle-aged crone to be in charge of them. Those chosen bowed solemnly, fearfully, and then were ushered by the old crone up the stairs at the side of the house, to sort themselves out on the open floor beneath the raised roof. Until Ernst decided otherwise, that's where they would live from now on, separated from family and friends, working only for him.

He had another drink of brandy, feeling marginally better for it, then strapped his holster on and stepped off the porch, followed by the obedient Valentinas. Disgusted by the seemingly disorganised state of the compound, he told Valentinas to get rid of the open fires and move the natives back into the ramshackle living accommodations located on both sides of the clearing. The natives so housed would then be used as the labour force required to dig out the centre of the compound and turn it into a reinforced, concrete landing pad for the flying saucers. Also, though the barbed-wire fence was already electrified, he wanted to erect watchtowers and have them manned at all times with machine-gun crews.

Ernst barked his numerous instructions with renewed, drunken vigour while Valentinas, always standing in his shadow, nodded affirmatively.

'Any mistakes,' Ernst informed him, 'and you'll be dealt with personally, harshly, by me. Understood?'

'Yes, *senor*.'

The sun had started sinking when Ernst returned to the house, this time letting Valentinas lead him inside to show him around. There were two floors beneath the open

floor at the top, both with balconies overlooking the living room. The beds in the rooms located along the balconies were imported four-posters covered in mosquito nets, and the bedroom furniture, Ernst noted, was mostly imported German antique. The downstairs living room, however, was filled with well-cushioned bamboo chairs and sofas, bookcases of waxed pine, and low tables carved from local woods. All in all, it was surprisingly comfortable, if a touch too exotic.

Satisfied, Ernst tackled a light supper of bread, cheese and fresh fruit, all washed down with an intemperate amount of brandy. Now more drunk than he had been since leaving Germany, he thought of his homeland, grew unexpectedly maudlin, and had vivid recollections of the women he had known during the war: that lascivious stripper, Brigette, who had performed in the Französischestrasse; that Polish woman, Kosilewski, who had pleasured him to betray him; even Ingrid, his wife, who had loved him but eventually came to hate him, before dying with his children in an air-raid. Those and the others, some willing, some not, some whores and some unfortunate camp inmates used in military brothels. Those women and many more. So many women. So many ways.
Ernst remembered and was inflamed, wanting to have them all back, and so barked for Valentinas to bring him a girl - the youngest and prettiest of those upstairs. His wizened servant soon did so, fetching one from the top floor, and then he beat a hasty retreat when Ernst glared fiercely at him.

'Yes, *senor*. Of course, *senor*! I will be on the veranda if you need me. I'll sleep out there, *senor*.'

Satiated with food and drink, Ernst tried to undress the young girl, a mere stripling, and beat her badly when she tried to resist. When even the beating failed to work, but simply reduced her to tears, he threw the sobbing creature onto the floor and stormed out to the veranda.

'I will show you what discipline is,' he said to Valentinas, 'and you can tell all the others. Bring in the girl's mother.'

When the girl's terrified mother was brought into the living room, Ernst again told the sobbing girl to remove her clothes. When the girl refused to do so, Ernst unholstered his pistol and placed it to the head of her mother, who was now also sobbing.

'Tell her that if she doesn't do as I say, Valentinas, I'll blow her mother's brains out.'

'Yes, *senor*. Of course.'

Valentinas relayed the message and the sobbing girl, staring at her fearful mother, finally nodded agreement. The mother, still crying, was led out by Valentinas, as Ernst ordered the trembling girl to strip and lie back on the floor. When she had done so, he removed his own clothes, then stood over her, legs outspread, and told her to raise herself to her knees. Trembling, her eyes as big as spoons, she did as she was told.

'You will do everything I tell you,' Ernst said. 'Do you understand what I'm saying?'

'Yes,' the girl whispered, speaking English, which Ernst understood.

'Your fear excites me,' Ernst told her. 'Your degradation is my joy. Now dry your damned eyes.'

Placing his hands on the back of her head, he pulled the girl towards him, closing his

own eyes in expectation, making the most of his new life. The days would be long here.

Chapter Ten

The saucer was one of the early models, a mere thirty feet in diameter, ascending vertically, silently, towards a dark field in Virginia, its lights flashing on and off, the seamless surface a silvery white, gleaming in a vast sea of stars, parallel to a Gorgonzola moon. Reaching the ground, it didn't quite touch it, but merely hovered just above it, swaying slightly from side to side, until its four hydraulic legs emerged obliquely from its base and dug into the soft earth. The saucer's lights blinked out, its silvery-white sheen turned to grey, then its steps angled down from the base.

Two men in black coveralls dropped out, followed by Wilson.

Straightening up, Wilson glanced around him, taking in the grassy hills, the empty fields, the shivering trees, then he walked across the grass to the unfenced road, where a jet-black limousine was parked. Its windows were tinted and the headlights turned off, but its rear door opened as he approached. When he slipped into the car, the flying saucer in the field took off again. It rose slowly, almost silently, to a very great height, its lights flashing on and off around the rim to form a kaleidoscope. Eventually it became dime-sized, then a mere spot of white light. That light hovered in the air, as if just another star, then it suddenly shot away and disappeared.

Wilson took the rear seat in the limousine. Beside him, Artur Nebe was wearing a grey suit with shirt and tie, looking uncomfortable out of uniform.

Too many years in the SS, Wilson thought, with a pistol always holstered on his waist. He must feel naked without it.

'*Guten tag*, Nebe,' Wilson said. 'How is life in the real world?'

'I don't like all the politics,' Nebe said. 'I should be back in Antarctica.'

'You will be. Today. Once we get this meeting over with. After that, you'll have no reason to stay here. You'll come back with me.' He noticed that Nebe was staring intently at him. 'What is it? My face?'

'Sorry, sir. Yes, you look different. About twenty years younger.'

'Not like an eighty-two-year old?'

'More like sixty-two.'

Wilson smiled. 'Plastic surgery and skin grafts. Dr King is doing a good job of preserving me in particular and researching longevity in general. I've also had certain joints replaced with artificial ones, steel and fibre, which King produced during his on-going cyborg research.'

'He certainly seems to be doing well.'

'The knowledge that he can experiment without restraints of any kind has sent his imagination soaring and filled him with energy. He's become a man obsessed with his work and now cares for little else. He doesn't have to be watched any longer; his love of work has enslaved him. He's all ours, Nebe. Completely.'

'And his other needs?'

'We've given him total freedom when it comes to the comfort girls. The sex is all he

really wants when he's not working. The needs of most men are basic.'

Nebe offered a rare, chilling smile, being himself addicted to the abducted girls used as whores, or 'comfort girls', in the brothel in the Antarctic colony. 'I'm sure he didn't get sex like that in Hendon, England. That alone should enslave him.'

'It's certainly helped him forget his wife and children. Family love treads on thin ice.' Wilson rolled his window down and gazed out at the moonlit fields. The trees were silhouetted against a star-filled sky; the wind scarcely stirred. 'When is General Samford expected?'

Nebe checked his wristwatch. 'He should be here in five minutes. He was told to be punctual.'

'Who arranged the meeting?'

'A CIA agent, Sam Fuller. I'd heard he was on your trail. He was in charge of disinformation regarding the Socorro crash, back in 1947, and he went to have a talk with Mike Bradley.'

'The one who pursued me during the war?'

'Yes. Wounded at Kiel harbour. The explosion set by Ernst Stoll. You paid him a visit the night of the Socorro crash and warned him off his UFO investigations.'

'Ah, yes, I remember. Have you any idea what he told Fuller?'

'According to Fuller, nothing. But just knowing that Fuller had been to see him made me suspicious. Then, when he also went to see von Braun and Miethe, I knew it was us he was after.'

'So?'

'I contacted him in Washington DC. A meeting was arranged. Same place - right here - and same time. When we met, I told him I knew what he was after and that we were responsible.'

'Did you tell him where we're located?'

'I confirmed it. He already knew, of course, though not in too much detail. He'd interrogated Captain Schaeffer of U-boat 977, the one that took us to Plata del Mar, Argentina, and worked the rest of our route out from there. So he knows we're in Nue Schwabenland, though he still doesn't know the exact location. First US confirmation of the existence of our flying saucers came, he said, through the investigations of Operation Paperclip at the close of the war. Mike Bradley also worked on that, which is why he turned up at Kiel and later became obsessed with UFOs. That knowledge, as well as Bradley's turnaround after the Socorro crash, explain why Fuller went with First Lieutenant Harris to see him in Socorro. Now, a select few in the White House, the Pentagon, and the CIA, including Fuller, know we're hidden somewhere in Antarctica. They also know we have flying saucers more highly developed than those being constructed in the United States and Canada.'

'What made General Samford change his mind about meeting us? When I personally tried to set up this meeting, his minions said, "No deal".'

'Because you were using a pseudonym then - calling yourself Aldridge - and they didn't relate the name to Wilson, which is who they were looking for. Also, though they

knew we were in Antarctica, they didn't believe how advanced our saucers were and assumed we were just a bunch of fanatical Nazis not much different, though possibly crazier, than those who had fled to Paraguay. Reportedly, Samford, protective of his position as US Head of Intelligence, was outraged that his minions would even consider such a meeting. I believe he described us as a bunch of escaped war criminals and demanded that an expeditionary force be sent to Antarctica to get us out and bring us back to the United States, to be tried as war criminals.'

'Rear-Admiral Byrd's Operation Highjump.'

'Correct.'

'Which we put to rout. Byrd's expedition was then cut short. The official explanation was hurricane winds.'

'Also correct. But Samford still refused to believe we were that advanced technologically and asked for Byrd to be psychiatrically evaluated. He also demanded that all of Byrd's references to our flying saucers be removed from his official report.'

'So what made the morally outraged US Head of Intelligence change his mind?'

'I arranged for one of our saucers to hover over his house one evening, in the middle of a party he was giving in the garden of his home in Alexandria, Virginia. A lot of other top brass and their wives were in attendance and all of them saw the saucer. It was hovering right over them, casting its shadow on the lawn. *That's* what changed the stubborn General Samford's mind. He's a man who sees reason.'

Wilson smiled. 'It must have come as quite a shock to Samford's guests.'

'It sure did. All of those present were sworn to secrecy. When a couple of the wives gossiped about the incident, their husbands were transferred to Alaska. That was fair enough warning to the others. No one's talked since.'

'Who would believe them anyway? Project Grudge is now treating all those who report UFOs as cranks. Witnesses are afraid of public ridicule, so those best equipped to confirm the reality of the saucers - radar operators and pilots - are learning to keep their mouths shut. We have little to fear.'

'There they are,' Nebe said softly.

Looking beyond the driver's head, Wilson saw the headlights of another car approaching along the dark road. It slowed down and pulled into the verge, then stopped about twenty yards from the limousine. Another set of headlights appeared behind it, stopping further away. When the lights of both vehicles blinked out, Wilson saw that the other vehicle was an army troop-truck.

'Did you know about this?' he asked of Nebe.

'I told him he could bring some protection. I didn't mean a whole troop-truck.'

'No problem,' Wilson said.

He stepped from the limousine as the troops were spilling out of the truck to form a cordon across the road. All of the troops were armed. General Samford, in uniform, followed by a man in plain clothes, clambered out of the other car as Nebe joined Wilson. The two groups approached one another, stopping about three feet apart.

With his lean, almost ascetic face, General Samford did not look like a man to take

fools lightly. Fuller, on the other hand, was darkly handsome, clearly cynical, deceptively relaxed and slyly watchful. He looked like a man who could handle trouble and probably relished it.

Four of the armed troops came up behind Samford and Fuller, stopping a few yards farther back.

Nebe glanced at Fuller. 'So, we meet again.' Fuller just nodded. Nebe indicated Wilson with his finger. 'This is him,' he told Fuller. 'Herr Wilson, this is CIA agent Sam Fuller, and...'

'General Samford,' Fuller confirmed. 'Head of US Intelligence.'

'I believe you wanted a talk,' Samford said, sounding like a man suppressing anger. 'Well, here I am.'

'Are you nervous, General?'

'What?'

'You've brought a lot of armed troops to what I'd hoped would be an informal, friendly meeting.'

'I don't have friendly meetings with escaped war criminals. Nor do I like traitorous Americans and their Nazi cohorts.'

Wilson was amused. 'You wrong me. I'm not a man who changes sides. I've always been exactly what I am, which is a man on his own. I can't be a traitor, because I've never been a patriot. I go where my work takes me, General Samford, whether it's here, Nazi Germany, or the Antarctic. You're a soldier, General. I'm a scientist. That's the only difference between us.'

'You're just a goddamned Nazi,' Samford said. 'You and your whole bunch.'

'I am not, and never have been, a Nazi, General Samford. I have no political allegiances, no religion, no belief in any government, left or right. I live for my work, which is science, as you live for the army. You've chosen what you want to be, General, and I've done the same. We're two sides of the same coin.'

General Samford was obviously outraged by the very suggestion, but before he could explode, Fuller said soothingly, 'Okay, you've got us both here, Wilson. Now what do you want?'

'Can I take it you're both here with the full knowledge of the head of the Air Matériel Command?'

'General Vandenberg knows we're here,' Samford said, practically gritting his teeth. 'Now what do you *want*?'

'We want to trade,' Wilson said.

For a moment even Fuller looked dumbfounded, but General Samford could barely contain himself.

'*What*?' he asked, as if choking on a bone.

'You heard me,' Wilson said. 'As you clearly know, we're not the only ones with flying saucers, though ours are certainly the most advanced. The US and Canada are both involved in similar construction projects and have already had plenty of test flights. The Harold Dahl and Kenneth Arnold sightings of June 1947, over the Cascades, were

actually of crude US-Canadian saucers being constructed in secret in the wilds of Canada. Your saucers, General Samford, not ours. But no matter how long you take or how much you spend, your saucers can never be that advanced without further knowledge of my technology. I, too, have certain needs, General, so I'm willing to trade.'

'I don't – '

'Why would you do that?' Fuller interjected, his gaze ever watchful and direct. 'I mean, that would be inviting our technology to catch up with yours, and then...' He shrugged and grinned. 'We'd be evenly matched. Then we'd come in and get you.'

Wilson was unperturbed. 'Not quite true, Mr Fuller. In return for what I need, I'll trade certain secrets of my technology, but I'll be doing it a little at a time and only when I've already surpassed what I'm offering to you. Though this will benefit you greatly, you'll always remain behind us, which ensures that we'll retain the technological advantages we have at this time.'

'A balance of power,' Samford said.

'You might call it that,' Wilson replied.

'A seesaw arrangement, right? A tricky manoeuvre.'

'That's right, Mr Fuller.'

'And just what are we supposed to hand over for all this?' Samford asked, still sounding choked.

'I'm in constant need of various mass-produced components and equipment, as well as food and other supplies. We shipped a tremendous amount of it in throughout the war years, but it's finally beginning to run out and our saucers are not yet large enough to bring in the bulk we need. You'll do that for us.'

General Samford was red-faced, clenching and unclenching his fists, but Fuller seemed merely intrigued. 'If we do that for you,' he pointed out, 'we'll find out exactly where you are.'

'I don't care,' Wilson said. 'That information won't help you. You can't get conventional aircraft anywhere near us and your saucers have a long way to go before they can be used to combat us, either with troops or with weapons.'

'So if we can't get in with conventional aircraft, how will we get the supplies to you?'

'We're located at the base of a deep, hidden gorge in Neu Schwabenland, or Queen Maud Land, which isn't accessible by conventional aircraft. You'll be given a location at the other side of that mountain range. There we've already hacked storage spaces out of the base of the mountain and will soon have them manned all year round. You'll drop the supplies, and we'll then pick them up and transport them back here in our saucers. As and when required.'

'But eventually,' Fuller said with a smile not reflected in his cold, steady gaze, 'with the technological information you'll be feeding us in return, bit by bit, our technology, if never quite matching yours, will be enough to give us saucers capable of flying down into your hidden base.'

'By which time,' Wilson replied, 'we'll have developed some highly advanced form

of defence to keep out unwanted saucers - infrasound barriers or heat shields. We're already working on those.'

'You may not succeed,' General Samford said hopefully, 'in which case we could eventually get at you.'

'That's a chance I'm willing to take,' Wilson said. 'And I don't take chances lightly.' Samford and Fuller glanced at one another, the former outraged, the latter cynically amused.

'What if we reject your proposal?' Samford said. 'Seems to me, we can just leave you in the Antarctic and forget your existence. A few saucers flying here and there aren't going to give us much trouble. Most folks already think the saucers are piloted by Little Green Men or only witnessed by cranks. What can you do to us?'

'Remember the Mantell crash?' Nebe asked, breaking his icy silence. 'The first US Air Force officer to die chasing a UFO?'

'Yes,' Samford said, 'I remember. He either died chasing a Rawin weather balloon or because of a lack of oxygen when he foolishly climbed too high.'

'It's a well-known fact,' Nebe said softly, chillingly, 'that Mantell's last words were about something metallic and tremendous in size. That was our saucer.'

Samford glanced at Fuller, then at Wilson. 'I don't believe you're that far advanced,' he said. 'I think Mantell died from a lack of oxygen, maybe chasing Venus, so I'm calling your bluff.'

'You reject my proposal?' Wilson asked.

'Yes.'

'Then I'll give you proof, General Samford. I'll give you, the Pentagon and the White House the kind of proof you won't readily forget. Later this month my flying saucers will surround Washington DC. Some will be piloted; others will be small, remote-controlled devices of the kind called "Foo-fighters" during the war. For your entertainment, we'll even fly around the White House. We'll cause chaos on every radar screen in the area. If your aircraft try pursuing us, we'll play cat-and-mouse with them. Should that not make you change your mind, we'll repeat the performance a week later. I think, General Samford, that your superiors, including the President, will think differently after this demonstration.'

'I'll believe that when I see it,' Samford said. 'Now go to hell, Wilson.'

Wilson merely smiled and then returned with Nebe to the limousine. As he was slipping into the rear seat, he glanced back over his shoulder and saw Samford in angry consultation with Fuller. Fuller was shaking his head, as if saying, 'No,' but Samford was obviously overruling him. As Wilson closed his door, Samford shouted at the armed soldiers. Instantly, they readied their weapons and raced forward to surround the limousine.

'Too late,' Nebe said.

Suddenly, a great pyramid of dazzling light beamed down over the advancing soldiers. A bass humming sound, shaking even the limousine, was accompanied by a fierce, swirling wind that bent the trees on either side of the road and bowled the

advancing soldiers over. Their weapons fell from their hands as they were swept across the road, bellowing with fear and pain as what seemed like a tornado slammed them into one another or against the trees.

Wilson caught a glimpse of General Samford crouching low, holding his peaked cap on with one hand, shading his eyes with the other, squinting up at that dazzling, descending, pyramidal light as Fuller tugged him back to their own car, just outside the roaring whirlpool of wind, now filled with flying leaves, blades of grass, pebbles and dust.

'Let's go!' Nebe snapped.

The driver of the limousine reversed away from the tornado created by the descending saucer and then headed back across the field. There, a second saucer, thirty foot in diameter, had descended and was resting on its four hydraulic legs, gleaming silvery in moonlight. The driver stopped about twenty yards from the parked saucer, letting Wilson and Nebe climb out, then he reversed again and bounced back across the field to the road.

The first saucer was now visible, hovering high in the sky, its base spinning and emitting that great pyramidal light, creating the hurricane-like wind that was slamming the soldiers against the trees or causing them to roll between them, across the grass verge beyond the road.

The limousine raced away as the dazzling light blinked out, abruptly returning the night to darkness. The saucer ascended vertically, rapidly, until it was just a pinprick of light positioned high in the sky, a single star amongst many. Eventually, the swirling wind settled down, letting the bruised, dazed soldiers stand upright again. They all looked up in awe as the second saucer, containing Wilson and Nebe, also ascended vertically, hovered briefly in the sky, then shot off at unreal speed, heading south before blinking out.

'We have a problem,' Fuller said.

Chapter Eleven

The telephone call came during supper. Nichola, now four years of age, still blonde and cuter than ever, was no longer in her high chair, but sitting instead with Dwight and Beth at the table, having cookies and milk while her parents contented themselves with coffee. It was the month of July in 1952. Though it was pretty late in the evening, the sun hadn't sunk yet and the velvet sky was streaked with pink where the stars didn't show. When the telephone rang, Beth stared at it but made no move to pick it up.

'Okay,' Dwight said, feeling guilty and tense when he saw the look on her face. 'It's for me, right? I'll get it.' Though Beth was sitting beside the phone, he got up and walked around the table to pick it up, which placed him practically against her shoulder and made her lean away from him. 'Hi,' he said. 'Cap'n Randall.'

'Hate to call at this time of night,' Bob Jackson said, 'but you have to come over here. They want you right now.'

'Over where? To the ATIC?'

'Yeah, right. That's where I'm calling from. They want you immediately.'

'Who the hell are *they*?'

'Members of the Technical Intelligence Division, Air Matériel Command. They want to talk to you about what we've been doing since Project Sign was dissolved and replaced with Project Grudge.'

Even though now well prepared for the unexpected, Dwight was astounded at this. 'Now? At *this* time?'

'Yeah. They got me out of bed. They appear to have a very urgent need for some detailed case histories. They've also come to discuss your complaints about how they've been treating us.'

'Shit!'

'No shit, baby.'

'Okay,' Dwight said, 'I'm coming.' He dropped the phone and and stared at Beth, trying to hold her gaze, though he couldn't help shrugging forlornly. 'Top brass. I swear, Beth, I wasn't expecting this. Apparently they want to interview me - right now, in the ATIC. They're waiting over there for me.'

'Right now? This evening?'

'Unbelieveable, right?'

Nichola was breaking up a couple of cookies and spreading the crumbs out on the table.

'Why don't you tell them to go to hell? Tell them you have a right to your own life, even if in the Air Force.'

'I can't, Beth. It's top brass.'

'That doesn't give them the right. Lord knows, they're working you into the ground already; you have a right to your own time.'

'It must be something special, Beth.'

'Oh, yeah,' she replied. 'Something special. Every time we try to plan something, get together, something special comes up. This marriage won't last the course, Dwight.'

'Bullshit.'

'No, it's not. You work night and day for those people and get no thanks for it. They've even consistently denied you promotion, which is practically punishment. So what's the point, Dwight?'

Not knowing what to say, Dwight glanced down at his daughter. She was licking her index finger and drawing funny faces in the crumbs from the cookies, her brow wrinkled in deep thought. She was also whispering words he couldn't hear and perhaps wouldn't understand.

'Promotion's not the point,' Dwight said. 'I do this because it's my job and that's all there is to it.'

'Promotion may not be the point, but punishment is. They've consistently denied you promotion and you know why that is. It's the UFOs, Dwight. They don't approve of what you're doing. It's a pure PR exercise and someone had to be landed with it. You got the job, but they don't want you to succeed and so they're making it hard on you. God, Dwight, you're a fool!'

Dwight knew it was true. He just didn't know the reasons. On the one hand, the UFOs were treated as a threat to national security, on the other the reporting of them was discouraged. It just didn't make sense. No more than it made sense to establish a UFO programme and then block every move its members made. Beth was right - it was a goddamned PR exercise... and maybe he was the fall guy. He might find out tonight.

After kissing Nichola on the head, making her giggle and squirm, he went to the closet and pulled out his light jacket. He was wearing civilian clothes, his home clothes, and didn't intend changing into his uniform at this time of night. Let the bastards see that at least. Putting his jacket on, he went to the door, opened it, but then turned back to Beth.

'I used to count on your support,' he told her, 'but these days I only get flak. What happened, Beth?'

'You traded me in for your work.'

He stared steadily at her, feeling hurt, then stepped out onto the porch, letting the door snap shut behind him. The pink sky was turning darker, letting the stars come out, and he stood there for a moment, gazing across the airstrip, taking comfort from the aircraft hangars and the many parked planes silhouetted in the twilight. Seeing them, he was reminded of how much simpler life had been when he'd been flying the B-29s over India, China and the Pacific during World War II. Now the US was fighting a war in Korea. Dwight sometimes wished he could take part in it, instead of remaining here to chase UFOs and dodge flak that came from his superiors and Beth instead of the enemy. Sighing, still feeling wounded and hurt, he started down the steps to the yard.

The door opened and snapped shut behind him, then he heard Beth call out to him. When he turned back, she hurried down the steps to cup his face in her hands.

'Oh, honey,' she said, shaking her head in a woeful manner and letting her thumbs

slide down to his lips, 'I'm so sorry. I really am. It's not you, sweetheart – it's what they're doing to us. To *us*. The three of us. We're a family, a good family, a team, and they could tear us apart. That's what frightens me, Dwight.'

'There's no need,' he replied. 'There's no danger of that, Beth.' He removed one of her hands from his cheek and pressed his lips to it, moved by a rush of emotion that brought tears to his eyes. 'We'll be okay. I promise.'

'I worry,' she insisted. 'There's more than one kind of danger. There's the threat to this marriage – that's one - but we're okay if we know that. What we can't fight, what I think we can't defeat, is what happens to so many of those who do the work that you do. That's what worries me most, Dwight.'

He knew what she meant and was troubled to be reminded of it. Too many Air Force officers involved in UFO investigations ended up with career problems, broken marriages and ill health. Too many were denied promotion, punished for cooked-up misdemeanours, or posted to inhospitable climes, often separated from their families. Too many for comfort. Beth had cause for anxiety.

'I love you,' she said. 'You know that, honey. I'm just concerned for you.'

'I love you, too, Beth, but I can't help your concern.'

She sighed. 'No, I guess not. I'll just have to be stronger. We're a family, right, Dwight?'

'Yeah,' he said. 'A real family.'

'Then that's all that matters.' She embraced him and kissed him, clinging passionately to him, then let him go and wiped tears from her eyes. 'You hurry on, now. Take no mind of me. I'll be warming the bed, Dwight.'

'That sounds nice.' He turned away, wiping his own eyes, and hurried along the sidewalk, now deserted at this late hour, past the other houses of the officers quarters, heading for Wright Field, not looking forward to the meeting, but protected by Beth's love.

Chapter Twelve

The atmosphere in the ATIC operation's room was decidedly tense. Three US Air Force generals were sitting around Dwight's desk, all with thick wallet folders in front of them. Dwight's friend, Captain Bob Jackson, had placed a second chair beside Dwight's, behind the desk, and was sitting in it, facing the three generals. Seeing Dwight, he stood up and introduced him to generals Lamont, Conroy and Hackleman. After exchanging salutes, Dwight took the chair beside Bob, facing the generals over his own, paper-littered desk.

A brief, uncomfortable silence ensued, until General Hackleman, silvery-haired, deeply suntanned and lined, coughed into his clenched fist, clearing his throat, then said, 'Sorry to call you out at this time of night, Cap'n, but this matter is urgent.'

'Yes, sir,' Dwight said.

'It's come to our attention that contrary to air force policy, as laid down for Project Grudge, you've been openly supporting the UFO hypothesis and insisting that you have evidence for the physical reality of the phenomenon.'

'I think it's important, sir. And I should remind you that Project Grudge was replaced in April by Project Blue Book, for which there's a more positive policy.'

'I know all that,' General Lamont said testily, 'but we still want to hear what evidence you're basing your assumptions on.'

'Analysis of the photos of UFOs, done in the specialist Photo Reconnaissance Laboratory, here at Wright Field, have confirmed the saucer-shaped configuration of the sighted UFOs.'

'We know all that as well,' Lamont interrupted rudely. 'We've seen the photographic evidence. But what makes you think they're real, solid objects?'

Dwight refused to be bullied. 'With the saucer-shaped configuration and manoeuvring capabilities of the UFOs verified, what was needed was confirmation of what appeared to be their unusually large size and remarkable top speeds, as well as the fact that they appear to be able to hover, almost motionless, in the air. Regarding this, we received a report from Navy Commander R.B. McLaughlin, who'd worked throughout 1948 and 1949 with a team of engineers, technicians and scientists on a classified Skyhook balloon project, located in the Navy's top-secret guided-missile test and development area in the White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.' Dwight took his time leafing through one of his wallet folders, before pulling out a report and speaking while glancing repeatedly at it. 'According to that report, on April 24, 1949, at ten hundred hours in an absolutely clear Sunday morning, when McLaughlin and his team were preparing to launch one of their big Skyhook balloons - a hundred feet in diameter - the whole crew saw a UFO which, though high up, was clearly elliptical in shape and had a whitish-silver colour.'

'Could have been another Skyhook balloon,' Hackleman said. 'Or maybe even Venus.'

'No, sir,' Dwight replied. 'Neither. With a theodolite, stop-watch, and 25-power telescope, Commander McLaughlin's team was able to track the UFO as it dropped from an angle of elevation of forty-five degrees to twenty-five degrees, then abruptly shot upward and disappeared. Even after putting a reduction factor on the data recorded on the theodolite, Commander McLaughlin estimated that the UFO was approximately forty feet wide and a hundred feet long, had been at an altitude of fifty-six miles, and was travelling at seven miles per second, or approximately 25,000 miles per hour.'

'That's impossible!' General Conroy snapped angrily.

'I'll admit, sir, that there's some legitimate doubt regarding the accuracy of the speed and altitude figures that Commander McLaughlin's team arrived at from the data they measured with the theodolite. This, however, doesn't mean much in the sense that even if they were off by a factor of one hundred per cent, the speeds and altitude of the UFO would be extraordinary. I'd also remind you that various members of McLaughlin's team studied the object through a 25-power telescope and swore that it was a flat, oval-shaped object.'

'And I'd remind *you*, Cap'n Randall, that Commander McLaughlin had no right to release that report, let alone write the article he published in *True* magazine in March the following year. Small wonder he's been transferred back to sea.'

'With all due respect, sir, matters of naval discipline are not my concern. I was sent the report to read and analyze, which is just what I've done. In my view it confirms that the UFOs, or flying saucers, can fly at extraordinary speeds and reach remarkable altitudes.'

'You say these cinetheodolite cameras aren't always accurate,' General Conroy said. 'Just what are they and how do you use them, Cap'n?'

'A cinetheodolite is similar to a 35-mm movie camera, except that when a moving object is photographed with it, the developed photograph will also contain three readings that show the time the photo was taken, the azimuth angle, and the elevation angle of the camera. If two or more cinetheodolites photograph the same flying object, it's possible to obtain rough estimates of the object's size, speed and altitude. I stress *rough* estimates because cinetheodolites don't give accurate readings.'

'Nevertheless, you insist that the UFO tracked by McLaughlin's team was moving remarkably fast.'

'Yes, sir.'

'How fast?'

'A lot faster than any jet plane we know about.'

The generals glanced uneasily at one another, then returned their attention to Dwight. 'Okay, Cap'n, that accounts for configuration and speed. What's convinced you that these craft are real, solid objects?'

'Two incidents.' Dwight glanced at Bob, received a slight, knowing smile, then flipped over more pages in his folder and spoke as he read. 'On April 27, 1950, shortly after a guided missile had been fired from the White Sands Proving Ground in New Mexico and fell back to earth, the camera crews of Air Force technicians spotted an

object streaking across the sky. As most of the camera stations had already unloaded their film, only one camera was able to catch a shot of the UFO before it disappeared. That photo showed only a dark, smudgy object - but it also proved that whatever it was, it had been *moving*. A month later, during a second missile test, another UFO appeared. This time, two members of the camera teams saw it and shot several feet of film as the - quote - bright, shiny object - unquote - streaked across the sky. That film was subsequently processed and analysed by the Data Reduction Group at White Sands. By putting a correction factor in the data gathered by the two cameras, they were able to calculate that the object was higher than 40,000 feet, travelling over 2,000 miles per hour, and was approximately 300 feet in diameter.' Dwight looked each of the generals in the eye. 'I concede that these figures are only estimates, based on the possibly erroneous correction factor. However, they certainly prove that *something* had been in the air and it had been *solid* and moving very fast.'

'Enough to convince you of the reality of the phenomenon,' General Conroy said drily.

'Yes, sir. In combination with the two major flaps that came the following year: the Lubbock Lights and the Fort Monmouth sightings.'

Again the three generals stared at one another, this time even more uneasily. When General Hackleman turned back to Dwight, his hazel eyes were troubled.

'Ah, yes,' he said. 'We were informed that you'd investigated both cases personally. Kindly give us your report on both events. In precise detail, Cap'n.'

Dwight began to feel nervous. This was no casual interrogation. These three senior officers were concerned at what he knew and obviously not pleased with the extent of his knowledge. Nevertheless, they were demanding a detailed report, so, after glancing nervously at the equally concerned Bob Jackson, he picked up another file.

'The Lubbock affair,' he read, 'began on the evening of August 25, 1951, when an employee of the Atomic Energy Commission's supersecret Sandia Corporation – '

'Who?' General Lamont asked abruptly.

'I'm sorry, sir, I can't reveal that. I can only say that he had a top "Q" security clearance.'

The generals glanced uneasily at one another. 'Okay,' Lamont said. 'Continue.'

'This Sandia employee looked up from his garden on the outskirts of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and saw a huge aircraft flying swiftly and *silently* over his home. He later described it as having the shape of a flying wing, about one-and-a-half times the size of a B-26, with six to eight softly glowing, bluish lights on its aft end.'

General Lamont coughed into his clenched fist.

'That same evening,' Dwight continued, 'about twenty minutes after this sighting, four professors from the Texas Technological College at Lubbock -a geologist, a chemist, a physicist, and a petroleum engineer - observed a formation of lights streaking across the sky: about fifteen to thirty separate lights, all a bluish-green colour, moving from north to south in a semicircular formation.'

'You can't name the four professors either,' Conroy said sardonically.

'No, sir, I'm afraid not.'

'Keep reading, Cap'n.'

'Early in the morning of August 26, only a few hours after the Lubbock sightings, two different radars at an Air Defence Command radar station located in Washington State showed an unknown target travelling at 900 miles an hour at 1,300 feet and heading in a northwesterly direction. On August 31, at the height of the flap, two ladies were driving near Matador, seventy miles northeast of Lubbock, when they saw a pear-shaped object about 150 yards ahead of them, about 120 feet in the air, drifting slowly to the east at less than the take-off speed of a Cub airplane. One of those witnesses was familiar with aircraft - she was married to an air force officer and had lived on or near air bases for years - and she swore that the object was about the size of a B-29 fuselage, had a porthole on one side, made absolutely no noise as it moved *into* the wind, and suddenly picked up speed and climbed out of sight in a tight, spiralling motion. That same evening, an amateur photographer, Carl Hart, Jr., took five photos of a V formation of the same bluish-green lights as they flew over his back yard. Finally, a rancher's wife told her husband, who related the story to me, that she had seen a large object gliding swiftly and silently over her house. That object was observed about ten minutes after the Sandia Corporation executive had viewed *his* object. It was described as – I quote – "an airplane without a body". The woman said there were pairs of glowing lights on its aft edge - an exact description of the Albuquerque sightings made by the Sandia employee.'

'Who cannot be named,' General Conroy emphasised sardonically.

Dwight just smiled, then glanced down at his report. 'Subsequent investigation by myself and Captain Jackson' - he nodded in Bob's direction – 'confirmed that the Washington State radar lock-on had been a solid target - not a weather target. We then calculated that an object flying between that radar station and Lubbock would have been on a northwesterly course at the time it was seen at the two places - and that it would have had a speed of approximately 900 miles per hour, as calculated by the radar.'

'Still doesn't prove that much,' General Hackleman insisted with what seemed like a glimmer of hope.

'No,' Dwight said. 'But the five photographs taken by Carl Hart, Jr. were analysed by our Photo Reconnaissance Laboratory. The results showed that the lights, in an inverted V formation, had crossed about 120 degrees of open sky at a 30-degree per second angular velocity. This corresponded exactly to the angular velocity measured carefully by the four professors from the Technical College at Lubbock. Analysis of the photos also showed that the lights were a great deal brighter than the surrounding stars and that their unusual intensity could have been caused by an exceptionally bright light source which had a colour at the most distant red end of the spectrum, bordering on infrared.'

'What does that mean, Cap'n?' Hackleman's hazel gaze, which was steady, was also too concerned for Dwight's comfort.

'As the human eye isn't sensitive to such a light,' Dwight explained, 'the light could appear dim to the eye - as many of the Lubbock lights did - but be exceptionally bright

on film, as they were on the photographs. While according to the Photo Reconnaissance Laboratory, at that time there was nothing flying that had those particular characteristics, I was pretty startled to discover that the lights on the photos were strikingly similar to those described by the Atomic Energy Commission employee as being on the aft edge of the huge UFO that passed silently over his house.'

'So *did* something solid pass over Albuquerque, New Mexico,' Hackleman asked, 'and fly 250 miles to Lubbock, Texas, at an approximate speed of 900 miles per hour?'

'Yes, sir. According to the witnesses, and to the radar and visual-tracking calculations, it did. The Lubbock files were also studied by a group of rocket experts, nuclear physicists and intelligence experts, and they were all convinced that the sightings had been of an enormous, solid object, most probably with a highly swept-back wing configuration and a series of small jet orifices around its edge.'

There was silence for a moment while the three generals studied Dwight, none of them appearing too friendly, all looking concerned. Then General Hackleman let out a loud sigh. 'So,' he said. 'Who ordered you to personally investigate the Lubbock lights?'

'Major General C.P. Cabell, sir, representing the Director of Intelligence of the Air Force. In a matter of hours of receiving the order, Captain Jackson and I were on an airplane to Lubbock. Once there, we worked around the clock, interrogating everyone involved in the sighting - pilots, radar operators, technicians and instructors. What they told us substantiated the sighting reports.'

'We appreciate the thoroughness of the written report,' General Hackleman said, though displaying impatience. 'Who did you personally report to before writing it up?'

'General Cabell - naturally - and other high-ranking intelligence officers in the Pentagon, where the meeting took place.'

'You reported verbally?'

'Yes, sir.'

'That's what we'd been told,' General Hackleman said. 'But we couldn't find the recording of that meeting.'

Dwight glanced at Bob, who was looking uneasier every minute.

'Every word of that meeting was recorded,' Dwight insisted.

'But the recording was destroyed shortly after,' General Hackleman said. 'At least, so we were informed by the CIA.'

'But - '

'It doesn't matter,' General Conroy interjected. 'Don't bother asking, Cap'n. There are good reasons for everything, I'm sure. Now what about the replacement of Project Grudge with Project Blue Book in April this year, with Captain Ruppelt in command? Did you resent being downgraded to second-in-command?'

'I wouldn't be human if I didn't, sir.' Dwight was feeling hot and embarrassed. More so because this very subject had caused more friction between him and Beth, who was convinced that officers involved in UFO investigations always had a hard time from the Air Force and were often consistently denied promotion. Thus, when Project Grudge had been dropped and replaced with Project Blue Book, with Dwight reduced to second-

in-command under Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, Dwight's acute disappointment had only been exacerbated by Beth's angry insistence that his 'virtual demotion' was another sign that he should asked to be transferred to another, less controversial, line of work. 'But I should emphasise,' Dwight now insisted to General Conroy, 'that Captain Ruppelt and I have an excellent working relationship.'

'So Ruppelt has confirmed,' Conroy said with a slight, mocking smile. 'However, to change the subject slightly, do you think the stir caused by the Lubbock sightings was responsible for the replacement of Grudge with Blue Book?'

'The Lubbock sightings certainly helped, sir, but they weren't totally responsible. Though those sightings certainly made the Air Force sit up and take notice, it was the ones that took place a month later that really led to the formation of Project Blue Book.'

'The ones that took place at the Army Signal Corps radar centre at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.'

'Yes, sir.'

'A top-secret establishment.'

'Exactly, sir.'

'Tell us about those,' General Conroy said.

Dwight opened another file. 'The flap began at 11.10 in the morning of September 10, 1951, when a student operator was giving a demonstration of automatic radar tracking to a group of visiting top brass – sorry: senior officers.' General Conroy gave a wintry smile, but said nothing, so Dwight, flustered, glanced down at his notes and continued reading. 'After spotting an object flying about 12,000 yards southeast of the station, the operator switched to automatic tracking, but failed to hold the object. In his confusion, he blurted out to the visiting officers that the object was going too fast for the radar set - which meant that it was flying faster than any known jet. After three minutes, during which the UFO continued to fly too fast for the automatic radar tracking, it disappeared.'

'The weather?' General Lamont asked.

'Checks with the weather department revealed that there were no indications of a temperature inversion.'

'Okay, Cap'n, continue.'

'Twenty-five minutes later, the pilot of a T-33 jet trainer, carrying an Air Force major as passenger and flying 20,000 feet over Mount Pleasant, New Jersey, observed a dull, silver, disk-like object below him. It was thirty to fifty feet in diameter. When the object descended towards Sandy Hook, the T-33 pilot went after it. As he approached the object, it stopped abruptly, hovered impossibly, suddenly sped south, then made a 120-degree turn and vanished out to sea.'

Dwight glanced up from his report, surprised at how breathless and nervous he was. 'The Air Force major in the T-33 confirmed that sighting.' When no one passed comment, he avoided the three pairs of eyes by looking back at his notes.

'At 3.15pm, back at the Fort Monmouth radar centre, a frantic call was received from headquarters, demanding that they pick up an unknown that was flying very high, to the north, roughly where the first UFO had vanished. A radar lock-on confirmed that the

UFO was travelling - I quote - *slowly*, at 93,000 feet - or eighteen miles above the earth - and it could also be made out visually as a silver speck.'

'No known aircraft of today can fly eighteen miles above the earth,' Bob said, speaking for the first time.

'Thank you for that observation, Cap'n Jackson,' General Conroy said dryly. 'Okay, Cap'n Randall, continue.'

Giving Bob a fleeting grin, Dwight said, 'Next morning two radar sets picked up another unknown that climbed, levelled out, dived and climbed again repeatedly, too fast for the automatic radar tracking. When the object climbed, it went almost straight up. The flap ended that afternoon when the radar picked up another slowly moving UFO and tracked it for several minutes, before it, too, disappeared.'

He looked up from his notes. 'Those sightings were witnessed by all the visiting VIPs and it was they who really got the ball rolling. So, it was the Monmouth sightings, even more than the Lubbock lights, that compelled Major Cabell to order the ATIC to establish a new, more serious UFO investigation project. Subsequently, in April, Project Grudge was renamed Project Blue Book.'

'And in contradiction to the policy of Project Grudge,' General Hackleman said, 'Project Blue Book is to work on the assumption that the UFOs, or flying saucers, are real, solid objects.'

'Yes, sir,' Dwight said, sweating too much, his heart beating too fast. When he closed the file, he noticed that his hands were shaking. Not much, but definitely shaking, which really surprised him.

There was a lengthy, tense silence, then General Hackleman leaned forward in his chair and said, 'Anything else, Cap'n?'

Dwight glanced at Bob and was given a nod of approval to state what they had both been frightened of reporting. 'Yes, sir,' Dwight said. 'The pattern and nature of a recent build-up of sightings of fiery discs, green fireballs, and large flying saucers, over the past month, along the East Coast, indicates something damned scary.'

'Oh?' The general's gaze was steady and intense. 'What's that, Cap'n Randall?'

Dwight took a deep breath, hardly believing he was going to say it, then let his words come out on a rush of air.

'It seems like some kind of UFO invasion,' he said, 'and it's closing in on Washington D.C.'

The silence stretched out forever.

Chapter Thirteen

The sun was dying. Wilson knew this as he stood in a field of wheat in Montezuma, Iowa, the stalks shoulder-high around him, and gazed across that yellow field to where green fields met blue sky, then squinted up into the sun's striations, which were silvery and ravishing. Wilson was only ten years old, blond-haired and tanned, but even as the sun's heat scorched his face, he knew the sun was dying. It would take a long time, but die it surely would, and when it died, the earth would die with it, destroying the great hope of mankind. Wilson, though still a child, was overwhelmed by that knowledge and decided, there and then, without a moment's hesitation, that he had to do something to save mankind and ensure its continuance.

Man's destiny, he was convinced, could only be changed through science and the evolution of a new kind of man, one less prone to mortality.

Even then, as a boy growing up in Iowa, born of God-fearing parents, but unable to accept the idea of Him, Wilson had been convinced that mankind would eventually have to leave Earth and inhabit another, less endangered planet. To do so, he would have to create an extraordinary technology; he would also have to transcend his still primitive nature and escape the physical limitations of his weak, mortal body.

Man would have to turn himself into Superman and then reach for the stars.

Wilson realised this at ten years old as he squinted up at the sun over Iowa... Then he awakened, at eighty-two, to look out over the vast, snow-covered wilderness of Antarctica from his bed near the summit of a mountain in Nue Schwabenland.

Though still groggy from anaesthetics, the dream, or recollection, had filled him with the awareness of how fragile was mortality and how ephemeral each individual life. From childhood to old age had taken no time at all - the past was virtually in the present - and now he knew with more certainty than ever that no matter what he did to himself, his time would be limited.

Nevertheless, there was still a lot he could do before it ended, so he had to keep that dark moment at bay as long as humanly, or scientifically, possible.

For this reason, he had become his own laboratory animal, experimenting constantly on himself, with the aid of his two specialists: Professor Adolf Eckhardt, a former Nazi concentration camp experimental surgeon, and the abducted Dr Paul Gold, formerly of the Powered Limbs Unit of West Hendon Hospital, London. Freed from the moral, ethical and religious constraints of Western surgical research, they were producing between them some extraordinary innovations in prosthetics, organ replacement and skin grafts.

After having some of the latter done successfully to his face and hands, thus making him look sixty instead of eighty-two, Wilson had recently had his weakening heart replaced with the first of Eckhardt's prosthetics and was already recovering from the operation.

Sitting upright on the bed and breathing deeply, letting the cold air clear his head, he

called on the phone for Eckhardt and Gold to come up immediately. He also asked for Hans Kammler and Artur Nebe to come up thirty minutes later, in order to submit their latest reports.

Eckhardt and Gold entered together, both wearing white smocks, and stood one at each side of Wilson's bed, smiling down at him. Once devoted to his wife and children in London, Gold was now devoted only to his work in this Antarctic colony and content to take his pleasures with the 'comfort girls' abducted by the flying saucer crews from all over the Earth. He was completely reliable. Eckhardt, of course, being a fugitive war criminal, still wanted by the British, not to mention the Jews of Israel, for his so-called 'anthropological' experiments in the Nazi concentration camps, clearly had no place else to go. Nevertheless, he also was delighted to be able to continue his experiments without restraint in the colony's laboratories, using animals and the human abductees being held in appalling conditions in the dank, freezing underground cells. He, too, took his pleasures from the comfort girls and was obsessed with his work.

'So,' he said, lowering his stethoscope to examine Wilson's heartbeat, 'you look good. How do you feel?'

'Excellent,' Wilson said.

Eckhardt listened to Wilson's heartbeat, then straightened up. 'Perfect.'

'It doesn't feel perfect,' Wilson replied. 'It's a little uncomfortable.'

'We'll soon improve on it.' Eckhardt was unfazed by Wilson's cold stare, having known him since the early days in Nazi Germany, way back in 1940, before the dream of the Thousand Year Reich had collapsed into ruins.

As Wilson well knew, Eckhardt and other Nazis were convinced that their Aryan dreams would be resurrected here, which is why they stayed on without persuasion. Wilson knew differently, but was not about to correct them, as he needed to use their insane faith for his own, infinitely more rational, purposes. He also needed them to help in extending his life, even if not indefinitely, as they were doing with his artificial heart and various joint and minor organ replacements.

Wilson's new heart, or pacemaker, was a highly advanced device which, utilizing a piezoelectric crystal and a small balloon filled with water, caused the heart's own pumping to stimulate itself. First created in crude form in Nazi Germany, but recently perfected here in the colony's laboratories, it was more advanced than the one inserted for the first time in a human being in Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, a few months ago. That recipient, a 41-year old steelworker, had only lived for eighty minutes after his heart replacement, but Wilson would survive a lot longer.

'The water-filled balloon,' Eckhardt explained, 'will be replaced with something smaller in a few months. Though the pacemaker is already maintenance free and doesn't require batteries, we'll eventually replace it with a plutonium power source, or nuclear battery, which will weigh practically nothing and last longer. As for the rest of you, that's up to Dr Gold here.'

Eckhardt smiled thinly, without affection, at Dr Gold, whom he viewed as a rival for Wilson's attention. Gold, who despised Professor Eckhardt, politely ignored his smile.

‘Your arthritic problems have been cured with joint replacements,’ he said, ‘but already we have more advanced prosthetics, if you’re willing to – ’

‘Yes,’ Wilson interjected without a pause. ‘I am. The operations don’t bother me.’

‘Good.’ Gold smiled like a normal doctor with a normal patient, as if still in the West Hendon Hospital, London, not here in a hidden Antarctic colony from which he would never escape. ‘At the moment we’re experimenting with artificial knees and elbows of clear acrylic resin reinforced with stainless steel. As for the joints themselves, the main problems have always been corrosion and lubrication, but soon I’ll be removing your relatively crude, temporary stainless steel prosthetics and inserting more durable, maintenance-free, one-hundred percent mobile joints made of a corrosion-free, easily lubricated, more durable cobalt-chromium alloy. As most of the surgical work on your joints was done for the original replacements, the operations for the insertion of the new prosthetics will be relatively simple.’

‘And the rest of me?’

Gold shrugged and raised his hands as if pleading for clemency. ‘These are early days yet, but with human laboratory subjects instead of only animals we should certainly progress quicker than anyone else. That heart will buy you a few more years, but problems with your kidneys and lungs will come soon enough, which is why we’re working on those right now.’

‘Tell me.’

‘Regarding your kidneys, we’re experimenting with something first devised by a Dutch surgeon, Wilhelm Kolff, and tested, ironically, on a Nazi collaborator. This involves the use of cellulose acetate film as the filter membrane and heparin as the anticoagulant. Already we have an advanced version that we think will work, but we also need to find a means of circulating your blood from time to time through the artificial kidney. A cumbersome dialysis machine has been devised, but to avoid having to keep you plugged into it twenty-four hours a day we’re working on a six-inch socket that can be permanently implanted in your circulatory system, between an artery and vein, then opened and joined to the artificial kidney. What we’ve come up with is a six-inch tube of silicone rubber, tipped with polytetrafluoroethylene - an unreactive plastic - with ends that penetrate the skin and are stitched to the adjoining artery and vein. While causing you little discomfort, this will allow you to leave the large dialysis machine for days at a time. Eventually, we hope to have a self-sustaining artificial kidney, but that, alas, will take longer to develop.’

‘And my lungs?’

‘As those are essentially mechanical, we’re looking into prosthetic replacements. However, as the lung is also a membrane of unusually high permeability and, more complex, roughly the area of a tennis court, we need to find a means of imitating it within the confines of the thorax. We hope to do this with a membrane of exceptionally thin silicone - say, one-thousandth of an inch thick - and with a maximum area of one square metre. This will be placed in the thorax in concentric layers, kept apart and self-supported in a manner that forms minute channels, which in turn form the new blood

capillaries. Unfortunately, in this case, the problems are many and the death rate during experiments is high. This is due mainly to our inability, so far, to prevent the artificial membrane from becoming choked by coagulated blood. Nevertheless, I'm convinced that with time, patience, and unimpeded human experimentation, we can produce the required anticoagulant. Then the artificial, implantable lung will be within reach.'

'Good,' Wilson said. He spent a few more minutes discussing the various surgical and medical experiments going on with the abducted humans held in the underground cells, then dismissed his two professors and waited for the arrival of administrator Hans Kammler and chief of security Artur Nebe, both former members of the Death's Head SS. Kammler arrived first, wearing a black coverall, still blond and handsome, but no longer the golden young god of war, now visibly ageing. He took a seat by the bed and nodded at Wilson, not smiling at all.

'You're recovering well?' he asked.

'Yes, Hans. No problems at all. I'll soon be on my feet again. So how is Ernst Stoll settling into Paraguay?'

Kammler smiled frostily. 'With no great deal of joy, but with dedication - as you had expected. He's greatly increased the defences of the compound, constructed a landing pad for the saucers, and set up a line of communication between himself and General Stroessner, whom be believes will eventually take over as President. As Stroessner is infinitely corruptible, this is all to the good. We will certainly be well protected there.'

'Apart from that, is he doing what he's been sent there for?'

'Yes. The mass abduction of Ache Indians has begun with the aid of General Stroessner's *Federales*. For this, Stroessner is being well paid. Stoll claims that Stroessner is using the money to bribe senior army officers and seduce the heads of the Colorado Party. He's buying their support in his bid for the presidency and plans to make his move this year or next.'

'Excellent. We need a man like Stroessner in charge. We also need the Ache Indians - the females as comfort girls and servants, the males as conditioned pilots for the saucers and as experimental surgical fodder for Eckhardt and Gold. Since with even the abductions, we're running short of human material, a regular supply of the Ache will be truly invaluable.'

'I don't think Stoll will let you down.'

The door opened again and Artur Nebe entered, small and stout, as solid as a rock, with eyes as dark as his black coverall. His swarthy features, though revealing no emotion, concealed the soul of a monster. As he crossed to stand at the other side of the bed, facing Kammler, Wilson glanced through the panoramic window at the far side of the room and saw the vast, Antarctic wilderness, its soaring ice-covered peaks and snow-covered valleys stretching out to a dazzling, blue horizon. While the sheer, untouched beauty of it denied the horrors taking place daily in the laboratories and underground cells of this hidden colony, Wilson did not see it that way. Dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge – which, in his view, separated Man from beast - he was embarked on a crusade to redirect the evolution of mankind and turn the thinly disguised beast into

Superman. There was no room for emotion in his grand design. His notion of beauty was absolute knowledge and the pure truths of science.

'So, Artur,' he said, looking up into Nebe's dark, fathomless gaze and taking confidence from the murderous well of his nature, 'what do you have to tell me?'

'Everything has gone smoothly. Exactly as we had planned. The calculated spreading of disinformation about UFOs has had the desired effect and is leading to confusion, not only with the public, but with military intelligence on a worldwide basis. By now, public opinion is split between those who believe the UFOs are of extraterrestrial origin, those who insist they're misinterpretations of natural atmospheric phenomenon, those who deem them the products of mass hallucination encouraged by too much talk about the subject, and those who believe they're the top-secret experimental craft of their own governments.'

'Official attitudes are equally confused?'

'Yes. The few government, military and intelligence heads who know of our existence here are so concerned about the possibility of public hysteria in the event that the news gets out, they've classified the subject top-secret. They've also classified as top-secret their own race to construct similar saucers in the vain hope of eventually getting us out of here. They're not only concerned with what they see as the new military threat represented by our technology, but by the fact that the Antarctic is Earth's last untapped treasure-house of oil, coal, gold, copper, uranium and, most important, water - the whole world will soon need water - and here we are, threatening to keep them out. So that's what concerns them most of all.'

'We can use that concern when we trade,' Wilson said. 'It's a strong card to hold. But apart from the stubborn General Samford, what do they think of our capability?'

'Deliberately letting the top brass of Fort Monmouth see one of our large saucers finally convinced the Pentagon of our vastly superior capability, though the White House, and Samford, remain unconvinced.'

'They soon will be,' Wilson said.

Nebe didn't return his smile, but continued speaking in his soft, oddly threatening monotone. 'The so-called Lubbock lights, which were in fact the lights on the tail end of an American-Canadian experimental flying wing constructed in secret at the White Sands Proving Ground, has further convinced the American public that alien craft are exploring the earth. The Lubbock lights - that flying wing - also succeeded in further confusing those in military intelligence who don't yet know of our existence and are baffled as to why their own superiors are trying to kill off the sighting reports, even as they insist that the saucers are a threat to national security.'

'We couldn't have done better ourselves,' Wilson observed.

'Finally,' Nebe continued, 'the concentrated build-up of flights of our mass-produced World War II *Feuerballs* over the east coast of the United States has been highly successful, leading to nationwide concern and numerous wild stories about green or orange fireballs and extraterrestrial flying saucers, as well as secret speculations in military circles about a forthcoming UFO invasion of the nation's capital.'

'Perfect,' Wilson said. 'We'll now proceed to do just that. We'll surround Washington DC in general and the White House in particular with a virtual armada of *Feuerballs*. If that doesn't persuade them the first time, we'll repeat the performance a week later with even more *Feuerballs* and some larger, piloted saucers. I think it will work.'

'When will it begin?' Kammler asked him.

'Time is of the essence,' Wilson said. 'The invasion commences tomorrow.'

Chapter Fourteen

Just off a flight from Dayton, Ohio, Dwight and Bob Jackson were passing a newspaper stand in the lobby of Washington National Airport Terminal Building when they were stopped dead in their tracks by the headline: INTERCEPTORS CHASE FLYING SAUCERS OVER WASHINGTON DC. Shocked, Dwight purchased the paper and read that the capital was in the middle of the biggest UFO flap of all time.

'The bastards didn't even tell us!' he fumed, folding up the paper and jamming it into the side pocket of his Air Force jacket. 'If we hadn't come here on our own bat, they probably wouldn't have called us. The biggest UFO flap of them all and we weren't even informed!'

'Come on,' Bob said, swinging his briefcase from one hand to the other and heading energetically for the cab rank. 'Let's go and talk to Dewey Fournet.'

Instructing the cabbie to take them to the Pentagon, Dwight, still furious, opened the paper again and read the newspaper account of the present flap more carefully, tying the report to what he already knew. He was even more furious about not being informed because he had practically predicted that this flap would occur and, indeed, had informed generals Conroy, Lamont and Hackleman about it during his recent, unpleasant interrogation. The Air Force's Project Blue Book was now going strong under the leadership of Captain Edward J. Ruppelt and had received more official UFO reports than it had done in any previous month in its history. In fact, according to Ruppelt, the sheer number of reports was making Air Force officers in the Pentagon frantic.

By June 15, the locations, timing, and sequence of the reports had indicated that the UFOs were gradually closing in on Washington DC.

Throughout the afternoon of June 15, reports of 'round, shiny objects' and 'silvery spheres' had come in from all over Virginia, one after the other: 3.40pm at Unionville; 4.20pm at Gordonsville; 4.25pm at Richmond; then 4.43pm and 5.43pm at Gordonsville. At 7.35pm a lot of people in Blackstone, about eighty miles south of Gordonsville, had observed a 'round, shiny object with a golden glow' moving from north to south. By 7.59pm the same object was observed by the people in the CAA radio facility at Blackstone. At 8.00pm a jet from Langley Air Force Base tried to intercept it, but five minutes later the object, moving too slowly to be an airplane, disappeared.

So inexplicable and disturbing were these reports that Captain Ruppelt was called to Washington DC to give a briefing in the restricted area of the fourth-floor 'B' ring of the Pentagon to General Samford, the Director of Intelligence, some of the members of his staff, two captains from the Office of Naval Intelligence, and some others whom Ruppelt had refused to name for security reasons. That meeting had resulted in a directive to take further steps to obtain positive identification of the UFOs.

Meanwhile, the sightings continued. By the end of June, it had become apparent that there was a considerable build-up of sightings in the eastern United States. In

Massachusetts, New Jersey and Maryland jet fighters were scrambled almost nightly for a week, but always foiled when their radar-locks were broken by the abrupt, swift manoeuvres of the UFOs. On July 1, many UFOs were sighted over Boston, then began working their way down the coast. The same day two UFOs had come down across Boston on a southwesterly heading, crossed Long Island, hovered a few minutes over the Army's secret laboratories at Fort Monmouth, then proceeded towards Washington DC. A few hours later, the first report from Washington DC was submitted by a physics professor at George Washington University.

For the next couple of weeks, reports about Washington DC sightings poured in at the rate of twenty or thirty a day and, according to Ruppelt, unknowns were running about 40 percent. Finally, according to the *Washington Post*, last night, July 19, the greatest flap of them all had begun, with UFOs being tracked all over the capital and the restricted corridor around the White House filled with interceptor jets trying to chase UFOs.

Immensely frustrated and angry, Dwight finished reading the report, then passed the paper to Bob. By the time Bob finished reading it, he, too, was furious that the ATIC had not been informed about the event.

'Damned lucky we were coming here anyway,' he said. 'Otherwise they'd have kept us locked out. Why the hell would they do that?'

'Maybe it was just an oversight,' Dwight replied without conviction, staring up at the sunny sky in the vain hope of seeing his first UFO. 'The heat of the moment, and so on. They're probably all frantic by now and just forgot to put the call through.'

'Yeah,' Bob said doubtfully, also glancing automatically at the empty sky over Virginia. 'Maybe you're right.'

When they were inside the Pentagon, that immense five-sided building in Arlington County, Dwight demanded an urgent meeting with Major Dewey Fournet, their UFO liaison man in the capital. Entering his office, located on the fourth floor, they found him in the company of Colonel Donald Bower, the intelligence officer from Bolling AFB, located just east of National Airport, across the Potomac River. Neither Fournet nor Bower looked pleased with this visit.

'Okay, okay,' a harassed Fournet said, waving his hands as if to defend himself. 'I know what you're going to say.'

'So, what happened?' Dwight asked.

'We've just been too damned busy,' Fournet replied. 'It was an oversight, gentlemen.' Dwight glanced at Major Bower. 'I don't believe that. Seems to me, you just wanted to keep us out. Why is that, Major?'

'You'd have received a full report in due course,' Major Bower said, his gaze steady and hard.

'Your report, not ours, Major,' Dwight replied. 'It's not the same thing.' He removed his gaze from Bower and fixed it on Fournet instead. 'So what are the facts, sir? Is the report in the *Washington Post* correct?'

Fournet shrugged. 'Yeah, essentially correct. At 11.40pm the ARTC radars at

Washington National Airport, about three miles south of the centre of Washington DC, picked up eight unidentified targets near Andrews AFB, Maryland, twenty miles east of National Airport and in direct line with National and Bolling. The objects were flying at approximately 100 to 130 miles per hour, then suddenly accelerated to fantastically high speeds and left the area. They soon returned, en masse. During the night, tower operators and the aircrews of several airliners saw unidentified lights in the same locations indicated by the radar. Before the night was out, and while interceptor jets tried and failed to catch them, the unidentified targets had moved into every sector covered by the radarscopes, including the prohibited corridor over the White House and the Capitol building. The climax came in the early hours of the morning, when the operators in the control tower at Andrews AFB, in response to an ARTC traffic controller's query about a target directly over the Andrews Radio range station, located near their tower, reported that a large, fiery, orange-coloured sphere was hovering in the sky directly above them.'

'Weather?'

'An analysis of the sightings has completely ruled out temperature inversions. Also, the radar operators at Washington National Airport and Andrews AFB - plus at least two veteran airline pilots - have all sworn that their sightings were caused by the radar waves bouncing off hard, *solid* objects.'

'Oh, boy!' Bob said, glancing at Dwight. 'This sounds really good.'

'That's hardly the right word to use,' Bower said. 'It certainly didn't seem good to the top brass of the Pentagon. Nor did it seem good to President Truman, who personally witnessed a UFO skimming right around the White House. In fact, at ten this morning, the President's air aide, Brigadier General Landry, called me, at Truman's personal request, to find out what the hell was going on.'

'Oh?' Dwight said, amused. 'And what did you tell him?'

'I hedged my answers,' Bower replied, 'because, truthfully, I couldn't explain the sightings away.'

'On behalf of the Air Force,' Fournet said, 'public relations officer Al Chops has given the press an official "No comment" on the sightings, but the reporters are still massed down there on the first floor, all baying for more. In the meantime, we're investigating the affair. That's all we can tell you.'

'Fine, Major,' Dwight said, taking note of Bob's cynical sideways glance and deciding not to raise any awkward points. 'Have you any objections to me doing my own investigation for the ATIC?'

Fournet glanced uneasily at Major Bower, who did not seem too pleased. Nevertheless, he said, 'Of course not, Cap'n Randall. Why should we mind?'

'Here,' Fournet said, trying to look helpful as he handed Dwight a manila folder. 'Two of the first reports submitted. One is the unofficial report from the Andrews AFB tower operators; the other is from an F-94C pilot who tried to intercept unidentified lights. I should warn you that these are just off-the-cuff, preliminary reports. More detailed, more accurate versions will be drafted and signed at a later date. But you might find them helpful for the time being.'

'And as I said,' Major Bower added, 'you'll be receiving our official report when it's been completed.'

'I look forward to it,' Dwight said, then he and Bob saluted and left the office.

'Bullshitter,' Bob whispered as they walked along the spoke-like, windowless corridor in one of the five concentric rings of the building, heading for the small office used by the ATIC when visiting here. 'That Bower's the one who stopped us from being informed - maybe because the President is now involved. Whatever was flying around here last night, they sure as hell don't want us to know about it.'

'Well, we're going to get to know about it,' Dwight said determinedly as he unlocked the door of the office at the far end of the corridor. 'We'll complete a thorough investigation and find out just what the hell those interceptor jets were pursuing in the restricted corridor around the White House. No intelligence officer from Bolling AFB is going to stop me - not Bower and not anyone else.' He and Bob entered the office, switching on the light and closing the door behind them. It was a small, square-shaped room with no windows and nothing on the walls. Outside was US Highway 1 and, beyond it, the Potomac River, but they couldn't see either from this gloomy cell. Dwight placed his briefcase on the desk and gazed at the bare wall. 'I want to speak to the chief radar operator at Andrews AFB and the F-94C pilot who put in this report,' he said, fanning himself with the manila envelope. 'Get on the blower, Bob.'

As Bob took the wooden chair beside the desk and picked up the phone, Dwight kicked off his shoes and massaged his hot feet through his socks. Bob flipped open the manila envelope, checked one of the two reports, then asked for the senior traffic controller in the Andrews AFB control tower. After a short wait, he nodded and Dwight picked up the other line.

'Captain Chapman? This is Captain Dwight Randall of the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. I'm here at the Pentagon with Captain Bob Jackson to check out yesterday's UFO flap. We thought you might be able to help us out.'

'I put in a report to Major Bower,' Captain Chapman responded, sounding uneasy. 'Yes, Captain, I've got it right here. I believe you were in charge of operations when that huge, orange-coloured sphere was observed over the Andrews Radio range station, located near the control tower.'

'Oh, yeah... *that*.' Chapman sounded even more uncomfortable. 'It wasn't huge; it was large.'

'Says right here it was *huge*.'

'We were all pretty excited at the time. It was large, not huge.'

'You saw it?'

'Well, yeah, I saw it... but when we checked the data later, we realised it was only a star.'

'*What*?'

'It was only a star.'

Dwight glanced at Bob who, holding the phone to his ear, merely shrugged his

shoulders.

'I don't get this, Captain,' Dwight said. 'I have your report right in front of me and it clearly describes the object as a - quote - huge, fiery-orange-coloured sphere.'

'It was a large star. I know it was. When I submitted that report, we were all pretty scared and excited. I now regret that description.'

'Okay: it was large. However, I find it hard to credit that seven trained radar operators would mistake a large, fiery, orange-coloured sphere for a star.'

'The heat of the moment, Captain. We all make mistakes. I'm going to change that description when I redraft the report. What we saw was an exceptionally bright star. That's all there is to it.'

Dwight took a deep breath, glanced at Bob, who shrugged again, then let his breath out in an audible sigh. 'The report also states that you and the six other traffic controllers on the shift saw this object, or star, hovering over the Andrews Radio range station, at precisely the same moment the radar operators at National Airport reported having a target over the very same location.'

'I can't account for that, Captain, except to say that the radars all over Washington DC were going crazy last night and a lot of atmospheric anomalies are suspected. What we saw was a star.'

'Okay, Captain, thanks.' Dwight pressed the phone-cradle down, cutting Chapman off, then said, 'Get on to that guy in charge of the astronomical charts and ask him if there were any unusually bright stars in the sky last night.'

Bob leafed through his notebook, dialled a number and asked for Air Force corporal Alan Collins. After explaining what he wanted, he sat waiting, drumming his fingers nervously on the desk and studying the ceiling. Eventually he nodded, went, 'Mmmmm, thanks corporal,' and dropped the phone back on its cradle. 'Nope,' he said. 'No exceptionally bright stars where that UFO was seen. None at all, Dwight.'

'Damn! Is the pilot of that F-94C available?'

Bob tugged the second report out of the manila folder, checked it, and said, 'Yeah, he's located at Bolling AFB - where our good friend, Major Bower, also comes from. You want me to try him?'

'Damned right, I do.'

Tracking down the pilot took a lot longer, but eventually Bob nodded again at Dwight and the latter picked up the phone. After introducing himself, he said, 'I'd like to hear in your own words exactly what you thought you were pursuing last night.'

'It was a ground light reflecting off a layer of haze.'

'*What*?'

'A ground light reflecting off – '

'I heard you, Lieutenant, I just don't believe you. I have your report right here and it says that the lights were high up in the sky, in the restricted air corridor around the White House, and that they descended, ascended, hovered, and shot off at incredible speeds.'

'An optical illusion, Captain.'

'But the report – '

'I wrote it in the heat of the moment, right after landing. I was pretty nervous and excited, Captain, not too sure of what was happening, but when I'd settled down and spoken to Major Bower, I realised that I'd misinterpreted what I'd seen.'

Bob silently gave the thumbs-down.

'You spoke to Major Bower?' Dwight asked.

'That's right, Captain. Right after I landed. All of the pilots at Bolling were interrogated about what they had seen by the base intelligence officers.'

'And after interrogation, you were persuaded that what you had seen was not a lot of unidentified lights that made extraordinary manoeuvres over the White House, but simply a ground light reflecting off a layer of haze.'

'That's correct, Captain.'

'If you don't mind me saying so, Lieutenant, that seems a pretty ridiculous statement, given that this report – '

'I'm redrafting it, Captain, to make it more accurate.'

'Given that in this report,' Dwight insisted, 'you say that the lights repeatedly disappeared and reappeared in the sky before eventually shooting away.'

'An optical illusion caused by the layer of haze.'

'No, Lieutenant, not possible. According to your statement, the disappearances and reappearances described by you were matched exactly by the radar readings - same location, same time.'

'According to Major Bowers, the radar operatives later said they'd been mistaken. Given that, I can only confirm what I saw.'

'A ground light reflecting off a layer of haze.'

'Exactly.'

'And that's what's going into your redrafted report?'

'Yes, Captain.'

'Thanks, Lieutenant.' Angry and frustrated, Dwight dropped the phone, then glared at Bob, who was shrugging and spreading his hands in the air, signifying defeat. 'Major Bower,' Dwight said.

'Intelligence chief of Bolling AFB. He also talked to the Andrews AFB radar flight controllers and radar operatives. Looks like a snow job.'

'Which confirms that they didn't call the ATIC because they didn't want us snooping around. They're putting the lid on this thing.' Dwight hammered his fist on the table. 'Well, damn them, I won't let them. Let's get a staff car and travel around a bit - Washington National Airport, Andrews AFB, airline offices, the weather bureau, and anywhere else we can think of. Damn it, let's *do* it.' Dwight picked up the phone and called the Pentagon transportation section.

'Hi. Captain Dwight Randall of the ATIC speaking. I need a staff car for a couple of hours and – '

'Did you say the ATIC?' the corporal at the other end of the line asked.

'That's right. The Air Technical Intelligence Centre. I need a staff car to – '

'Just a moment, sir.' There was a pause on the other end of the line, following by whispering, then the corporal came back on. 'Sorry, sir. Did you say Captain Dwight Randall?'

'Yes, corporal, and – '

'I'm sorry, sir, but I'm afraid I can't help you. Regulations say that we can't make staff cars available to anyone other than senior colonels or generals.'

'Bullshit.'

'Sorry, sir, but those are the regulations.'

'Since when?'

'Just recently, sir.'

'Dammit, corporal, I want that staff car!'

'Sorry, sir, I can't help you. Not unless you get authorisation from a senior colonel or general.'

'Alright, damn you, I will.' Dwight pressed the cradle down. 'Can you believe this shit?' he said to Bob. 'New regulation says we can't have a car unless we're senior colonels or generals.'

'New regulation invented just for us,' Bob said. 'Why not try General Samford? He'll be obliged to help you.'

'Why not?' Dwight said. When he tried to contact the general, however, he was told that Samford wasn't in his office. When he asked the secretary to track him down, he was told that Samford couldn't be found. 'To hell with this,' Dwight said, slamming the phone down and then putting his shoes on again. 'Let's go down to the finance office and charge a rented car to expenses. They can't argue with that.'

But they did. When Dwight and Bob put their request to the heavy, grey-haired lady in the Pentagon finance office, she looked embarrassed, checked their names again, then said nervously: 'Sorry, sir, but I can't do that. Policy is that if you don't have a staff car, you use city buses.'

'Ma'm, this is a matter of extreme urgency and one requiring a lot of travelling. We don't know the bus system and it would take us hours to get to all the places we need to visit.'

'Sorry, sir, but I still can't help you. If it's that important, I suggest you use a cab and pay for it out of your per diem.'

'I can't afford to do that, Ma'm. This job is going to take a couple of days and requires travelling all over Virginia. At nine dollars a day per diem, I can hardly – '

'Besides,' the lady said, examining Dwight's papers, 'this travel order only covers a trip to the Pentagon - not Washington, and certainly not a trip around Virginia. In fact, according to this, you're supposed to be on your way back to Dayton by now.'

'Well, I'm not going. This work is more important, and I'm pretty sure - '

The lady sighed and handed back his travel orders. 'Unless you're willing to go through all the red tape of getting these orders amended, you won't be able to collect *any* per diem. Also, you'll be technically AWOL.'

'Are you kidding me?'

'No, sir, I'm not. If you don't head back to Dayton today, you'll both be classified AWOL. I can't help you, sir.'

Clenching his fist around his damned travel orders, Dwight stormed out of the finance office, followed by Bob. He was just about to head back to his office, when Bob stopped him by tugging at his elbow.

'What?'

'We've gotta leave,' Bob said. 'We can't afford to be AWOL. If they're really trying to stop us, they'll use the AWOL as an excuse to tan our hides. We've got to go back, Dwight.'

'No, damn it, I won't let them give me the runaround this way. I have friends at Andrews AFB, so let's go there and ask them to call Wright-Patterson for permission to stay in this area for another week or so. That'll enable us to continue our investigations without the help or hindrance of the bastards in here.'

Bob puffed his cheeks out and blew a gust of air. 'I think one of us should go back,' he said. 'Hold the fort, so to speak. The teletype machines are bound to be going mad at the ATIC, so one of us should be back there to help Captain Ruppelt. If you want to stay here, okay, and I'll go back and clear it with Ruppelt.'

'Great,' Dwight said. 'You smooth matters out with Ruppelt and I'll call Beth this evening and explain things.'

'One call I wouldn't want to make, partner. Rather you than me.'

'I'll be fine,' Dwight said.

He and Bob returned to the ATIC office, picked up their briefcases, switched off the light, locked the door and then left the Pentagon. They took a taxi to the Washington National Terminal Airport Building. There Bob was dropped off and Dwight, still boiling mad, took a bus all the way to Andrews AFB, twenty miles east, in Maryland.

On the evening of July 26, Dwight was having coffee alone in the almost deserted officer's mess of Andrews AFB, thinking gloomily that he had been here for exactly one week to the day, sharing a room with three other officers, phoning Bob Jackson or Captain Ruppelt every afternoon and Beth every evening, when he was inclined to feel most miserable, and had received nothing valuable regarding the UFOs in return for his suffering.

In fact, he was gloomily pondering the ironic fact that he was second-in-command of Project Blue Book and yet had never personally seen a UFO. Every evening since Bob's departure, Dwight had been out prowling around the airstrip of Andrews AFB, scanning the night sky for UFOs, but so far he hadn't seen a damned thing. Nor had the radar operators or pilots - a fact that only increased Dwight's feelings of frustration and inadequacy.

Oddly enough, there had been a flurry of UFO sightings the previous day and evening, though none of them over Washington DC First, amber-red lights had been observed over the Guided Missile Long-Range Proving Ground at Patrick AFB, Florida.

Next, a UFO described as ‘a large, round, silver object that spun on its vertical axis’ had been seen to cross 100 degrees of afternoon sky in forty-eight seconds. Then, in the late afternoon, interceptor jets had chased UFOs over Los Alamos and Holyoke, Massachussetts, losing them as they turned into the sun. Finally, that night, F-94s had tried in vain to intercept unidentified lights reported by the Ground Observer Corps in Massachussetts and New Jersey.

But nothing over Washington DC...

And not a thing over Andrews AFB, where Dwight, after a week on his own, was starting to feel that the whole business was some kind of bad dream that had almost broken up his marriage and might soon break him.

He was gloomily pondering this, at 10.30pm, when he heard his name being called out over the tannoy system, asking him to report urgently to the control tower.
Dwight jumped up and ran.

The Andrews AFB control tower was in pandemonium, with most of the traffic controllers, eerily shadowed in the night lighting, grouped around the 24-inch radarscopes and staring at rapidly multiplying targets.
‘Same as last time,’ the captain in charge said, jabbing his fingers at the screens, ‘but this time they’re not just over Washington DC. Those UFOs are spread out in a huge arc from Herndon, Virginia, to here. They’re right above Washington National Airport - and also right above us. In other words, they have Washington boxed in.’

‘Jesus Christ!’ an Air force sergeant whispered.

With everyone else, Dwight glanced automatically at the sky above the darkened, lamplit airfield, but saw only the moon and stars. According to the radar, some of those UFOs were overhead, but they couldn’t be seen by the naked eye. To confirm that they actually existed, you had to look at the radarscopes... and there they were: all those white lights constantly on the move, forming a great arc around Virginia and Maryland, but closing in on Washington DC.

‘God damn it!’ someone else exclaimed softly, glancing up at the sky. ‘Where the hell are they?’

A group of F-94s were already racing along the airstrip and taking off into the sky, in pursuit of the targets on the radar screens. Even as they disappeared in the direction of Washington DC, the telephone rang. The chief traffic controller answered it, nodded his head, then lowered the phone and said, ‘The targets have just left the radarscopes at Washington National Airport, but already people around Langley AFB, near Newport News, as well as the radar operators in Langley Tower, are reporting weird lights that appear to be rotating and giving off alternating colours.’

‘Jesus Christ!’ the sergeant whispered again.

Increasingly excited, but also frustrated because he could actually see nothing other than the targets on the radarscopes, Dwight remained in the control tower as the drama unfolded.

By 11.30pm four or five of the targets were being tracked continually over the Capitol. F-94 interceptor jets tried and failed to catch them. Shortly after the UFOs left

the sky over the Capitol building, more reports came in from Langley Tower, where the operators again described them as unidentified lights that were rotating and giving off alternating colours. Another F-94 was dispatched from Langley AFB and visually vectored to the lights by the tower operators. The pilot reported that as he approached one of the lights, it went out 'like somebody turning off a light bulb'. No sooner had this happened, than the targets came back on the radarscopes at Washington National Airport. Again, F-94s were dispatched to locate them... but each time they were vectored into the lights, the UFO disappeared abruptly from the radarscopes and the pilots simultaneously reported that they had visually observed the lights blinking out.

Eventually too frustrated to take it any longer, Dwight tried dialling the Pentagon. Unable to get through because the lines were tied up - or so the frantic switchboard operator informed him - he phoned an old reporter buddy, Rex Ginna, *Life's* UFO expert, operating out of the magazine's Washington News Bureau.

'I can't get through to the Pentagon,' Dwight said. 'What can you actually *see* there, Rex?'

'Fantastic!' Rex exclaimed. 'A real light show here! They could be lights - or silvery discs – it's hard to say what - but they're racing to and fro across the sky right above us. They're also above the Capitol and the White House.'

'Oh, my God,' Dwight groaned, 'and I'm trapped here. What are they doing?'

'They look like bright stars from here. Small lights... or high up. They're like light bulbs, but sometimes they spin so fast, they become a silvery blur. They're flying in all directions. Sometimes they stop and hover. They rise and descend vertically, shoot sideways, perform all kinds of tricks. Sometimes they're so low, they actually circle the Capitol and the White House, then they shoot up again at incredible speed and then just blink out like light bulbs. Damned amazing, I'm telling you.'

That phrase again, Dwight thought. *They blink out like light bulbs.*

'Anyway,' Ginna said, 'they must be taking it pretty serious. All the reporters were ordered out of the radar rooms of Virginia as soon as the interceptor jets went after the UFOs. They told us it was because the procedures used in an intercept were classified, but we know that's bullshit. Most ham operators can build the equipment needed to listen in on an intercept. No, the real reason they threw us out is that some top brass are convinced that this is the night some pilot's gonna get a good, close look at a UFO - and they don't want the press to spread the word. So here I am in the news bureau instead, watching the whole show. Too bad you can't see it.'

'Go to hell, Rex!' Dwight hung up on Ginna's chuckling, then tried the Pentagon again. Getting through this time, he asked for Dewey Fournet and was surprised to get him. Fournet sounded harassed.

'Yeah,' he said. 'Right. No point in denying it. Those things are visible overhead and solid, *metallic* objects are causing the blips on the radarscopes. They can't possibly be caused by anything else; and whatever they are, they can literally hover in the air, then accelerate to fantastic speeds.'

'And they definitely can't be caused by temperature inversions?'

'No way. We've just checked out the strength of the inversions through the Air Defence Command Weather Forecast Centre - and there's no temperature inversion strong enough to show up on the radar. Finally, no weather target makes a 180-degree turn and flies away every time an airplane reaches it. Like I say, those things are solid and *metallic*. They're also controlled.'

'Any indication of size?'

'We don't think they're that big. In fact, we think they're pretty small. Not big enough to be manned. Some of the ones our pilots are seeing seem much bigger, though we can't be too sure yet. It's the small ones that are coming down real low and winging around the Capitol and... Well, I might as well tell you... President Truman almost went apeshit when he saw them skimming right around the White House. This whole place is bananas.'

When Dwight put the phone down, he looked up at the sky and was again frustrated to see only stars. Looking at the radarscope, he saw that the screen was literally filled with the white dots, clearly showing that the UFOs were still high in the sky over Andrews AFB.

'Damn it,' Dwight whispered, 'where *are* they?'

Even as he spoke, the lights on the radarscope raced in towards one another, to form a single, bigger light that flared up and then went right off the screen.

'What the hell...?' the chief traffic controller said, as his men all bunched up closer around the radarscope, wondering where all the targets had gone so suddenly.

At that moment, the floor of the radar tower shook briefly.

Everyone looked outside, as if searching for an earthquake, but they saw nothing but the darkened, lamplit airstrip.

The floor shook a second time, settled down again, and then an eerie yellow light filled the control tower, beaming in from outside, and gradually changed to an amber-orange light that appeared to be beaming down from above. As everyone looked up, straining to see out through the windows, the floor shook a third time, a bass humming sound filled the silence, and the amber-orange light, now clearly beaming down from above, turned into a huge, fiery, orange-coloured sphere that was descending slowly, inexorably, upon the control tower, as if about to land on it and crush it.

With everyone else in the control tower, Dwight looked up at that dazzling apparition, paralysed by amazement and disbelief, his heart pounding dangerously.

Then everything went dark.

Chapter Fifteen

The so-called UFO 'invasion' of Washington DC led to a secret midnight meeting in the Oval Room of the White House between Wilson and President Truman, General Samford, Head of Air Intelligence, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, USAF Chief of Staff, and CIA agent, Sam Fuller, through whom the first approach to Samford had been made. Wilson, wearing civilian clothes and already almost fully recovered after his recent operations, was accompanied by the icy Artur Nebe. Truman was seated behind the ornate oak desk, framed by the Presidential flag and the flag of the United States, with Samford and Vandenberg, both in full uniform, at one side of him and Fuller, wearing a light grey suit, shirt and tie, at the other. All three men were standing just in front of the high French windows overlooking the West Wing's Rose Garden.

Taking a chair at the other side of the desk, with Nebe just behind him, Wilson studied Sam Fuller's cynical, sharp-eyed gaze and the wary faces of the two generals, then he offered President Truman an engaging smile.

'So, Mr President,' he said, 'how did you like our two UFO displays over Washington DC?'

'Very impressive,' President Truman replied, not returning the smile.

'I'm glad you think so, Mr President.'

'I'm sure you are,' Truman said with soft sarcasm.

'I assume you know that not *all* of the saucers were mine.'

'Weren't they?'

'No. During the second invasion some of your own saucers, the ones constructed in Malton, Ontario, attempted to intercept, but failed dismally and were pursued back to Canada.'

'We just thought we'd try it on,' Fuller said sardonically.

'Don't do it again,' Wilson told him, then turned his attention to generals Samford and Vandenberg. 'Can I take it that you gentleman are now convinced of the superiority of our technology?'

Both men just stared at him, too speechless with rage to speak.

'I take your silence as reluctant agreement. Can I therefore also assume that you will now make no further attempts to thwart us, either in the skies or in Antarctica?'

'Damn it – ' Samford began.

'You can take it that for the time being, at least,' Vandenberg said, sounding choked, 'we accept that such moves would be pointless.'

Wilson nodded, acknowledging the oblique, temporary surrender, then he returned his attention to President Truman. The President did not avoid his gaze, but took his time before speaking.

'Just tell us what you want,' he said.

'Antarctica is now the most valuable piece of real estate in the world.'

'I'm well aware of that fact, Mr Wilson, and also of the fact that you control it simply

by being there.'

'Antarctica is also the greatest natural laboratory on Earth and the West now needs to exploit it.'

'Correct,' the President said.

'You also desperately need its water and mineral wealth, which is why you need me.'

'I am all ears,' the President said when Wilson paused to let the import of his words sink in.

'If you wish to populate Antarctica with your scientists and research facilities without being harassed by my saucers,' Wilson calmly informed him, 'you'll have to agree to the trade previously discussed that night in Virginia. In return, I'll let those already in Antarctica remain unmolested to engage in reasonable scientific research.'

'What's your idea of reasonable?'

'I'll obviously monitor their activities and put a stop to anything that presents a threat to my colony.'

'You have no right – ' Samford began, but was waved into silence by the President.

'In return for the supplies I need,' Wilson continued, intrigued to see how quickly even men of great power and authority could be reduced to petty human behaviourial patterns, 'I will pass on valuable secrets of my technology, on a pro rata basis, though only after my own technology has superseded what I choose to give you at any given moment in time. In this way, my technology will turn the US into the most advanced nation on earth, scientifically and militarily, while simultaneously ensuring that it will never become advanced enough to threaten our own existence in Antarctica.'

The President stared steadily at Wilson for a moment, then swivelled around in his chair to judge the reaction of his two generals. Samford looked enraged and helpless at once; whereas Vandenberg, though normally a man of immense authority, was revealing the first signs of shock and disbelief.

'What if we say no?' Fuller asked, his gaze direct and unafraid, his lips curved in a slight, sardonic grin.

This man is like Nebe, Wilson thought. He thrives on intrigue. Though the one in this room with the least authority, he's the one I must watch the most.

'Then I'll trade with the Soviets,' Wilson said, 'and maybe even the Chinese. The choice is entirely yours.'

Vandenberg opened and closed his fists, Samford turned a deep red, and the President swivelled back in his chair to face Wilson again.

'You're an American,' he said quietly.

'A goddamned traitor!' Samford exploded.

'Right!' Vandenberg added, almost choking with anger.

'Gentlemen, gentlemen!' the President admonished them, waving them into silence.

Observing the two outraged, high-ranking military officers, Wilson recalled how, all those years ago, the great, innovatory work of himself and Robert H. Goddard had been ignored consistently by the US government and military establishment. He also remembered how their negative reactions to his genius had forced him to destroy his

great work, drop out of sight, and spend three decades of his life in lonely anonymity, until he saw his opportunity in Nazi Germany, where his work and that of Goddard was greatly respected, even if for the wrong reasons. Now this United States president and his generals and intelligence officers - the same breed of man who had previously tried to stop his work and failed to support Goddard - were accusing him of being a traitor to his country, even as they hypocritically bartered to obtain his technology.

'I'm a scientist,' he told them. 'Nothing more and nothing less. I'm not moved by your patriotism, which is merely self-interest, and I won't be a traitor to myself just because you accuse me of being a traitor to my country. You have more blood on your hands than I do - and for less admirable reasons. Now do you agree or not?'

'No!' Samford exploded.

'We've no choice,' Vandenberg argued. 'We can't let the Russians or Chinese get their hands on this traitor's technology. I'm afraid we have to deal with him.'

There was silence for a moment while the President considered his options. Having previously met Samford and Fuller, Wilson took this opportunity to study General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. The general had been head of the Central Intelligence Group (later the CIA) from June 1946 to May 1947 and his uncle had been chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, then the most powerful committee in the Senate. Clearly, Vandenberg still had great influence in those areas, as well as all the authority inherent in his position as USAF Chief of Staff. This man, once he had accepted defeat, would be particularly useful.

President Truman was studying Wilson at length, disbelieving, quietly outraged, helplessly intrigued, but eventually he too was forced to raise his hands in surrender. 'I agree with General Vandenberg,' he said. 'We have no choice in the matter. We must deal with this man.'

The ensuing silence was filled with dread and despair, until Nebe, finally speaking for the first time, said in his deadly soft, oddly threatening manner: 'This leads to the delicate matter of security.'

'Ah, yes!' Wilson exclaimed softly. 'I'd almost forgotten.' Studying Fuller, he saw Nebe's murderous double behind his urbane manner and knew that what Nebe was about to say would be understood by him. 'Go ahead, Nebe.'

'Since it's impossible to fly the saucers without being observed,' Nebe said, his voice as chilling as his demeanour, 'whether they be our own highly advanced craft or your crude US-Canadian prototypes, I suggest you implement the widespread use of ridicule, harassment and confusion of UFO witnesses, official and otherwise.'

'We've already done that,' Fuller told him.

'Correct,' Vandenberg added. 'When Project Sign was established in January 1948 it was given a 2A classification and placed under the jurisdiction of the Intelligence Division of the Air Force's Air Material Command at Wright Field - later renamed the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, or the ATIC. When Captain Dwight Randall of Sign submitted his official, top-secret Estimate of the Situation in July of that year, I personally rejected it on the grounds that it lacked proof, even though the proof was

clearly conclusive. I then encouraged a whole new policy at Project Sign: in the future, Sign personnel were to assume that *all* UFO reports were hoaxes. They also had to check with FBI officers and with the criminal and subversive files of police departments, looking into the private lives of the witnesses to check if they were reliable. Most of the Project Sign team took this as fair warning that it wasn't wise to raise the subject of UFO sightings. To encourage this fear, I first leaked the news that Captain Randall's Estimate of the Situation had been incinerated, then renamed Sign as Project Grudge. As anticipated, this was taken by all concerned as another indication of my displeasure.'

'Clever,' Nebe whispered admiringly.

'The function of Project Grudge,' Fuller explained, picking up where Vandenberg had left off, 'was to shift the investigations away from the actual UFOs and on to those who reported them. However, since a good twenty-three percent of their reports were still classified as unknowns, this wasn't easy. For this reason, Project Grudge launched a CIA-backed public relations campaign designed to convince the American public that UFOs did *not* represent anything unusual or extraordinary. As part of this debunking effort, we encouraged the *Saturday Evening Post* journalist, Sidney Shallet, to write a two-part article exposing UFOs as a waste of time; but when that backfired - by increasing public interest rather than diminishing it - we got the Air Force to counteract by stating officially that UFOs were either misidentifications of natural phenomenon or the products of mass hallucination. Project Grudge issued its final report in August 1949 - only six months after its inception. Put simply, its conclusion was that while twenty-three percent of the UFO reports were still classified as unknowns, most had psychological explanations and the investigation was therefore a waste of time and should be downgraded even further. On December 27, the Air Force announced the termination of the project. Shortly after, the Project Grudge records were stored and most of its personnel were widely scattered.'

'You can do more,' Nebe said, 'to encourage widespread confusion and fear of ridicule when it comes to the reporting of UFOs. Your Air Force must be seen to be supporting UFO investigations with Project Blue Book, while actually hampering them behind the scenes and by otherwise making things unpleasant, or even dangerous, for UFO witnesses and investigators. This can be done through the introduction of some new, restrictive Air Force regulations. You should also form a supposedly secret panel of leading scientists to investigate UFOs. However, this panel will also include CIA representatives who will ensure that its official report ridicules the whole phenomenon and then is leaked to the press.'

'You're asking us to turn our own, patriotic pilots and citizens into traitors,' Samford said angrily, 'and, even worse, to do so while we're fighting the war in Korea.'

'A small sacrifice,' Wilson said, 'and one you must make. Otherwise there can be no agreement between us.'

Samford was about to make another angry retort, but was cut short by the stern glances of President Truman and General Vandenberg.

'As Head of Air Intelligence – ' Nebe nodded at General Samford – 'and USAF Chief

of Staff' - he nodded at General Vandenberg – 'you two are in an excellent position to do this, so please ensure that it's done.'

Vandenberg managed to keep his peace, if with visible effort, but Samford practically turned purple and even took a step forward. 'I'd remind you that the last time we talked you were relatively safe because we were in open countryside with your saucer hovering right above us. This time, however, we're in the Oval Room of the White House, so what the hell can you do to prevent us from arresting you right now?'

Smiling, Wilson told Samford to turn off the lights. When this had been done, the Oval Room was plunged into moonlit darkness. Wilson then removed a pocket-sized electronic device from his jacket pocket and whispered coded instructions into it. A few seconds later, a bass humming sound came from outside, seeming to fill the room, then the room shook a little, as if from an earth tremor, and a dazzling, pulsating, silvery-white light beamed in through the windows overlooking the Rose Garden.

When they all stared at the windows, they saw what appeared to be a row of portholes in a metal body, with the light beaming out of them to form the single, blinding brilliance that now filled the Oval Room.

The row of lights bobbed up and down, as if hovering just above the ground, while the bass humming sound filled the room to exert a subtle, almost palpable, disturbing pressure. Then the humming noise ceased and the silvery-white lights blinked out, plunging the Oval Room back into moonlit darkness.

General Samford switched the room lights back on as Wilson stood up, preparing to leave with Nebe.

'I'll be spending a few days in the capital,' he informed them with confidence, 'so please don't try any tricks while I'm here.'

'We won't,' Fuller said.

General Samford glared at Wilson, General Vandenberg looked stunned, and President Truman simply stared at the windows as if in a state of shock.

Without another word, Fuller led Wilson and Nebe out of the Oval Room, then down to the White House garage, to drive them back to where they were staying, in the Hay Adams hotel.

Chapter Sixteen

Cold December winds were blowing dust across the desert when Fuller drove to the house of Mike and Gladys Bradley, near Eden Valley, Roswell, New Mexico. The sun was starting to sink when he got out of his car and walked up the steps of the modest ranch-style house in the middle of nowhere, with only the El Capitán Mountain visible in the distance, beyond the otherwise featureless flatlands.

They sure like their privacy, Fuller thought as he rang the doorbell.

Neither Bradley nor his wife was expecting the visit from Fuller and the latter gazed at him suspiciously through the mesh-wire of the outer door when she opened the main door.

'Gladys Bradley?' Fuller asked.

'If you're here, you must know that already, so why bother asking?'

Fuller had heard she was a tough old bird, so he wasn't too surprised by her tart response. Though now nearing her sixties, Gladys was still as thin as a whip and had a gaunt, suntanned face, under grey hair cropped as short as a man's. She was squinting at him through the smoke from the cigarette dangling from compressed lips.

'I want to speak to your husband, Mrs Bradley.'

'He may not want to speak to you, mister. Just who the hell are you?'

'Sam Fuller. CIA.'

'Oh, one of those.' She clearly disapproved. 'You got an appointment?' Fuller shook his head. 'No,' Gladys said, 'I didn't think so. Goodnight, Mr Fuller.'

She was just about to close the main door again when Fuller jerked the outer door open and used his foot as a doorstop on the other one. 'Don't close the door, Mrs Bradley. I might hurt my foot. If I do, I'm liable to get angry and that leads to trouble. You look like a woman of some perception, so you know I'm not lying. Now do I come in or not?'

Still a reporter to her fingertips, Gladys studied him for a moment, then nodded and opened the inner door. 'Okay,' she said. 'I know trouble when I see it. You promise me none of that and I'll let you in.'

'No trouble,' Fuller said.

Gladys nodded again, then stepped aside to let him pass. He entered a short hallway with doors on either side. Gladys closed the door behind him, then skipped ahead to lead him into the expansive living room, which had an open-beam ceiling, walls and floors of pine boards, and comfortable, old-fashioned furniture on Mexican carpets. As they entered, Mike Bradley looked up in surprise, then rose from his armchair in front of the flickering TV set.

'Sam Fuller,' Gladys said, waving a careless hand in Fuller's direction. 'CIA. He was very persistent. Wants to ask a few questions.'

Bradley nodded, understanding what she meant, then looked directly at Fuller. He didn't extend his hand.

'CIA?'

'That's right, Mr Bradley. I know you won't want to answer my questions, but I'm afraid you'll just have to.'

Just as Gladys had done, Mike Bradley studied Fuller carefully, then glanced inquiringly at his wife.

'It's been years now,' Gladys said. 'It can't make too much difference. This one's trouble and we don't need that at our age. Just answer his questions, Mike.'

Bradley nodded, then held out his hand. 'Hi,' he said as Fuller shook it. 'Can I get you a drink?'

'I could sure do with a beer,' Fuller replied.

'I'll get it,' Gladys said.

As she disappeared into the kitchen, Bradley indicated that Fuller should take an armchair facing the TV. When Fuller did so, Bradley switched the set off - Milton Berle was hamming it up in the Texaco Star Theater - and took the comfortable armchair facing him. At fifty-eight years old, Bradley was still a handsome, well-built, silvery-haired man, though the skin on one cheek was slightly livid from what looked like an old burn.

The explosion at Kiel Harbour, Fuller thought. That's what put him in hospital. Otherwise, the guy looks like Spencer Tracy. A dead ringer, in fact.

'Nice house,' Fuller said, glancing around the living room.

'Yes,' Bradley said, 'we think so.'

The pine-board walls were covered with framed photos taken from the personal history of the two people who lived here. Apart from early family portraits, the photos of Gladys showed her as a reporter in Roswell in the 1930s, including some with Robert H. Goddard and his rocket team; then the Spanish Civil War, including some of Ernest Hemingway; plus London, England, during World War II; liberated Paris, France; then more journalistic encounters in Roswell after the war. Other photos showed Gladys and Bradley, both in uniform, also in London and liberated Paris during the war, or Bradley with other military personnel in France and Germany during the same period. Fuller assumed that the framed photos of a young man and strikingly similar young woman, sometimes alone, other times with children or Bradley, were of Bradley's son and daughter and grandchildren. There were no photos of Bradley's former wife, who had died at Pearl Harbour.

'You two have obviously lived a full life,' Fuller said.

'If you're in the CIA, Mr Fuller, I'm sure you know as much about us as we do.'

Fuller grinned. 'Yeah, I guess so.'

Gladys returned with his beer, handed it to him, then took the chair between him and Bradley. Fuller sipped the beer, which was ice cold, then he licked his wet lips.

'Well,' he said, 'times have sure changed since you two got together during World War Two. That was some damned explosion last week, right?'

'It sure was,' Bradley replied, his gaze steady and watchful. 'And so was the one the month before.'

He was referring to Britain's first atomic bomb test in Monte Bello Islands, off the northwest coast of Australia, which had taken place about eight weeks ago. Fuller, on the other hand, was referring to the obliteration of the whole island of Eniwetok, in the Pacific, by the US hydrogen bomb test of two days ago.

'An awesome sight,' Fuller said.

'Some would call it terrifying.'

'Yeah... And now we're being plagued by these damned flying saucers. The world's certainly changing.'

'We both know why you're here, Mr Fuller. You don't have to introduce the subject in this roundabout manner. You want to know why I didn't turn up at the Socorro UFO crash site on July 2, 1947, five years ago. You want to know what I know.'

Fuller sighed. 'Yeah, that's it.' Glancing at Gladys, he met a measuring, grey-eyed gaze, so quickly turned back to Bradley. 'Okay, you know why I'm here. From the day you returned from the war in Europe, you were obsessed with UFOs, or flying saucers, and kept in constant touch with the Flight Intelligence Officer of Roswell Army Air Base, First Lieutenant William B. Harris, hounding him for information on any sightings. Yet that night in July, 1947, when Harris called to inform you that a flying saucer had actually crashed on the Plain of Magdalena, near Socorro, inviting you to go and view the crash debris with him, you didn't show up and ever since have refused to say why. You also stopped investigating, or even discussing, UFOs from that night on. What happened, Mr Bradley?'

'What do you know about my activities during the war?'

'You were trying to track down a brilliant American physicist who had once worked with Robert H. Goddard, right here in Roswell, before absconding to Germany and ending up in charge of a top-secret Nazi research project. He was called John Wilson. Born Montezuma, Iowa, in – '

'You know what that research project was, don't you?'

'We believe it was called Projekt Saucer. We also have grounds for believing that it involved the construction of a highly advanced, jet-propelled, saucer-shaped aircraft.'

'Correct. Then you also know that my reason for being at Kiel Harbour just before the close of the war was to try and capture Wilson before he made his escape.'

'By submarine?'

'You must know that as well.'

'No,' Fuller lied, wanting Bradley to reveal as much as possible from his own knowledge. 'The report on your World War Two activities has been heavily censored. I only know that you made it as far as Kiel, where you were badly wounded in an explosion on the dock. I wasn't sure if you knew what had happened to Wilson.'

'Yes, I knew. Wilson and some of his cronies were taken on board the Nazi submarine U-977, which I actually saw leaving Kiel harbour. Just before the submarine put out to sea, one of Wilson's Nazi pals, an SS lieutenant, found me lying hurt on the dock, after my car had been overturned. He introduced himself, saying his name was Stoll, and confirmed that Wilson was on board the submarine. He also said that Wilson

would remember my name. Then he blew up the nearby warehouses, which contained trucks stacked high with slaughtered SS troops: the only remaining witnesses, apart from myself, to Wilson's escape. As you know, I was badly wounded by that same explosion and spent many months in hospital, first in Germany, then back here. When I was released, I became obsessed with flying saucers - not mere UFOs - because I knew damned well that they existed and I wanted to prove it.'

'So why didn't you go with First Lieutenant William Harris when he invited you to the site of the Socorro crash?'

'Initially, I intended going,' Bradley confessed. 'In fact, I left here immediately and was heading for Roswell Air Base, to meet Lieutenant Harris, when I realised that I was being tracked by a flying saucer. It landed on the road ahead and made the engine of my car malfunction; then three men dressed in black dropped out of the base of the flying saucer and surrounded my car. One of them introduced himself as Wilson.'

'Christ,' Fuller exclaimed softly. Glancing at Gladys, he saw that she was still gazing steadily at him, not trusting him an inch. 'So what did Wilson say?' Fuller asked, turning back to Bradley.

'He told me that the world we know is dying - a world of wasteful emotions - and that the new world, his world, was approaching and couldn't be held back. His world, he informed me, would be one of truth, or pitiless logic, and his technology was going to take us there. He then told me to stop pursuing him. He threatened Gladys and my grandchildren. He explained that his flying saucers would fly the skies with impunity and that those who reported them - presumably including me - would be ridiculed and, where necessary, silenced. He told me again to think of my children. To enjoy my retirement. Then he bid me *Auf Wiedersehen* and took off in his saucer. I was frightened by the advanced capability of that flying saucer, by what Wilson had said, by the knowledge that he had managed to track me down, and so I stopped chasing UFOs.'

Gladys Bradley reached over to squeeze her husband's hand. When he smiled, she let his hand go and sat back again.

Fuller had another sip of beer, then put the glass down. 'The saucer made the engine of your car cut out?'

'That's right. A kind of bass humming sound, almost physical, head-tightening. Then the engine of my car cut out and wouldn't start again.'

'Why didn't you get out and run for it?'

'I tried, but felt paralysed. It wasn't fear, though I certainly felt that. It was some kind of paralysis.'

'A kind of hypnotism?'

'I was fully conscious, but it could have been something like that.'

'How did you get back to your home when the saucer took off?'

'I just turned the ignition key and the damned thing started up as if nothing had happened, letting me drive home. But no way, after what I'd seen, felt and heard, was I going to go up against that Wilson.'

'Since then, have you ever felt you were being watched? Any contact with UFOs?'

'Yes, on both counts. At least three or four times a year, always when driving at night, my car is paced by lights in the sky - either circular or in a long line, indicating a saucer shape. Also, though less frequently, Gladys and I will be awakened in the dead of night by lights beaming into the house from outside, often accompanied by that familiar bass humming sound. They're keeping their eye on us, Mr Fuller, and they always will.'

'Do you think they know we're having this conversation?'

'I really don't think so. I suspect they keep paying me the unexpected visits just to remind me that they haven't forgotten me. I'm taking a chance by having you here, but if they came tonight, it would just be a coincidence - an *unfortunate* coincidence.'

'I'm sorry to put you in this danger.'

'No, you're not,' Gladys said accusingly.

Fuller glanced at her, realised how tough she was, so just grinned and then wiped it from his face when he turned back to Bradley.

'So Wilson knew who you were,' he said, 'and also knew that you were there at Kiel harbour.'

'Absolutely,' Bradley said.

'Do you know where that submarine was taking him?'

'I didn't at the time, but I put it all together later, when I learned through the OSS organization that the submarine I'd seen in Kiel harbour, U-977, under the command of Captain Heinz Schaeffer, had docked at Mar del Plata, Argentina, a few months after the war.'

'You think they're in Argentina?'

'No. Neither Wilson nor that SS lieutenant Stoll were found on board. Nor were any of the mechanical parts or drawings relating to Projekt Saucer - so my guess is that they used Argentina as a springboard to the next stop.'

'Antarctica?'

'Yes. The Nazis were obsessed with building underground structures there - just like the enormous underground rocket complexes I saw at the end of the war in Belgium and Nordhausen, Thuringia. Documents found by Operation Paperclip indicated that virtually from the moment the Nazis illegally claimed Queen Maud Land in 1938, renaming it Neu Schwabenland, to the closing days of the war, they were shipping scientists, engineers, architects, builders, slave labour, and the material and plans for various highly advanced projects, including Projekt Saucer, to somewhere in Nue Schwabenland. So it didn't take much to put two-and-two together and come up with Antarctica. Then, when I read about Rear-Admiral Byrd's aborted Operation Highjump, in 1947, I was pretty much convinced that I was right. Wilson is somewhere in Queen Maud Land, either under or inside a mountain range, building flying saucers and god knows what else. It's a nightmare scenario.'

'Do you think he'd be able to produce flying saucers with the capability of those being reported?'

'Yes. My bet is that a lot of the saucers are small, remote-called machines that first

evolved out of the German *Feuerballs*, better known during the war as Foo fighters. I certainly think they might be the ones involved in the so-called UFO invasion of Washington DC last July. Other saucers are bigger and piloted - just like the one that stopped me that night on the road to Roswell.'

'What do you think happened to the Projekt Saucer documents and parts divided between the Russians and the Allies at the end of the war?'

'I think it's likely that they now have their own saucers, though they certainly won't be as advanced as those created by Wilson and doubtless still being evolved in Antarctica.'

'One last question,' Fuller said, finishing his beer and preparing to leave. 'If we sent an invitation, would you be prepared to return to UFO investigations on behalf of the US government?'

'No, thanks, Mr Fuller.'

'Thank *you*, Mr Bradley.' Fuller stood up and turned to face Gladys, who hadn't moved from her chair. 'And thank you, Mrs Bradley.'

She just nodded, not trusting him an inch, letting Bradley walk him to the front door. They shook hands on the porch.

'From what I've read, you're a hell of a guy,' Fuller said. 'I mean, you really did some things in your time.'

Bradley smiled in a modest manner, then released Fuller's hand. 'Not really,' he said. 'But I hope that what I've told you helps. I just don't want to be personally involved.'

'You won't be,' Fuller promised.

Walking back to his car, he climbed in and then looked out the window. Bradley was still on the porch, the wind blowing his silvery hair, handsome and clearly a decent citizen in his white shirt and slacks. He raised his hand in farewell. Fuller waved back, turned on the ignition, and then drove away from the house. When he glanced back, Bradley had disappeared from the porch. The lights of the house beamed out into the darkness, under a vast, star-filled sky. A real picture-postcard scene.

Fuller only drove a short way along the road. He stopped when he came to another car that was parked by the side of the road with its headlights off. The man in the other car rolled his window down.

'Well?' he asked.

'He knows all about Wilson,' Fuller said. 'Every damned thing.'

The other man nodded and then got out of his car, slinging a canvas bag over his shoulder. He walked back along the dark road, toward Bradley's house. Fuller got out of his car, lit a cigarette and silently smoked it.

When Bradley's house exploded and turned into a distant furnace that lit up the night, turning the sky a bloody red and erasing the stars, Fuller sighed, dropped the butt of his cigarette, ground it into the dust with the heel of his shoe, then climbed back into his own car and drove off.

'Too bad,' he murmured.

Chapter Seventeen

Dwight sometimes thought he would never work out just what it was he had seen that night in July 1952, hovering over the control tower of Andrews AFB as if about to descend upon it and crush it. In fact, the object, if such it had been, had merely hovered for a few seconds, dazzling them all with the radiance of what appeared to be its vast, swirling base, before it ascended again, making only a bass humming sound, almost an infrasound, then ascending abruptly and blinking out high above, plunging everyone in the control tower into a brief, blinding darkness.

Normal vision had returned soon enough, bringing the real world back with it, but from that day to this, Dwight had thought constantly about, and often dreamed about, that vision of luminous power, and wondered just what it was. Now, back in Washington DC, a year later but in the same month, he had to struggle to keep the memory of that night out of his thoughts and concentrate on what he was doing.

He was in the downtown office of the recently formed Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute, or APII, a civilian UFO organisation, to give a clandestine 'deep background' interview to Dr Frederick Epstein, a 41-year astronomer and head of the institute, who had often been of great assistance to Project Blue Book in its evaluation of UFO reports.

Epstein was short and bulky, with a good thatch of hair, though there were streaks of telling grey in his dark Vandyke beard, which he tended to stroke a lot when deep in thought. He and Dwight were facing each other across a cluttered desk, in an office with walls covered by large charts showing the most commonly reported UFO shapes, the most commonly reported UFO formations and UFO manoeuvres, both singly and in formation, the worldwide locations and flight directions of the major UFO waves from 1896 to the present, major UFO events in the United States and overseas, and details of the world's major UFO organisations. The most common flight direction for the UFOs, Dwight noted, was south to north and back again.

'It was the official reaction to the Washington sightings, more than anything else,' Dwight told Epstein, who was recording the conversation, 'that made all of us at Blue Book even more suspicious of the Air Force's stance on UFOs. Too many people were telling us one thing and then changing their stories for their official reports. Also, it became increasingly obvious that the top brass in the Air Force were trying to blind us with some dodgy manoeuvres. After the Washington sightings I became convinced that pilots reporting UFOs were being intimidated into changing their reports or simply remaining silent. I also suspected - and still do - that a lot of information was being withheld from us and that the CIA was stepping into the picture for unexplained reasons.'

Epstein stopped him there, in order to change the tapes. Dwight glanced at the window, but the curtains were drawn, even in broad daylight, and the door behind, he knew, was locked to prevent anyone coming in accidentally. It seemed a melodramatic

thing to do and made him feel a little foolish, but when he thought of the mysterious deaths of Mike and Gladys Bradley, whose house had gone up in flames after an unexplained explosion about seven months ago - a tragedy that many thought had been caused by an act of arson - his foolishness was replaced with the fearful conviction that people investigating UFOs were putting themselves at risk.

Dwight was worried not only about himself, but about Beth and their daughter, Nichola. You just never knew...

When Epstein had changed the tapes, he looked up and said, 'Okay... The CIA was stepping into the picture for unexplained reasons.'

'Right. The person who most worried us was Chief of Staff, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. It was Vandenberg who'd buried the original Project Sign Estimate, caused its incineration, and had the project renamed Project Grudge. We're still not sure just how much Vandenberg was influencing the Air Force or the CIA, but certainly he'd been head of the Central Intelligence Group, now the CIA, from June 1946 to May 1947 and his uncle had been chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, the most powerful committee in the Senate. Clearly, Vandenberg still has great influence in those areas - and it's from those very areas that pressure's always coming to suppress the results of our UFO investigations.'

'So you weren't surprised,' Epstein said, smiling encouragingly, 'when you learnt that the CIA and some high-ranking officers, including Generals Vandenberg and Samford, were convening a panel of scientists to analyze all the Blue Book data.'

'No. And I wasn't surprised, either, to discover that this panel was to be headed by Dr H.P. Robertson, director of the Weapons System Evaluation Group in the Office of the Secretary of Defence - and a CIA classified employee. The Robertson panel, by the way, was also convened against the objections of the Batelle Memorial Institute - the private research group used by the Air Force to carry out statistical studies of UFO characteristics and advise them on UFO investigations. Normally the Air Force bows to the Batelle Memorial Institute's every demand, but not in this instance.'

'Certainly sounds like they're determined to form that panel, come hell or high water.'

'They are,' Dwight said.

'What can you tell me about the panel?'

'This is strictly deep background. My name's not to be mentioned.'

'You have my word on it,' Epstein said.

Dwight took a deep breath, feeling nervous, but determined to let out what was troubling him, hopefully for future use by Epstein's invaluable organisation. Exhaling his breath in a sigh, he said, 'The Robertson panel was convened in great secrecy right here in Washington DC last January. While some insist that it opened on January twelve, it actually ran from January fourteen to eighteen. Apart from Robertson, the group's panel consisted of physicist and Nobel Prize-winner Luis W. Alvarez; geophysicist and radar specialist Lloyd V. Berkner and physicist Samuel Goudsmit, both of the Brookhaven National Laboratories; and astronomer and astrophysicist Thornton Page, Deputy Director of the John Hopkins Operations Research Office. Other participants

included J.Allen Hynek, an astronomer consultant to the United States Air Force; Frederick C.Durant, an army ordnance test station director; William M.Garland, the Commanding General of the ATIC; our Pentagon liaison officer, Major Dewey Fournet; my Project Blue Book chief, Captain Ruppelt; two officers from the Navy Photo Interpretation Laboratory; and three high-ranking CIA representatives.'

Epstein gave a low whistle. 'That's some group,' he said. 'Almost impossible to argue with.'

'That seems to be the point,' Dwight said. 'The seriousness with which the subject was supposed to be treated is best illustrated not only by the calibre of the men involved, but also by the fact that the group's report was to be given to the National Security Council, NSC, and then, if the decision was that the UFOs are of extraterrestrial origin, to the President himself.'

'Which may have been so much cotton wool,' Epstein said.

'I think it was.'

Epstein nodded his understanding. 'So what information was the Robertson panel given?'

'For the first two days of the session, Captain Ruppelt reviewed the Blue Book findings for the scientists. First, he pointed out that Blue Book received reports of only ten percent of the UFO sightings made in the United States, which meant that in five and a half years about 44,000 sightings had been made. He then broke the sightings down into the percentage that was composed of balloons, aircraft, astronomical bodies, and other misinterpretations, such as birds, blowing paper, noctilucent and lenticular clouds, temperature inversions, reflections, and so forth, and pointed out that this still left 429 as definite unknowns. Of those, it was clear that the most reported shape was elliptical, the most often reported colour was white or metallic, the same number of UFOs were reported as being seen in daylight as at night, and the direction of travel equally covered the sixteen cardinal points of the compass. Seventy percent of those unknowns had been seen visually from the air - in other words, by experienced pilots and navigators; twelve percent had been seen visually from the ground; ten percent had been picked up by airborne and ground radar; and eight percent were combination visual-radar sightings. Ruppelt also confirmed that many UFO reports came from top-secret military establishments, such as atomic energy and missile-testing installations, plus harbours and manufacturing areas.'

'That should have impressed them,' Epstein said. 'They always sit up when their own top-secret establishments are involved.'

'It *should* have impressed them,' Dwight said, hardly able to contain his lingering bitterness. 'Ruppelt and Major Dewey Fournet had completed an analysis of the motions of the reported unknowns as a means of determining if they were intelligently controlled. Regarding this, Major Fournet told the panel of how, by eliminating every possibility of balloons, airplanes, astronomical bodies, and so forth, from the hundreds of reports studied, and by then analysing the motions of the unidentifieds in the remaining unknown category, his study group had been forced to conclude that the

UFOs were intelligently controlled by persons with brains equal to, or maybe surpassing, ours. The next step in the study, Fournet explained, had been to find out where those beings came from; and since it seemed unlikely that their machines could have been built in secret, the answer had to be that they came from outer space.'

'Substantiating evidence?' Epstein asked, distractedly stroking his beard and studying the turning spools in the tape-recorder, as if they might reveal something Dwight hadn't told him.

'Yes,' Dwight said. 'The morning after Fournet's summary, the panel was shown four strips of movie film that had been assessed as falling into the definite-unknown category. The cinetheodolite movies taken by Air Force technicians at the White Sands Proving Ground on April 27, 1950, and approximately a month later; the so-called Montana movie taken on August 15 the same year by the manager of the Great Falls baseball team; and the Tremonton movie taken on July 2, 1952, by Navy Chief Photographer, Warrant Officer Delbert C.Newhouse.'

'Let's take them in turn,' Epstein said.

'Right.' Dwight removed a kerchief from his pocket and wiping the sweat from his face. The room, with its windows closed and doors locked, was unbearably hot. 'One of the White Sands movies showed a dark smudgy object that proved only that *something* had been in the air and, whatever it was, it had been *moving*. The second movie had been analysed by the Data Reduction Group at Wright-Patterson AFB, with results indicating that the object had been approximately higher than 40,000 feet, travelling over 2,000 miles per hour, and was over 300 feet in diameter.'

Epstein gave another low whistle and shook his head from side to side in a gesture either of disbelief or admiration.

'The Montana movie showed two large, bright lights flying across the blue sky in an echelon formation. The lights didn't show any detail, but they appeared to be large, circular objects. The Tremonton movie showed about a dozen shiny, disc-like objects fading in and out constantly, performing extraordinary aerial manoeuvres, darting in and out and circling one another in a cloudless blue sky.'

'Astronomical phenomena?'

'No. Any possibility that they might have been that was dispelled when the film clearly showed them heading in the same tight cluster toward the western horizon and, more specifically, when one of them left the main group and shot off to the east.'

'Don't tell me the panel refused to accept *that* evidence!'

Dwight rolled his eyes in disgust, then nodded affirmatively. 'They haven't released their official report yet, but according to Captain Ruppelt they didn't seem impressed.' He wiped his forehead again, then studied the kerchief. It was soaked with his sweat. 'Yet the Montana movie had been subjected to thousands of hours of analysis in the Air Force laboratory at Wright Field and the results proved conclusively that the objects weren't birds, balloons, aircraft, meteors, clouds, or reflections - in short, they were unknowns. As for the Tremonton movie, it had been studied for two solid months by the Navy Laboratory in Anacostia, Maryland, and

their conclusion was that the unidentifieds weren't birds or airplanes, were probably travelling at several thousands of miles an hour, and judging by their extraordinary manoeuvres, were intelligently controlled vehicles. In other words, the evidence was conclusive.'

'But the panel still wasn't impressed.'

'No, damn them. After going over the evidence for two days, the bastards concluded in their initial report that the evidence was *not* substantial, that the continued emphasis on the reporting of the phenomenon was resulting in a – quote - *threat to the orderly functioning of the protective organs of the body politic* – unquote - and that the reports clogged military channels, could possibly precipitate mass hysteria, and might encourage defence personnel to misidentify or ignore actual enemy aircraft.'

'In other words: the real problem wasn't the UFOs - it was the UFO *reports.'*

'You've got it,' Dwight said.

Even talking about it could make him feel bad these days, bringing his buried fears to the surface and encouraging what he sometimes believed was his growing paranoia. Yesterday, watching TV, he had seen mud-smeared, weary American troops celebrating the end of the Korean war - a sight that had filled him with overwhelming nostalgia for his own fighting days in World War Two. It was a terrible truth that war had its attractions, but for Dwight it was something more than that: it was the desire to escape from the deepening darkness and dangers of his all-embracing UFO investigations.

The news of the death of the former UFOlogist, Mike Bradley, and his wife Gladys, possibly by an act of murder, had certainly filled Beth with fear and again made her plead for Dwight to get out of this business. In fact, he had tried, but the Air Force had refused his request; and now, when he thought of Bradley's blazing house, he felt trapped and threatened.

'So what do you think their official report will recommend?' Epstein asked him.

'Nothing honest or realistic,' Dwight replied. 'I think the whole idea behind the Robertson panel is to convince the American public that the Air Force has made the definitive study of UFOs and come up with a negative evaluation. In other words, their job is to shaft us... and I think they'll succeed.'

'That's why you're giving me this information?'

'Yes. I think Project Blue Book is going to be restrained by the recommendations of the Robertson panel. If that's true, you'll be able to use this info' more effectively than us.'

'Thanks,' Epstein said, turning off the tapes. 'Sadly, I believe you're right.'

Dwight was glad to make his escape from the airless office in Dr Epstein's Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute, or APII, and step back into the uplifting sunlight of late July in Washington DC. He caught a cab to the airport.

Chapter Eighteen

Marlon Clarke was talking to himself. His guillotined head had been separated from its original body for six years now, but was still functioning in an insane, chaotic manner. Still enclosed in a glass casing with an inner temperature reduced to just above the point of freezing, the head was connected to the two amputated hands and the surgically removed, still beating human heart in the chilled glass case on the desk beside it. Clarke's eyes were still open, but were wide with terror or madness. His dribbling lips were moving rapidly to form a torrent of words that could not actually be heard because of the cutting of his vocal chords. Attached by the severed neck to a steel-clamp base enclosing artificial blood vessels and the wiring that connected it to the amputated hands and beating heart, the head was moving slightly, the eyes roaming frantically left and right, as the fingers of the severed hands opened and closed spasmodically, sometimes making the hands crawl across the boxed-in table like large, insane spiders.

'The main problem,' Dr Gold was explaining to Wilson, Kammler and Nebe, 'is not in perfecting the psycho-physical interaction between head and body, but in retaining the sanity of the severed head. As you can see, Clarke's head is successfully receiving the blood being pumped by the separate heart and has retained its power to agitate the amputated hands, though in a chaotic, useless manner. This suggests that while the head still has enough consciousness to send impulses to the severed limbs, it's in a state of delirium, or insanity, caused by disbelief and trauma. It's impossible to ascertain just what Clarke is thinking right now - if his thoughts still include self-awareness or not - but his wide-open, wandering eyes prove that at least he's still aware of *something*. We just can't tell how much.'

'So the main problem isn't physical, but psychological,' Wilson said. 'We have to find a way to minimise the shock and retain the severed head's sanity.'

'Exactly,' Dr Gold said. 'With regard to cyborg development, I believe we can solve this with artificially induced amnesia - chemical or electric stimulation of the relevant areas of the brain. In this case, the severed head, or the beneficiary of a surgically rearranged face, part original, part prosthetic, will assume that it's always been what it is and not suffer trauma. This way, please.'

Leading them across the laboratory, which had walls hacked out of the interior of the mountain and therefore gave no view of the Antarctic wilderness outside, Gold stopped at a bizarre, headless figure strapped upright to an electric chair that was wired to a large computer console. From the waist down, the figure was a perfectly normal, naked male, though the blood had been drained from the legs, giving them a pasty-white, slightly blue, mouldy appearance. However, from the waist up, the torso was artificial, made from moulded steel plates, with one plate missing, exposing a ghoulishly colourful mass of electric wiring and a narrow glimpse of the original intestines. One arm was missing from the headless torso and the other, Wilson noted, was actually a cobalt-chromium alloy prosthetic.

‘The prototype for our first cyborg,’ Gold explained. ‘The lungs, kidneys and original intestines will remain, but will be strengthened and supported by a two-chamber pacemaker. Working prosthetic joint replacements have already been perfected and will help defeat the rigours of supersonic flight and space travel. The psycho-physical interaction between brain and artificial limbs will be stimulated by the use of an electronic metal skullplate and the problem of speech for the lower-face prosthetic, including new chin implant, will be solved by using an electronic larynx. Control of the cyborg will be attained by a combination of chemical-electronic stimulation of the brain and computerised, remote-control interfacing between the cyborg and its activating machine, located here in the colony and in the saucers. These are early days yet, but I believe it can be accomplished relatively soon. If we can solve the problem of the sanity of the severed head, we’re on our way to success.’

A severed human head was resting on a table beside the electric chair. One eye was missing. An odd-looking eye, rather like a glass marble, was resting on the table beside the one-eyed head.

Smiling, Gold picked up the loose eye and showed it to Wilson. ‘An acrylic eye. We’re trying various experiments with them. Unfortunately, so far, when we’ve implanted them in the heads of living subjects, they haven’t worked well. When we replace only one eye, the living nerves of the remaining eye help the replacement to see slightly; but when we replace both eyes at the same time, blindness results. Still, given time and a regular supply of living subjects, we’ll get there in good time.’

‘There’ll be no problem with living subjects,’ Kammler said. ‘Stoll is doing a good job in Paraguay and the supply of Ache Indians is limitless. You need have no fears there.’

‘Good.’ Gold glanced with pride around his busy laboratory, filled with white-smocked surgeons, bio-engineers, dedicated scientists, headless torsoes, amputated limbs, and isolated, still pumping human hearts. ‘Please, gentlemen, this way.’

He led them through the nearest door, along a short corridor, and into another, larger laboratory containing various chairs, some electric, others normal, all with buckled straps on the arms, and small, dark cells with leaded-steel doors containing narrow viewing panels.

There was a dreadful amount of noise in this laboratory - and the noise, by its very nature, was even more dreadful.

Gold introduced Wilson, Kammler and Nebe to Dr Eckhardt, formerly of an SS experimental medical unit. Eckhardt gave them a tour of his domain.

In a small side chamber, human subjects, male and female, were strapped to heavy chairs cemented into the floor, wearing headphones, bleeding profusely from their nostrils and ears. They were also, in some cases, vomiting into plastic bags taped to their mouths.

‘Infrasounds,’ Dr Eckhardt explained, raising his voice to defeat the agonised screaming of his victims. ‘Sounds just below the level of human hearing - so condensed that they can create physical pressure on the human brain and the body’s organs. At the

moment, the particular infrasounds being used are bursting the blood vessels in the heads of the human subjects, with the results that you see. We're also experimenting with other infrasound levels to ascertain their potential as surgical tools and beam weapons, which we hope to incorporate in our flying saucers. For this reason, we're also experimenting with strobe lights. Please, this way, gentlemen.'

In one of the darkened cells, behind the closed, sealed door, a man was being subjected to flickering strobe lights. Viewed through the narrow panels in the leaded-steel door, in the rapidly alternating light and darkness, he appeared to be writhing and kicking in slow motion, while tearing frantically at his hair or clawing his own naked, bloody body.

'The strobe lights,' Eckhardt explained, 'are flickering in the alpha-rhythm range, between eight and twelve cycles a second, thus causing an epileptic seizure in the human subject - as you can see. Other rhythms produce different results, inducing either drowsiness, full mesmerism, hunger, nausea, or various moods ranging from acute depression to uncontrollable violence. These, also, we are planning to incorporate into beam weapons for the saucers. Come, gentlemen, this way.'

A gaunt, pale-faced woman, wearing a one-piece black coverall, was strapped by her wrists and ankles to the arms and legs of an electric chair. A metal skullcap, wired to the console-control beside the chair, was being lowered onto her shaven head. The woman was sweating, trembling and weeping.

'Please don't,' she whispered.

'A stereotaxic skullcap,' Eckhardt explained, ignoring the woman's pleading as the metal device, containing hundreds of minute, hair-thin electrodes, was lowered onto her shaven head. 'When we can hypnotise or otherwise control human beings by remote control - say, with the use of brain-implants – we'll abduct those we want, implant them by means of a stereotaxic skullcap such as this, then return them to the world of ordinary men, to do our bidding as and when required. Eventually, in this way, we'll be able to enslave the world's most powerful men and women without resorting to war and with few aware that they're in our control. In other words, they'll become our brain-implanted robots.'

'You've perfected this?' Nebe asked.

'No,' Eckhardt confessed, 'not yet. At the moment, most of those subjected to electronic stimulation from the stereotaxic skullcaps become vegetables - but some are keeping their minds longer than others, so we're getting there gradually. The breakthrough will come soon enough.'

He nodded in the direction of the white-smocked technician at the control console. When the technician flicked a switch, the woman screamed in agony, writhed violently in the chair - or as much as she could with her wrists and ankles strapped - then urinated and collapsed into stillness. The technician turned off the power while a medic examined the woman's pulse and heartbeat. Straightening up, he shook his head from side to side and said, 'Her heart's given out. I think we should try one of the adolescents; they have a much greater will to live.'

'Bring one in,' Eckhardt said.

'The cyborg-and-other experimentation is excellent,' Wilson told Gold when they had left Eckhardt to his work and were making their way back to Gold's laboratory, 'but what about human, non-prosthetic longevity? Are you making progress with that?'

'There are still considerable problems, particularly regarding the liver, but eventually even that will be solved. I would remind you that even in the West, some remarkable discoveries and advances have recently been made, including the discovery of DNA, the basic structure of life; the first full chemical analysis of a protein; and the first impregnation of a woman with deep frozen sperm - so the secrets of longevity, and even of life, are now within the bounds of possibility. I would therefore suggest that you arrange for the abduction of some scientists and biologists specialising in those fields.'

'I'll see to it,' Wilson said. 'In the meantime, you're doing invaluable work here. Keep it up, Dr Gold.'

Now back in Gold's laboratory, Wilson glanced once more at the mad eyes and dribbling, silently gibbering lips of the severed head of Marlon Clarke. Impressed, he led Kammler and Nebe out, walking along a recently completed tunnel, past brightly-lit side chambers containing other laboratories, workshops, machine-shops, and rooms containing spare parts and supplies, all guarded by armed men in black coveralls. At the end of the tunnel, in a brightly-lit open space carved out of the rock, they took a lift up to Wilson's office, located near the summit of the mountain.

Entering, Wilson was briefly dazzled by the vast, sunlit Antarctic as seen through the panoramic windows that stretched along the full length of one wall, just beyond his desk. He did not sit at the desk, but instead indicated the chairs grouped around a table placed right in front of the window, giving a magnificent view of the white wilderness. The table had been prepared for dinner, with a bottle of white wine being chilled in a bucket. The food, which already was on the plates, consisted of a simple green salad, wholewheat bread and cheese. Wilson liked to eat healthily.

'Gentlemen,' he said, pulling out one of the chairs and seating himself. 'Let's sort our differences out in a civilised manner, over good food and wine.' When Kammler and Nebe were also sitting, both eyeing the healthy food with a visible lack of enthusiasm, Wilson removed the bottle of wine from the ice bucket and filled up their glasses. After toasting one another, they commenced eating, talking through the meal.

'I believe you had a complaint to make,' Wilson said, addressing both men.

'Yes,' Kammler replied. 'While my direct responsibilities are for the scientific aspects of the colony, including labour management and discipline, I believe I should still have a say in other matters.'

'Such as?'

'It's not my belief that we should be negotiating with the Americans in return for their cooperation regarding supplies.'

'How else do you propose obtaining such supplies?'

'The way we've always done in the past: by stealing them and bringing them in on the saucers.'

'The saucers aren't yet big enough and our supplies are running out.'

'Nevertheless,' Kammler insisted, glancing nervously at the watchful Nebe, 'I don't believe we should let the West stay in the Antarctic. Nor do I believe that we should give the Americans the slightest knowledge of our technology.'

'We don't have a choice, Hans.' Wilson was being patient. 'We can't wait until we run out of supplies and then make our trade. Once we run out of supplies, the West will have us over a barrel. We can't let that happen.'

'And what if those in the West, particularly the US, use the knowledge we give them to actually catch up with our technology?'

'That simply won't happen.' Wilson was starting to lose patience. 'I'll only pass on what we've already superseded, which means that no matter how far they advance, we'll always be even more advanced – light years ahead of them.'

'I don't think we can take that chance,' Kammler said. 'One of your old Projekt Saucer team, Walter Miethe, is now working for the A.V. Roe aircraft company in Malton, Ontario, helping them to construct some crude flying saucers based on our early designs. Habermohl is doing the same for the Soviets. Werner von Braun is now working for NASA, reportedly on a long-term moon programme. As for Flugkapitän Rudolph Schriever, he's now back in his home town of Bremer-Haven, West Germany, from where he's busily informing all and sundry that the Americans have their own saucers and constructed them from his designs, which is partially true. The United States now knows too much, so we shouldn't barter with them.'

'And I repeat,' Wilson said, his patience running out, 'that it can't be avoided.' Disgusted, he turned to the silent, always calculating Nebe. 'And you, Artur, what do you think?'

'I agree with Kammler. We can't take such a chance. If we want supplies, let's go and take them. With our saucers, we can bring the United States to it knees - and from there take over the whole world. Why wait so long?'

'You want power, Nebe.'

'Nothing else in life matters.'

Wilson sighed, despairing of base human nature. 'I'm not interested in power for its own sake,' he explained, 'but want only to guarantee the survival and continuing evolution of this apolitical, scientific community. Eventually, our technology will make us the dominant power anyway, without resort to pointless violence, and in the meantime, we can get what we want with minimum effort. Let the United States bring in our supplies; what we give in return will serve them well, but not enough to give them an advantage over us. We're safe from attack.'

'I'm a policeman,' Nebe said. 'That's what I'm reduced to here. I'm not a man cut out for peaceful work and long-term commitments. I'm being destroyed by boredom. I need something more to do. Let's go to war against the Americans, I say, and prove the worth of our saucers. We will soon rule the world, then.'

'You have the instincts of an animal,' Wilson said, 'and the mind of a caveman. This subject is closed.'

He saw the flash of anger in Nebe's dark, primal gaze and knew that he had struck through to a nerve that would make the man murderous. Glancing at Kammler, he saw that he too was angry, though trying to conceal it with a smile that did not reach his eyes. Wilson knew what they were after: the glory of immediate conquest. He also knew that they now wanted to get rid of him, divide the colony between them, and use the flying saucers to resurrect the Third Reich and ensure that it would finally become their beloved Thousand Year Reich.

It was a pitiful dream, one which filled him with contempt, making him realise that these Nazis had served their only useful purpose and that the time had finally come to put an end to them. He would do it this evening.

'Well, perhaps you're right,' he said. 'The gamble may be too great. Let me sleep on it tonight and make a decision tomorrow.'

'Excellent,' Kammler responded, smiling, all charm, while Nebe simply stared in a stony manner, which was normal for him. Wilson raised his glass of wine in the air and smiled falsely at both men.

'I can tell you both miss the war,' he said. 'Peace can often be boring. So - to the war!' They toasted the war by touching glasses. When they had drank, Wilson said, 'Ah, yes, they were indeed good days.'

As sunlight stroked the frozen peaks in the bright night of Antarctica, Kammler and Nebe nostalgically recalled the days of World War II while Wilson listened, pretending to be interested, but practically twitching with impatience. When, a few hours later, after brandy and cigars, they returned to the subject of how best to deal with the outside world, Wilson pretended to agree with them and promised to let them devise a strategy for war, starting with an immediate attack on the United States, initially targeting Washington DC.

Satisfied, Kammler and Nebe retired to bed.

Understanding that no matter what he agreed to, they would eventually turn against him, Wilson had no intention of doing what they wanted. Therefore, instead of considering their request, he sat at his desk and turned on the TV screens that showed them in their separate rooms, Kammler already sleeping, Nebe naked and straddling one of the comfort girls, his bloated body heaving up and down in a joining devoid of love.

Shaking his head in disgust at what they had forced him to do, Wilson pressed a button located under his desk, releasing jets of lethal gas into their rooms - killing them exactly as they had killed so many others in the gas chambers of the Nazi concentration camps.

Kammler didn't waken up. He died in his sleep. Nebe rolled off the girl, covering his mouth with his hands, tried to open the front door and failed, then attempted to climb through the window as the girl, also realising what was happening, started pounding on the door with her fists, obviously screaming for help. Nebe fell back from the window, rolled on the floor, clambered back up. He grabbed the girl by the hair, jerked her away from the door, then frantically tried to pull the door open until the gas overcame him. The girl went into convulsions first, writhing naked on the bed, vomiting. Nebe slid

down the door, turned away, fell forward, started crawling towards the window on his hands and knees, then collapsed face down on the floor. He went into convulsions as the girl became still, then he too vomited profusely and shuddered his way into the final stillness of death. The dense gas had become a cloud of smoke that obscured his body and made it look like a bloated, hairy animal lying on its side. That carcass did not move.

Wilson picked up his phone and called the Rubbish Disposal Unit. He ordered them to remove the bodies from rooms 2 and 3 and incinerate them and all their belongings. Then, immensely relieved and satisfied, he had a good sleep.

Chapter Nineteen

Dwight awakened from a restless, dream-haunted sleep in which he had been pursued by a flying saucer while driving from Wright-Patterson AFB to the town of Dayton. The saucer was immense, with a fiery orange-coloured base, and it came down on Dwight's car, blotting out the whole sky, to make the vehicle's engine malfunction and then swallow it whole. Dwight looked up in terror, his heart ready to burst, as the fiery orange-coloured base, now a bizarre, swirling furnace, spread out all around him and suddenly blinded him.

His scream of fear tore him loose, casting him back to the real world, and he jerked upright on the bed, opening his eyes to the morning sunlight, realising that he was covered in sweat and that Beth and Nichola were in the kitchen, having breakfast already. Breathing deeply, trying to still his racing heart, he slid off the bed, wriggled out of his soaked pyjamas, and gratefully went for a cold shower.

Feeling better after the shower, he put his uniform on and went into the kitchen. Beth and Nichola were facing each other across the dining table, having a breakfast of cornflakes, toast, orange juice and, in Beth's case, black coffee. Nichola was now six years old and as pretty as a picture. Beth, though no longer the young, longhaired beauty he had married, was still, with her short-cropped auburn hair, full lips and slim figure, an exceptionally attractive 27-year old woman. She was also a woman who spoke her mind, as Dwight knew only too well and was reminded of once more when he joined her and Nichola at the table.

'Groaning and tossing in your sleep again,' Beth said for openers. 'More nightmares, Dwight.'

Dwight sighed. 'Yeah, right.' He helped himself to some cornflakes. 'Sorry if I kept you awake. I wouldn't want to disturb you.'

'No need for sarcasm, Dwight. I was only making an observation. Those nightmares are becoming more frequent and that can't be a good sign.'

'I hate nightmares,' Nichola informed them, 'but dreams are okay. Why can't we have ice cream for breakfast? I'm fed up with cornflakes.'

'I'm okay,' Dwight said, spooning his cornflakes up too quickly. 'Everyone has nightmares from time to time. There could be lots of reasons.'

'Like what?'

'What do you mean?'

'What else could be causing the nightmares? Is it *me*? Something I don't know about? Another woman, perhaps?'

Shocked, Dwight glanced at Nichola, but clearly she wasn't listening. She was running her finger around the inside of her upper lip while lethargically stirring the cornflakes into various shapes. 'A duck,' she said, addressing herself. 'A dog. A.... Mmmmmm.' Dwight turned back to Beth.

'Are you serious? Is that what you think?'

She gazed steadily at him, measuring him, then lowered her eyes. ‘Well, you haven’t exactly been *attentive* lately. Not yourself at all, Dwight.’

‘I’m under a lot of pressure. You know that as well as I do. I wouldn't even have *time* for another woman, so it isn’t an issue.’

Beth reached across the table to squeeze his hand. ‘Get out from under that pressure, Dwight. Neither of us needs it. I know you tried before, but try again to get out of this work. If you can’t, leave the Air Force.’

Flushed with guilt and wanting to hide it, Dwight glanced out the window. He was guilty because he understood why Beth would be worried, but when he looked outside, at the planes parked on the airstrip in the inky shadow of the great hangars, wing-flaps and hangar doors shuddering in the August wind, he knew that he couldn’t live without the Air Force and become a civilian. Also (and the thought of this made him feel even worse), though Project Blue Book was certainly putting pressure on and giving him nightmares, it was also exerting a dreadful fascination that he couldn’t resist. It wasn’t ordinary work, after all.

‘I can’t eat what’s left,’ Nichola said. ‘They’re too mushy and messy.’

‘That’s ‘cause you made them that way stirring them,’ Beth retorted.

‘I was drawing with my spoon,’ Nichola explained.

Dwight placed his free hand on Beth’s wrist. ‘I can’t leave the Air Force. What would I do out there? I’m in it for life. Besides, it isn’t as bad as you think. Half the things you hear about UFOs are nonsense. Hysteria and wishful thinking have a lot to do with it. You know? The planet Venus, comets, meteors, clouds, plasmoids, corona discharges, parhelia and paraselenae, the sun and moon and stars, even lightning and birds, can all look like bright, solid objects moving at high speed. So people see those, misinterpret what they see, then hysteria or wishful thinking comes into play. As for the UFOs being flown by extraterrestrial beings... well, maybe they’re not. Maybe they’re just some kind of extraterrestrial phenomenon - a kind of mirage. We’re frightened of what we can’t understand, so we tend to exaggerate.’

‘That doesn’t stop your nightmares, Dwight. Also, you’re losing weight. We hardly ever see you anymore, and when you’re here, you’re not here – you’re at the ATIC in your thoughts, still beavering away there.’

‘The nightmares will go away with time. I’m pretty damned sure of that.’

‘Look, Dwight, I don’t know if we’re being invaded by flying saucers or not. I only know that my husband is having bad nightmares, is losing weight, and is often too exhausted and distracted to even make love to me. I’m worried about that and also about your future. You say you’re an Air Force lifer - well, I agree with that - but that being so, what’s going to happen to you if they consistently deny you promotion, as they seem to be doing,? We both know why that is, Dwight. It’s nothing to do with your competence. It’s because most of those who get involved with UFOs are given a hard time. You should have been in charge of Project Blue Book, but Ruppelt got it instead. Now there are rumours that Ruppelt’s in trouble and may get pushed out. That’s the way it runs, Dwight.’

'They're just rumours,' Dwight said, though he thought they might be true. 'Some folks talk too much. We all know that today the official recommendations of the Robertson panel will be released, and that knowledge has encouraged a lot of wild speculation, mostly to do with the fate of Project Blue Book in general and Captain Ruppelt in particular. They're just rumours, Beth.'

'It isn't a rumour that you've been repeatedly denied promotion from as far back as Project Sign. Before that you were everybody's darling; since then they've made all kinds of excuses to put other, less experienced officers in front of you. Those aren't rumours, Dwight. And it isn't just a rumour that a lot of people involved in UFO investigations have had even worse things to contend with, such as being posted to Alaska or even having bad, inexplicable, sometimes fatal accidents, like that World War Two hero and UFO expert, Mike Bradley, and his unfortunate wife.'

Dwight gulped the last of his coffee and then put on his Air Force captain's tunic. 'There's no proof for that,' he lied, looking guiltily from Beth to Nichola, secretly convinced that he was placing both of them in danger and feeling bad because of it. 'It's just more wild speculation.'

'Oh, yeah? Then how do you explain the men in black?'

Dwight had been about to kiss Beth on the cheek, but her words stopped him, making him straighten up again, feeling a chill wind pass through him.

'What do you know about the men in black?' he asked.

'Lots of gossip, Dwight. I prefer to call them stories. Folks are talking about people involved in UFO investigations receiving visits from groups of men dressed all in black. Some say they wear black suits. Others say they're coveralls. Most agree that they're not with the Air Force and though human seem strange. Unusually pale, folks say. Oddly inexpressive faces. They usually visit in twos or threes, generally arrive in a black limousine, and always warn those they've come to see to stop discussing or investigating UFOs. They tell them that if they continue to do so, they'll find themselves in real trouble.'

'More tall stories,' Dwight said, though in fact he had been receiving an increasing number of such stories, many from reliable sources. 'These tall tales spread like wildfire. You believe all that garbage?'

'I'm only telling you what I heard,' Beth replied cagily, though certainly not joking. 'Most of these stories come from pretty reliable sources - mostly Air Force personnel - and some came from folk who had the visitors themselves, ignored what they were told, then got into serious trouble shortly after. In at least one case, the person who received the visitors and told Adele Walters about it - saying he thought it was a hoax - later vanished and hasn't been seen since.'

'If it was a friend of Adele's, it could only have been Ben Little,' Dwight informed her.

Little was an amateur astronomer and fanatical UFOlogist, resident right here in Dayton, who had frequently, perhaps too loudly, claimed that the flying saucers could be man-made secret weapons of the US and Canadian governments. After receiving a lot of

local press coverage for a couple of days, Little had just upped and disappeared, leaving a wife and three kids. Adele's husband, Ralph Walters, an Air Force Flight engineer, was a close family friend.

'Yeah, that's the one. Obviously, you heard about it, Dwight.'

'Yes. And I also heard that the marriage was in trouble and that Ben Little may simply have fled the coop. I lean towards that hypothesis.'

'I bet,' Beth said. She had his number and he knew it. Though he simply couldn't admit it even to himself, he believed that something bad had happened to the loud-mouthed Ben Little and that the mysterious 'men in black' had something to do with it. He now believed that the 'men in black' existed; he just didn't know who they were. Extraterrestrials? The CIA? Foreign agents? There was no way of knowing.

Trying to hide the shock that Beth's knowledge had given him, he leaned down and kissed her on the cheek. 'See you later,' he said. Then he kissed Nichola on the forehead, tickled her under the armpits, and left her giggling hysterically as he hurried out of the house, to walk the short distance to the ATIC, across the airstrip of Wright Field.

The ATIC operations room was not as spartan as it had been during Project Sign. Now, a lot of UFO photographs and drawings of their 'alien' occupants had been added to the many incident maps, charts and graphs on the walls. The two teletype machines hardly ever stopped clicking and the single secretarial assistant, WAC corporal Thelma Wheeler, was now a sergeant with a couple of other secretaries under her command.

Though putting on a little weight, Thelma was still blonde and pretty. She had eyes only for Captain Bob Jackson, who had somehow managed to carry on an affair with her for years without actually tying the knot, let alone becoming engaged. Even now, as Dwight entered the cluttered room, Bob was sitting on the edge of Thelma's desk, leaning towards her and whispering into her ear. Thelma burst into giggles and slapped Bob's knee, then turned away by swivelling around in her chair and went back to her expert typewriting. Bob looked up, saw Dwight and stopped smiling, so Dwight knew the news was bad.

'Morning,' he said, approaching Bob. 'I take it from the look on your face that the recommendations of the Robertson panel have come through.'

'Yeah,' Bob replied. 'I don't know what's in the report, but Ruppelt doesn't look happy and said we were to go straight in and see him as soon as you got here.'

'Then let's go in, Bob.'

Seated behind his desk, Ruppelt, in his Air Force uniform, still looked like a dark-haired adolescent whose slightly plump, smoothly handsome face showed decency and good humour. Nevertheless, gazing down at the thick folder on his desk, he was clearly not in a good-humoured mood and, indeed, looked decidedly troubled - so much so, in fact, that he didn't notice their arrival and was only distracted from the report when Dwight said, 'Morning, Cap'n Ruppelt. I believe you wanted to see us.'

Ruppelt glanced up as if confused, trying to collect his thoughts, then he smiled as if it was something of an effort, indicating that Dwight and Bob should take the chairs at the

other side of his desk. When they had done so, he glanced down at the Robertson panel report, then looked up again and spread his hands over the file as if casting a net.

'What can I say?' he asked rhetorically. 'Where do I start?'

'Just come out with it, Cap'n,' Dwight said. 'It'll be easier for all of us.'

'It's not good.'

'They've shafted us,' Bob said bluntly. 'Is that what you're saying?'

'Yes, Bob, I'm afraid it is.' Ruppelt massaged his forehead with his fingers, glanced distractedly at the file, and then looked up again. 'I should warn you that this isn't the full report. It's merely a summary of their major recommendations.'

'So when are we getting the full report?' Dwight asked him.

'We're not. We're only getting what they want us to know and this is it, gentlemen.'

'What...?' Dwight began, glancing at the equally shocked Bob.

'Don't ask me,' Ruppelt said wearily, then lowered his head again, to scan the document. 'First, despite the conclusive evidence offered by me and Major Fournet, the members of the panel have concluded that the evidence is *not* substantial, that the continued emphasis on the reporting of the phenomenon is resulting in - I quote - *a threat to the orderly functioning of the protective organs of the body politic* - unquote - and that the continuing UFO reports are clogging military channels, could possibly precipitate mass hysteria, and might encourage defence personnel to misidentify or ignore actual enemy aircraft. In other words: the real problem isn't the UFOs – it's the UFO *reports*.'

'That much I knew already,' Dwight said. 'What bothers me is what they've recommended.'

'It's pretty startling,' Ruppelt said. He glanced at the many posters on the walls around his desk, mostly enlargements of frames from cinetheodolite movies or stills taken with amateur cameras, the UFOs mostly no more than blurred, round-shaped objects. He appeared to be trying to take some solace from them, though not with success. Sighing, he went back to the report. 'As I say, based on the assessment, the Robertson panel has made some unexpected, even startling, recommendations.'

'Ho, ho,' Bob whispered.

'First, it's recommended that the three major private UFO organizations - the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization, or APRO, the Civilian Saucer Intelligence, or CSI, and Dr Frederick Epstein's Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute, or APII - be watched because of what's described as their potentially great influence on mass thinking in the event of widespread sightings. Included in this recommendation is the statement: "The apparent irresponsibility and the possible use of such groups for subversive purposes should be kept in mind".'

'Jesus Christ!' Bob exclaimed.

'Next, it recommends that the national security agencies take immediate steps to strip the UFO phenomenon of its importance and eliminate the *aura of mystery* that it's acquired. The means will include a so-called *public education programme*.'

'Mass brainwashing,' Bob translated bitterly.

'Finally, the panel has outlined a programme of public education' - Bob snorted contemptuously – 'with two purposes: training and debunking. The former will help people identify known objects and thus reduce the mass of reports caused by misidentification; the latter will reduce public interest in UFOs and thereby decrease or eliminate UFO reports altogether.'

'Shove it under the carpet,' Bob translated.

'As a means of pursuing this so-called education programme,' Captain Ruppelt continued sombrely, ignoring Bob's outraged interjections, 'the panel's suggested that the government hire psychologists familiar with mass psychology, military training film companies, Walt Disney Productions, and popular personalities such as Arthur Godfrey, to subtly convey this new thinking to the masses. It's also recommended that the sighting reports should *not* be declassified, but that security should be tightened even more while all so-called non-military personnel should still be denied access to our UFO files.'

Ruppelt stopped scanning the report and looked at Dwight and Bob in turn. After a tense silence, he said, 'Interpreting these recommendations the only way possible, it seems clear to me that the whole purpose of the Robertson Panel has been to enable the Air Force to state for the next decade or so that an *impartial* body had examined the UFO data and found no evidence for anything unusual in the skies.'

'Damn right,' Bob said bitterly.

'While this is an obvious distortion of fact, it means that the Air Force can now avoid discussing the nature of the objects and instead concentrate on the public relations campaign to eliminate the UFO reports totally. In other words, Project Blue Book is finished. If it continues under that name, it won't be as we know it.'

'No,' Dwight said, 'it won't. Project Blue Book's going to become responsible for a policy of ridicule and denial that'll inhibit the effectiveness of any future study of the phenomenon. It'll now be just another arm of the Robertson panel's CIA-backed propaganda campaign.'

'Those bastards,' Bob said.

Though clearly not happy, Ruppelt smiled at him, then he turned the report over, picked up some other pages, and spread them out on his desk as if they were dirt.

'I'm afraid, gentleman, that while the deliberately leaked Robertson panel report recommends the dropping of all secrecy and the expansion of Project Blue Book's staff, in the official report, from which this summary has been extracted, they've actually recommended a tightening of security, a mass debunking of the phenomena, a subtle ridicule of witnesses, and... the virtual elimination of all the Project Blue Book staff.'

'Oh, my God!' Bob said, practically groaning.

Ignoring him, but sounding choked up, Ruppelt said, 'The following are being posted elsewhere.' Lowering his head and sounding even more choked, he read off the list of names of those being posted. The list included him. The only people left were Dwight, Bob, and Thelma Wheeler.

'The original three,' Ruppelt pointed out. 'You're now in charge, Dwight.'

‘Of what? They’ve left me in charge of a pile of shit.’

‘It sure smells that way,’ Bob said.

Ruppelt stood up and put on his peaked cap. ‘I knew this last night, so I’ve already packed my kit. They told me I had to leave immediately and that’s what I’m doing. My bags are out in the jeep and I’m leaving right now. It was my pleasure knowing you, gentlemen. I’m just sorry it’s ended this way.’

‘So am I,’ Dwight said.

He and Bob followed Ruppelt out of his office and into the main room, where the latter called the staff together and painfully read out the instructions for their postings. When the shocked staff had taken in the news, he walked around shaking hands with each of them in turn, clearly embarrassed when some of the girls shed tears. After shaking the last hand, he indicated that Dwight and Bob should escort him to the front door of the ATIC building. Outside, on the veranda, with the planes taking off, landing, and roaring in low over the runway and hangars, he stared intently at both of them.

‘They’re trying to grind you down,’ he said, ‘and they might well succeed, but in the meantime, here are a few questions for you to answer.’ He spread his hands in the air and started raising each finger in turn as he ticked off the questions. ‘Why, when the Air Force was telling the whole world that the study of UFOs hadn’t produced enough evidence to warrant investigation, did they secretly order all reports to be investigated? Why, when all of us had actually read General Twining’s statement that the phenomenon was something real, did they deny that such a statement had ever been submitted? Why, when they themselves initiated Project Sign and received its official report concluding that the UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin, did they dissolve the project and then burn the report? Why, when Project Sign was changed to Project Grudge, did they go all out to ridicule the reported sightings and then disperse most of the staff on the project? Why, when the Air Force continued to claim that they had absolutely no interest in UFOs, did they insist that all reports be sent to the Pentagon? Finally, why did the CIA lie to us, why has the Robertson Report been kept from us, and why has Project Blue Book been destroyed? Those questions need to be answered, gentlemen, and you’re the only ones left. Goodbye... and good luck!’

He saluted and walked down to his jeep and then drove out of their lives.

‘I don’t believe this,’ Dwight said.

Chapter Twenty

Ernst Stoll was disgusted by the reflection in the mirror. He had aged since coming here, his features now gaunt, skin yellowish from bad food and lack of activity, eyes losing their lustre. Realising just how much the jungle was taking its toll, he cursed under his breath and called for his comfort girl, Maria, to bring him coffee. She did so quickly, padding towards him on bare feet, her face bruised from the beating he had given her last night when his latest sexual innovations had failed to produce the desired result. That, too, was disappearing - his potency, his damned manhood - and when he glanced again in the mirror to see Maria retreating nervously from him, leaving his steaming cup of coffee on the table just behind him, he realised that she knew this all too well and might be talking about it. Feeling even more humiliated, he decided to get rid of her, and started pondering how best to do it as he wiped his face with a towel.

Then the mirror shook a little, bouncing off the wall, making his already fractured image move out of the frame and back in again.

Steadying the mirror with his free hand, Ernst finished drying his face, then put the towel down and felt the floor shaking under his feet as a familiar bass humming sound filled the room, emanating from outside. Realising that they had arrived earlier than expected, he hurriedly buttoned up his shirt, slipped on his boots, and started across the room.

Maria was on her hands and knees, polishing the wooden floorboards with a waxed cloth. A local Indian girl, but the illegitimate daughter of a white man who had discarded her, she had barely turned seventeen, which was the age Ernst liked them. Right now, her naked body was clearly visible through the thin cotton dress, where it tightened over her raised rump and curved spine. Ernst felt a wave of the lust that was rarely satisfied these days, so he angrily pressed his booted foot on her spine and pressed her face down on the floor. The bass humming sound filled the room, making the floors and walls shake, but Ernst could still feel the trembling of the girl under his booted foot. He had the urge to crush her spine, thus releasing his frustration, but instead he took his pleasure from the fear he could hear in her voice.

‘Please, master,’ she whimpered.

He pressed harder with his boot, heard her soft groan of pain, laughed and removed his boot from her spine, then left the house.

Outside, on the veranda, the bass humming sound was louder, almost palpable, an odd vibration that shook the building. He looked up to see a 300-foot-diameter flying saucer descending vertically, slowly, onto the landing pad that now took up most of the ground in the immense walled enclosure in front of the house.

The craft descending was an object of such beauty that it nearly brought a lump to Ernst’s throat, reminding him of what he had lost when sidetracked from aeronautical engineering to become an SS policeman. Still high up in the air and viewed by Ernst from almost directly below, the saucer was spinning rapidly on its own axis, except for

the central part, which was stationary. It was, he knew, constructed like a giant meniscus lens, or like two inverted plates, that were rotating around the dome-shaped, gyroscopically stabilised central fuselage containing the control cabin, passenger accommodations and supplies. Driven by an advanced electromagnetic propulsion system that ionised the surrounding air and created an electrical conducting field, the saucer was not hindered by normal heat and drag; it therefore had remarkable lift while being devoid of sonic booms or other noises, other than the infrasound that seemed almost palpable.

The rapid rotation of the great outer rings slowed down as the saucer descended, but its electromagnetic gravity-damping system - which also aided its lift and ability to hover almost motionless in the air - was creating violent currents of air within a cylindrical zone the same width as the saucer, making the grass and plants flutter, sucking up loose soil and gravel, and causing them to spin wildly, noisily, in the air as if caught in the eye of a hurricane.

The native workers who lived in the shacks located around the inner edge of the compound were standing outside their modest homes, untouched by the whirlpool of wind that did not extend beyond the cylindrical zone of the saucer, which made it seem magical. They were looking up in awe as the gigantic saucer descended, pointing and chattering to express their disbelief, even though they had seen it many times before.

Ernst felt a lump in his throat as the saucer descended to almost ground level, filling up most of the compound, its central dome as high as a two-storey building. Composed of an electrically charged, minutely porous magnesium orthosilicate, it had a whitish glow caused by the ionisation, but it darkened to a more normal metallic grey as it hovered just above ground level, its hydraulic legs emerging from four points around the base to embed themselves in the soft earth. The saucer bounced gently on the legs, but eventually settled down and was still. Its rotating rings gradually slowed and then stopped altogether, as did the wind that had been created by its gravity-damping system. Silence reigned for a moment.

Still standing on his veranda, Ernst was deeply moved and embittered simultaneously. He should have helped to construct that saucer, flown it, been part of it, but instead he was condemned to this hellish jungle, rounding up Ache Indians and haggling shamelessly with *Federales* instead of using his engineering talents for work in the Antarctic colony. He had been chosen for this and must do it, but it still deeply wounded him.

With the outer rings of the saucer no longer rotating, the infrasound faded away and a panel in the concave base dropped down on hinged arms to form a ramp leading to the ground. Armed guards wearing black coveralls emerged to form a protective ring around the ramp, then Wilson appeared, dressed completely in black, followed by more armed guards, dressed in black also.

Ernst stepped off the porch and went to greet his master. When Wilson shook his hand, Ernst was startled by how youthful he looked. Though he was now over eighty, his silvery-grey hair was abundant, his skin was smooth on a handsome, ascetic face,

and his eyes were as blue and icily clear as the Antarctic sky. The only giveaway, Ernst noticed, was in the slight rigidity to his features when he attempted to smile and, perhaps, a slight stiffness to his movements.

'How are you, Ernst?' he asked, his voice no warmer than his icy gaze.

'I'm fine, sir. And you?'

'All the operations so far have been successful. Doctors Eckhardt and Gold are making good progress. By having the courage to let them try things out on me, I've kept old age at bay.'

Though aware that the good doctors Eckhardt and Gold always tried things out on unfortunate live subjects before operating on Wilson, Ernst thought it wise to pass no comment.

'I'm afraid we can't stay for long,' Wilson continued. 'We'll simply collect the livestock, then be on our way again. You and I can have a quick talk while Porter' - he indicated the armed, black-uniformed brute behind him – 'sees to the Indians. All right, Porter, get started.'

Realising that for the first time Kammler and Nebe were not with Wilson, Ernst waited until the burly Porter had marched off to the cages with a group of his armed thugs before asking about the whereabouts of his former, detested, World War II comrades.

'They're dead,' Wilson said indifferently, taking a seat at one side of the low table on the veranda. 'An unfortunate accident. They went together in a saucer to collect supplies left by the Americans at the other side of the mountain range. The saucer malfunctioned and crashed, killing everyone on board. Kammler and Nebe are no more.'

Even though he had detested Kammler and deeply feared Nebe, Ernst was shocked to hear of their passing. Nevertheless, after calling out for Maria to bring tea, he saw a ray of hope in his darkness. 'So what will you do now that they're gone? Surely you need someone experienced to replace them and help run the colony. Surely, I – '

'No,' Wilson said, instantly crushing his hopes. 'I know what you're going to suggest, Ernst, but it isn't possible right now. I can run the colony on my own. Your work here is more important. We can't do without a constant supply of Ache Indians, so we can't do without your presence here. You have done truly excellent work in opening up and maintaining lines of communication between General Stroessner and us. Those lines must not be broken. As Stroessner will almost certainly become the next President of Paraguay - probably within the next few months – it's important that you remain here to offer him support and strengthen the alliance between us. In time, I promise, you'll return to the colony, but right now your presence here is vital.'

Torn between pride and his suspicion that Wilson was lying and intended keeping him here forever, Ernst shifted uneasily in his chair. He compensated for his disappointment and deepening depression by barking angrily at Maria who, when she emerged from the house to pour their tea, spilt some onto the saucers.

'Her hands were shaking badly,' Wilson noted when Maria had backed nervously into the house. 'Is she frightened of you?'

'Yes,' Ernst said. 'During the war I learnt that fear could work miracles, so I make sure that everyone's frightened of me.'

'Very good,' Wilson said, though it was impossible to tell if he meant it or not, so unemotional, almost toneless, was his soft voice. 'And is the round-up of the Indians trouble-free?'

'Yes,' Ernst replied. 'The *Federales* do it for me. I merely stay in touch with them, tell them what I want, haggle like an Arab about the price, then let them get on with it. They know the jungle; also, they've been hunting the Ache for years, so they know what they're doing. Naturally, as you can imagine, they're ruthless, which makes them effective.'

'Any problems holding the prisoners in the compound?'

'No. The *Federales* don't bring the prisoners here until I give them a date, which is usually the day before you arrive. If the *Federales* round them up too early, they have to look after them for me and I'm sure they get certain benefits out of that - if you get my meaning.'

'I do,' Wilson replied, not mentioning rape or other forms of abuse, but registering a slight distaste for the low appetites of the still primitive human race. 'So they're only in your cages a short time?'

'Correct.' Even as Ernst spoke, Wilson's black-uniformed troops were opening the gates of the bamboo cages at one side of the compound and starting to herd out the terrified Ache Indians, men, women and children, to march them at gunpoint across the compound and up into the saucer by another, wider ramp that had since been lowered from the base. Looking up at the towering saucer, some of the Indians were terrified, started gibbering or covering their eyes with their hands, then tried either to break out of the column or turn back. When they did so, however, Wilson's men in black hammered them brutally with the butts of their weapons and forced them onward again.

I seem to have spent half my life watching people being herded at gunpoint from one form of imprisonment to another, Ernst thought, recalling the Jews in the cattle trucks in Poland and Germany, all fodder for another great dream. Masters and slaves, indeed.

'The last time we spoke,' Ernst said, 'you were making a deal with the Americans in return for supplies. I take it from the fate of Kammler and Nebe that you now have an agreement with the United States.'

'Yes, Ernst. They drop what we want at the far side of the mountain range and our saucers pick it up and bring it home. In return for this, I feed them titbits of our technology - though never enough to put us in any danger from them. They've also agreed to the late Artur Nebe's suggestion for a long-term programme of disinformation based on a mixture of ridicule and intimidation of UFO witnesses, both civilian and military.'

'I've been reading about that Robertson panel in American newspapers and assumed that it might be a threat to you.'

Wilson gave one of his rare chuckles of pleasure. 'All part of a planned, CIA-backed

programme of disinformation. Even though the Project Blue Book evidence on UFOs proved conclusively that the saucers exist, the panel stated in their report that the evidence *wasn't* substantial, that the continued emphasis on the reporting of the phenomenon was resulting in a threat to the orderly functioning of the protective organs of the body politic, and that the reports clogged military channels, could possibly precipitate mass hysteria, and might encourage defence personnel to misidentify or ignore actual enemy aircraft. Naturally, as the United States has just finished fighting the war in Korea, the Soviets have exploded their first hydrogen bomb, and the Cold War is presently at its chilliest, the American public, and the top brass of the armed forces, swallowed that all too readily.'

This man is truly a genius, Ernst thought, helplessly swelling up with admiration. There is nothing he can't do.

'What will the immediate results of this be?' he asked.

'We've already had the results, Ernst. Last August, the Pentagon issued Air Force Regulation 200-2, which the civilian UFO organisations are already describing as notorious.'

'For good reason?'

'Of course. Drafted purely as a public relations weapon, AFR 200-2 prohibits the release of *any* information about a UFO sighting to the public or media, except when the sighting is positively identified as a *natural* phenomenon. In addition, while AFR 200-5, the previous regulation, stated that sightings should not be classified higher than restricted, the new regulation ensures that *all* sightings will be classified as restricted. Then, in December, the Joint Chiefs of Staff followed AFR 200-2 with Joint-Army-Navy Air Force Publication 146, which made the releasing of any information to the public a crime under the Espionage Act, punishable by a one-to-ten-year prison term or a fine of ten-thousand dollars. Even better, the most ominous aspect of JANAP 146 - at least from the point of view of those who might fall foul of it - is that it applies to anyone who knows of its existence, even including commercial airline pilots.'

'In other words,' Ernst said, 'to all intents and purposes, and contrary to public Air Force pronouncements, the UFO project has been plunged into secrecy.'

'Correct.'

'It's nice to be protected by our enemies,' Ernst said.

'*Very* nice,' Wilson replied with a slight, chilly smile, gazing out from the veranda to where the Ache Indians were being herded at gunpoint from the cages to the flying saucer. Often they became hysterical when they were actually under its wide base, at the foot of the sloping ramp, but they always scurried up the ramp when they were thumped by rifle butts or, as Ernst now noted, by small metallic devices strapped by the wrist to the knuckles of some of the troops. When the troops merely touched the Indians with such devices, the latter screamed in pain.

'What are they?' Ernst asked.

'Experimental stun guns,' Wilson replied. 'At the moment, they do no more than give severe electrical shocks - not severe enough to kill, but certainly enough to burn and

hurt. But soon we'll be able to use them to stun, as well as merely hurt, and eventually, with fine tuning, they can be used as mesmerising devices when applied to certain points on the anatomy. Time will bring us everything.'

Ernst felt the great wave of his loss rolling over him to wash him away. Trembling, he finished his tea, placed the cup back on the saucer, and wiped his lips with the back of his hand.

'I only wish I could be part of it,' he said, secretly wanting to scream for release, but too frightened to do so. 'I mean, being here... this jungle... these filthy natives... I feel like an outcast. I was trained to be an engineer, a scientist, and yet now...'

In a rare gesture of affection, Wilson placed his hand gently on Ernst's wrist. 'No, Ernst, never think that. Such thoughts are for common people. It's vanity that makes you talk this way, and you should be above it. As individuals, we are nothing. Our desires are mere conceits. We only exist to serve the whole, which is past and future combined. You must suppress your own desires, cast off ephemeral needs, and learn to take pride from your small part in life's grander purpose. Man is still essentially animal. His only true worth is in the mind. The mind is the doorway to immortality and the secrets of being. You are part of that, Ernst. What you do here has its purpose. Like a monk in a monastery, like a hermit in his cave, like a mystic contemplating in his mountain eyrie, you will learn to accept this. Discipline brings freedom. Self-sacrifice brings fulfilment. What you lost in the past - your career, your wife and children, your hopes for the Third Reich - and what you feel you're losing now - the comradeship and esteem of your fellow engineers in Antarctica – you'll get back multiplied when what you are doing here has been completed and you see the results of it. Then, and only then, will I bring you back to the Antarctic. When I do so, you'll be twice the man you are now - ennobled by knowledge. Believe me, Ernst. Eventually this will come to pass and then you will thank me.'

Desperate to believe him, needing the healing hands of hope, Ernst tried to forget his lost wife, children, early ambitions and dreams - and all else in his dark, squandered history. Trembling, he picked the bell up from the table and violently rang it, calling for Maria.

'Yes,' he said, startled at how deeply he had been shaken by Wilson's softly spoken, unemotional, mesmeric monologue. 'As always, you're absolutely right. All else is vanity.'

When Maria appeared on the veranda, trembling as much as Ernst, he thought of how often he had forced her obedience by threatening to put a bullet into her mother - there and then, right in front of her. Naturally, it had always worked - a child's love knows no reason - but even that threat was unlikely to stop idle gossip. Vanity: yes, it was a dreadful human vice, but one he had not yet learnt to conquer when it came to his potency. To preserve her mother's life, Maria had submitted to every one of his vile demands - unimaginable sexual activities, not mere vice, beyond pornography - and yet none of it, certainly in the past weeks, had helped him to find release. Now, Maria was bound to talk - silence would be impossible for her - and when Ernst imagined the talk

spreading around the compound workers, all of whom loathed and feared him, he could not bear the thought of the humiliation he would then surely suffer.

They would thrive on his failure.

'Yes, master,' Maria said, falling to her knees before him, lowering her head, and not daring to look at him without permission. Ernst thought of all she had done to protect her mother and finally knew what would pleasure him.

'Please take her with the others,' he said to Wilson. 'She cannot be trusted.'

'Of course,' Wilson said.

As Maria, sobbing and pleading, was dragged into the great saucer by the armed men in black, and her mother, also sobbing and pleading, was dragged back into her shack by some other Indian women, Wilson stood up and squeezed Ernst's shoulder, then shook his hand.

'Don't worry, we'll put her to good use. Now I must be off, Ernst. Thank you. You're doing excellent work here. Take your pride from that knowledge.'

'I will.'

'Until the next time*, Auf Wedersehen*.'

'*Auf Wedersehen,*' Ernst said.

The lump returned to his throat when the great saucer took off, rising slowly, vertically, until it was the size of a silver coin, reflecting the sun. There it hovered for a moment, a silver coin spinning, then it suddenly shot off to the south and vanished in seconds, blinking out like a light bulb.

When the flying saucer had gone, Ernst looked around the compound, taking note of the shadows being cast by the soaring trees, the awe-struck eyes of the native workers, unwashed, in tattered rags, the pigs in their muddy pens, the chickens frantically flapping wings, the naked children rolling in mud and water silvered by sunlight, the guards at the machine-guns in the towers that looked out over the jungle. Choking up with despair instead of pride, he turned back into the house, desperately needing a drink. Without Wilson, he took his strength from the bottle and yearned for escape.

He just couldn't admit it.

Chapter Twenty-One

On the evening of March 7, 1954, Jack Fuller drove along the ten-mile causeway that led from Patrick Air Force Base, Cape Canaveral, Florida, across the Banana River, Merritt Island and the Indian River, to the Starlite Motel in Cocoa Beach, located in the swampy lands around the original village and now a rapidly growing town of ten thousand souls. From here dozens of missiles, as well as *Explorer 1*, America's first earth satellite, had been fired into space. Many of the motels in the area had been given appropriate names - the Vanguard, the Sea Missile, the Celestial Trailer Court - but the Starlite had gone one better by having a flashing neon rocket as its roadside sign, which made it easy for Fuller to find it. Amused by the sign, he was further amused when shown into his room, where the floor lamp was shaped like a rocket with its nose cone balancing a globular satellite, the walls were decorated with celestial crescents, spheres and orbital paths, and even the towels were embroidered with the legend, 'Satellite Motel'.

'Oh, boy,' Fuller said as he tipped the crew-cut kid who showed him to his room, 'it's a whole different ball game here.'

'It sure is,' the kid said.

Fuller had a shower, shaved, changed his clothes and then went to meet Wilson in the Starlite motel's bar. He was not surprised when it turned out to be a dimly lit, L-shaped room with murals showing the moon as seen through a telescope and Earth as seen from the moon. Nor was he surprised to find that Wilson was already there, drinking what looked like lemonade. He had always been punctual.

Fuller ordered a whisky-and-water from the barman, waited until he had it, then joined Wilson at his table. He was startled to see how young Wilson looked. He seemed to get younger every year, though in this dim lighting it was difficult to ascertain whether or not he'd had more plastic surgery.

He was studying the drinks menu, but when Fuller joined him, he looked up and smiled coldly.

'The town of Cocoa Beach,' he informed Fuller, 'has clearly become obsessed with space. What's that you're drinking?'

'Whisky with water.'

'I note that the drinks include a Countdown - ten parts vodka to one part vermouth - and a Marstini. Being here is like being in Disneyland, but it's all about space.'

'Yeah,' Fuller agreed, 'I know what you mean. They have a woman's bridge club called Missile Misses, a Miss Satellite contest, a fishing boat called Miss L. Ranger, a settlement called Satellite Beach, and even a museum, the Spacarium, that has burned-out components of Cape Canaveral rockets on display. Also, not ignoring the launch of *Explorer 1*, the Chamber of Commerce is already accepting reservations for space aboard what it's describing as the first globe-circling satellite. That's American know-how.'

'It's always nice to meet a patriot.'

'I'm not ashamed of it,' Fuller said. 'The fact that I have to deal with you doesn't change that one jot. What name are you travelling under this time?'

'Aldridge,' Wilson said. He put the menu down, sipped some lemonade, then added, 'This is certainly an encouraging place for a patriot.'

'Sure is,' Fuller agreed. He had spent the previous night in Patrick Air Force Base, two miles from Cape Canaveral, and was still thrilled by the concept of dozens of Atlas, Thor, Titan and Snark missiles, as well as the orbiting satellite, being launched from that restricted military zone of about fifteen-thousand square acres, much of it in uncleared jungle where deer and puma still roamed wild. Now, the formerly untouched land of sand dunes, palmettos, orange groves and swamps had a rapidly swelling population, scores of new businesses, and many housing developments, containing the fourteen thousand people now employed at Cape Canaveral and Patrick Air Force base.

'Cocoa Beach,' Wilson said, 'was once a small village of a few dozen families, but it's presently in the process of becoming the US government's largest and most important rocket-launching site.'

'This bothers you?'

'Yes.' Wilson glanced at the cosmic murals on the dimly lit walls, then shook his head from side to side, as if baffled by the childishness of it all. 'Of course for me there's a certain irony in the fact that most of the rockets being fired from here could not have been constructed without the assistance of Werner von Braun and his other Nazi scientists, who in turn based their work on the theories of Robert H.Goddard and me - both neglected Americans.'

'Ah, gee, the man's bitter!' Fuller said. 'My heart's breaking for him.'

'I could break your mind and body,' Wilson rejoindered, 'and don't ever forget it.'

The icy remove in his voice made the threat even more chilling, but Fuller was not a man to be easily frightened, so he just grinned and sipped his drink. 'So,' he said, placing his glass back on the table, 'why are you here?'

'I thought I'd check on the progress being made here and, if necessary, slow it down.'

'I don't know why you're concerned. As you just said yourself, what we're achieving here couldn't have been done without your assistance.'

'I dole that out carefully. You know why I do so. If NASA moves ahead more quickly than I deem fitting, I'll take firm measures to slow them down. I won't let you trick me.' Fuller couldn't suppress his pleasure. 'Boys will be boys and scientists will be scientists. You know that if you give us assistance, we're bound to try and exploit it. You've known that all along.'

'Never imagine that you're ahead of me,' Wilson warned him. 'If you do, I'll be forced to prove you wrong - and that could be expensive.'

'I know damned well how ruthless you can be,' Fuller said, keeping his gaze on Wilson's face, though relieved that his remorseless, icy eyes could not be seen too clearly in the gloom. 'You don't have to remind me.'

'I *would* remind you that your own organisation, the CIA, without or without the full

knowledge of the government, can also be fairly ruthless - as shown by the murder of various American citizens, such as Mike Bradley and his wife, who know too much about me, my base in the Antarctic, or the US-Canadian saucer projects. Those murders are not committed for my benefit. Nor do I commit them. How ironic that Mr Bradley was frightened of me... when it was you who murdered him in the end.'

'A casualty of war,' Fuller said, proud to have done his duty, 'and not one to give you cause for concern. You didn't come here to talk about that, Wilson - sorry, *Aldridge* - so what do you want?'

'A week ago the United States exploded a thermonuclear bomb over a lagoon at Bikini Atoll, thus dangerously contaminating seven thousand square miles of land and sea, injuring people nearly a hundred miles away from the area, and, even worse, making the world fall-out conscious for the first time. That test explosion, combined with the unseemly haste with which you're expanding Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral, makes me suspect that certain people in the Pentagon or the White House are no longer taking my threats seriously. If you don't slow down your rate of scientific progress, particularly regarding the Apollo space programme, I may have to give you another demonstration of my own, still much greater, capabilities.'

'We must be catching up with you,' Fuller said calmly. 'Otherwise you wouldn't be so damned worried.'

'I don't worry, Fuller. I simply apply reason. And when that tells me you need some kind of warning, I'll make sure you get one.'

'Okay, I've been warned. I'll take your message back to those in charge and I'm sure they'll take heed. Anything else?'

'Not really. I take it that UFO witnesses are still being harassed, ridiculed and thwarted at every turn?'

'Correct.'

'What's the state of Project Blue Book?'

'Not good, you'll be pleased to hear. The project leader, Captain Edward J.Ruppelt, was transferred to Denver and has since left the Air Force in disgust. However, he's now working for the Northrop Corporation and is rumoured to be planning a book that will substantiate the reality of the UFOs, though siding with the extraterrestrial hypothesis.'

'I'm not keen on the idea of a UFO book written by someone with that kind of credibility. Keep your eyes on him.'

'I will.'

'And the others?'

'All of the staff, except for the original two officers, have been scattered far and wide, which others obviously view as a form of official punishment, or warning. As for the two remaining officers - captains Dwight Randall and Robert Jackson –we're keeping the pressure on them all the time and consistently denying them promotion. In fact, by deliberately putting Ruppelt in charge of the former Project Blue Book, instead of Randall, who rightfully should have had the job, we were clearly slighting Randall. By putting him back in charge of the project only when it's been decimated and rendered

virtually inoperative, the slight seems even more brutal. To Randall, as well as to those who know of his involvement with Project Blue Book, it must seem that UFO work is the kiss of death. I believe this is already having bad psychological repercussions on Randall. With him as an example, not too many others will be keen to investigate UFOs.'

'He still might need something, another little push, to tip him over the edge. I'll keep him in mind.'

'Yeah, you do that. Anything else?'

'No. Not for now.' Wilson stood up to leave. After studying the cosmic murals on the walls of the bar, he said, 'America is a nation of children - a gigantic nursery. There's nothing worth having here.'

'Rather here than the Antarctic,' Fuller responded. 'What kind of life can you have there?'

'A life of work,' Wilson said. 'And work is the true function of man - the use of the mind. All else is a waste of time.'

'You're not a real human being, Wilson.'

'Nor do I want to be. Now take heed of my warning, Mr Fuller. Tell your superiors not to try upstaging me.'

'I'll pass the message on,' Fuller said.

When Wilson left the bar, Fuller ordered another whisky. He took his time drinking it, distractedly studying the crescents, spheres and orbital paths on the walls, thinking of the great dream of space and Wilson's part in it. Fuller was no romantic - he had the instincts of a killer - but even he possessed certain human needs that could not be denied. Wilson was something else: a kind of mutant, without emotion, a creature driven by the dictates of the mind, unhampered by feelings. Even Hitler had been driven by resentment and hatred - recognisable human traits - but Wilson existed outside such emotions, which made him inhuman. Fuller, who was frightened by very little, was frightened by that thought.

He finished his drink, left the bar, and went to look for a whorehouse.

Even whores had feelings.

Chapter Twenty-Two

When Dwight entered the lobby of the airport at Albuquerque, New Mexico, after a commercial flight from Dayton, Ohio, he had been drinking again and was feeling a little drunk, but he knew that it would soon pass away, letting his depression and fear return. He didn't relish that much.

His old friend, Captain Andrew Boyle, was waiting for him in an air force uniform too tight for his expanding beer belly, but he seemed as energetic as ever, with a broad grin creasing his good-natured, sun-reddened face. Slapping his hand on Dwight's shoulder, he said, 'Hi, there, partner! Long time, no see. You look like you've lost a bit of weight and could do with some sunshine, but otherwise you're recognizably yourself. Hell, man, it's really good to see you. It's been too long, pal.'

'Yeah,' Dwight said. 'Too long.'

They embraced, shook hands, then walked to the car park, Dwight carrying his overnight bag in one hand, Andy dangling his car keys. 'Christ,' he said, 'how long's it been now? Eight, nine years?'

'Nine years, more or less, though it doesn't seem that long. Time moves like the wind these days. We're getting old too fast, Andy.'

'Yeah, and no better for it. Christ, those were the days, man! I still get a lump in my throat when I think of the old B-29s. We did a lot of crazy things in those days. You had to be young to do it.'

Dwight and Andy had flown in the B-29s over the Pacific during World War II, being shot at by the Japs and having more than one hair-raising escape. It all ended in 1945, when both were demobilised, and apart from a brief reunion when, a few years later, they served briefly with an Air Force Reserve Troop Carrier Wing, they had only managed to keep in touch through the mail and by phone, united by the kind of emotional bonds that could only be forged in war. They would both go to their graves, Dwight suspected, secretly relishing those dangerous years as the best of their lives. This was a shaming truth.

'Anyway,' Andy said, as they climbed into his well used 1947 Frazer Manhattan in the car park, 'this work you're doing must be almost as exciting - I mean, searching for UFOs.'

'It's not quite the same,' Dwight confessed. 'It's more like a bad dream. Quite frankly, it's pushing me to the limit and I'm thinking of getting out.'

'Out of the Air Force?'

'Right.'

'You were *born* for the Air Force,' Andy told him, turning on the ignition. 'You're a natural lifer.'

'I used to think so. Not now.'

'I don't believe this,' Andy said.

Leaving the airport, he took the road away from Albuquerque, heading into the

morning's brightening sunlight, past fenced-in hangars and a lot of warehouses and factories.

As a radar operative at Cannon AFB, Andy had regularly fed Dwight with information on UFO sightings. However, last night he had phoned with more urgency than usual to tell him that the previous evening he had personally witnessed the landing of a flying saucer in the restricted area of the base. That's why Dwight was here.

'I can't believe this business is driving you out of the Air Force,' Andy said, driving with the windows rolled down, letting cooling air rush in around them. 'You thrived on the dangers of the war, so what's happening now?'

'It's not the same as the war,' Dwight said. 'Not the same kind of danger. During the war, we were treated as heroes, doing what our country wanted, but chasing UFOs brings you nothing but flak.'

'What kind of flak?'

'Antagonistic interrogations. Lack of promotion. Postings to places like Alaska. Accusations of incompetence where clearly there was none. Midnight phone calls from irate superior officers. General harassment of every imaginable kind. Now there's talk of men in black paying visits to UFO witnesses, warning them off. UFO witnesses are also starting to disappear. Damm it, Andy, this isn't something you *see*. It's not a dogfight in clear sky.'

'How's Beth taking it?'

'Not much better than me. I'm drinking too much - I know it, but I can't stop - and Beth's frightened about the men in black, as well as about my drinking and my growing desire to get the hell out of it. It's been eighteen months since Captain Ruppelt's departure from Project Blue Book and, subsequently, the Air Force. Since then, the organisation's been reduced to a mere three members - Captain Bob Jackson, a secretary, and me. To make matters worse, our investigating authority has been passed over to the inexperienced 4602d Air Intelligence Service Squadron; and most of our projects have been strangled systematically through a deliberate reduction in funds.'

'Jesus Christ,' Andy muttered as the engineering and canning factories on the outskirts of Albuquerque gave way to sun-drenched, pastoral farmlands.

'Obviously,' Dwight continued, 'I've been badly shaken and disillusioned by what's happened. I'm also unable to comprehend why the Air Force is supposedly concerned with UFOs, yet at the same time is ruthlessly discouraging a proper investigation of the phenomenon. Personally, I've been harassed constantly by my superior officers and passed over many times for promotion. Now I want to get the hell out - but ironically, given that she was the one who first suggested leaving the force, Beth says it's the drink talking and that there's nothing I could do as a civilian. She thinks I'm threatening our livelihood. She just wants me to transfer out of Blue Book, but I want to get out of the Air Force completely and she simply won't wear that. Frankly, Andy, I don't know *what* to do. I'm just running scared, I guess.'

'I don't blame you, old buddy, but are you sure you're not imagining a lot of this?'

'No, I'm not imagining it. Too many bad things have happened to those involved in

UFO research. Also, I'm not imagining the harassment. Christ, Andy, even during that UFO invasion of Washington DC, I was hamstrung and practically ordered back to Dayton. As a matter of fact, I flew here on a commercial flight - at my own expense, Andy - because when I tried to charter an air force plane I was refused permission.'

'On what grounds?'

'They said the base was temporarily sealed off because a security exercise was taking place. A *routine* security exercise, they said.'

'This was yesterday?'

'Yes.'

'Then it was bullshit,' Andy said. 'There was no security exercise taking place at Cannon yesterday - and the base wasn't sealed off. Did you tell them why you wanted to come here?'

'No. I just announced myself as head of Project Blue Book. That was enough.'

'But you've visited the base before.'

'That's right. So the only reason they could've had for their lies was the landing you saw. Tell me about it.'

Andy glanced in his rear-view mirror, a reflex action denoting confusion, then he concentrated again on the road ahead. 'Weird,' he said. 'Kinda spooky. Problem is, I'd been drinking, a real bellyful of beer, and that made me keep my mouth shut about it - to everybody but you. It was about two in the morning. I was just returning to the base... What the hell! We'll soon be there, Dwight. Let's wait till we get there.'

They arrived at the sprawling Cannon Air Force Base a few minutes later. After driving past the guardhouse and barrier at the entrance, Andy kept going along the fenced-in perimeter lining the road until he came to a place near the outer limits of the base, well away from the airstrip. He slowed down and stopped. Dwight could see the corrugated iron roof of a large hangar beyond the high fence. Andy pointed at it.

'Right there,' he said. 'About two in the morning. I was driving right past there, coming in the other direction - pretty loaded, as I said - when I saw that the lights on that hangar were still on. As I was passing, I thought how unusual it was for it to be lit up at that time in the morning. I also noticed that there was a series of arc lights forming a circle in the cleared area directly in front of it. Then, inexplicably, the engine of my car cut out and I rolled to a halt. Cursing, not too sure of what was happening, thinking that the drink had made me do something stupid, I tried to start the car again, but it just wouldn't spark. Then I heard a weird noise, a high-pitched whining sound, coming from the other side of the fence... and I looked up and saw that... that *thing* coming down.'

He shook his head from side to side, as if still not believing it, and looked at the hangar beyond the fence, reliving the night before.

'A domed, disc-shaped aircraft. It was landing about fifty yards inside the fence, in that area illuminated by the circle of arc lights, directly facing the open doors of the hangar. The aircraft, or flying saucer, had no lights – that's why the landing area was illuminated. The circular part around the dome of the aircraft was shaped like two plates, one placed upside-down on the other, and the raised dome in the middle was just like a

pilot's nose cabin, made of what seemed like Perspex, with a single pilot in it. The circular plates were revolving around the dome, which seemed to be gyroscopically balanced and, though fixed, was swaying up and down a little as the saucer descended. The closer it got to the ground, the slower the plates rotated and the quieter it became, until the high-pitched whining had become a low whirring sound. The saucer had ball-like landing gear, which I saw being lowered in preparation for touchdown. It was practically hovering in the air, just above the level of the perimeter fence. Then it disappeared below the top of the fence and the sound of it cut out completely. When it did, my car's engine started up again.'

Dwight was hearing all this clearly, but finding it hard to take in. He knew that Andy wasn't lying, but it still seemed incredible.

'Any insignia on the saucer?'

'None,' Andy said.

'And the hangar doors were open?'

'Yes. That hangar, I know, is used for secret aeronautical research projects, so I'm convinced that the saucer was being kept there. Certainly, it didn't take off again. I drove my car off the road, cut its lights and ignition, and sat there for a good couple of hours, sobering up and hoping to see the flying saucer ascending.' Andy shook his head from side to side, as if still finding it hard to accept what he had witnessed. 'But it didn't. At one point I thought I could hear muffled screeching sounds - like clamps or wheels needing oil - then, after a while, I heard the hangar doors closing. The arc lights above and in front of them were turned off. After that, there was silence.'

'That's a restricted area of the base?'

'Sure is.'

'So what do you think?'

'What do *I* think?' Andy unconsciously echoed Dwight's words as he glanced up and down the sunlit road that ran past the base. 'I'll tell you. You believe in the extraterrestrial hypothesis, right? Well, let me remind you that most of the best saucer sightings have been over top-secret military installations - in other words, mostly right here in New Mexico. So on the assumption that the saucers aren't piloted by extraterrestrials spying on our military secrets, what else could they be?'

'Soviet secret weapons.'

'Man-made?'

'Right.'

'But not necessarily Soviet. It's highly unlikely that the Soviets could have managed to fly their spy planes over our top-secret military installations without being brought down by us. On the assumption, then, that the saucers are neither Soviet nor extraterrestrial, but are seen over our own top-secret establishments - and, as in this case, have even been seen to land – there's a growing belief among some of us that they're radical new US aircraft prototypes, developed by the Air Force or Navy.'

'I can't really accept this,' Dwight said.

'No? Then let's see if we can get you into the base.' Andy turned the car around and

drove back to the main gate, stopping at the barrier. When he told the armed corporal in the gatehouse who Dwight was, the kid rang through for clearance, then put the phone down and shook his head, looking embarrassed.

'Sorry, sir,' he said, 'but I can't let you bring your guest in.'

'Guest? He's not a guest! He's the decorated US Air Force captain in charge of Project Blue Book. Now let us in, damn it!'

'Sorry,' the corporal repeated, straightening up, 'but I can't do that, sir.'

'Why not?'

'Because I have my orders.'

'What reasons were given?'

'No reasons were given, sir. I was just informed by my superior officer that Captain Randall wasn't to be allowed in.'

'And who's your superior officer?'

'Major Shapiro, the base intelligence officer.'

'Anyone else being denied permission to the base today, corporal?'

'I can't answer that, sir.'

'Okay, corporal, thank you.' Andy reversed away from the barrier, then took off in the direction they had come from, back to Albuquerque. 'Do you get the picture now?' he said. 'The flying saucer I saw last night was certainly no Russian spy plane, since its landing had clearly been prepared for and it certainly spent at least last night in that off-limits hangar. Therefore, it was either an alien spacecraft landing with the full permission of the Air Force or a top-secret Air Force - or even Navy - aircraft. But since it didn't look advanced enough to be an alien spacecraft, I'd opt for it being one of our own.'

'Oh, boy!' Dwight exclaimed softly. 'That would certainly explain why certain members of intelligence don't want us to find out too much.'

'Right. The extraterrestrial hypothesis is a smokescreen. In reality, they're defending their own secrets. Those saucers are man-made.' He glanced at Dwight and grinned. 'I've got some more news for you, but I'll let you have it over a drink. I think you'll need it, old buddy.'

They spent the rest of the drive in silence, allowing Dwight to think. He was having trouble putting his thoughts in order, but eventually he managed to do so. Now he saw, more clearly, the reason behind all the harassment, the smoke-screen of disinformation, the veiled threats from superior officers, the virtual destruction of Project Blue Book… the Air Force was protecting its own while pretending to be concerned with alien spacecraft.

Nevertheless, some nagging doubts remained, mostly to do with the extraordinary capabilities of the saucers reported. Dwight simply couldn't imagine that the Air Force had made such technological advances, not even in secret. Even for him, this was too much to deal with at the present time. It scared him to think of it.

In a roadside bar just outside Albuquerque, they settled into a dimly lit booth, both

drinking large bourbons. When they were feeling more relaxed, Andy withdrew an air force folder from his briefcase, opened it, and squinted down through the gloom at the pages.

'These classified Air Force intelligence documents were leaked to me by a friend. I can't give you his name, but I can verify the authenticity of the documents.' Grinning, he raised his finger like a schoolteacher. 'Okay. Let's try presenting a case for the possibility of man-made flying saucers.' He dropped his raised finger onto the pages opened before him. 'Though it's not widely known, American intelligence has been interested in the possibility of man-made flying saucers for a long time. First indication of this is an old intelligence report - I have it right here in my file - stating that a patent for a so-called flying saucer with a circular fixed wing was taken out by an unnamed American citizen as early as March 22, 1932.'

'*Unnamed*,' Dwight emphasised, sighing with disappointment.

Andy smiled brightly, triumphantly. 'That unnamed citizen was probably Jonathan E. Caldwell. This would explain why, on August 19, 1949, at the height of the immediate post-war UFO flap, the Air Force Command of Baltimore called a press conference to announce that two different types of prototypes that might solve the mystery of the flying saucers had been found in an abandoned farm near Glen Burnie, Maryland. According to the Air Force spokesman, both machines had been designed and constructed before the war by Jonathan E.Caldwell, with the aid of a local mechanic, and one of the machines had actually been flown.'

'I have that on file as well,' Dwight said.

Andy ignored his disappointment. 'The machines had been abandoned for years and were falling apart, but as they were a combination of airplane and helicopter, with round wings and contrarotating propellers, it was the belief of Air Force intelligence that in flight they'd have resembled flying saucers. So they could have been the prototypes of the more advanced UFOs seen in the skies over the past few years.'

'Sorry,' Dwight said. 'That notion was squashed less than twenty-four hours later when, at another urgent press conference, a different Air Force spokesman announced that the Caldwell machines had absolutely no connection with the reported phenomena of flying saucers.'

'Correct. But what the Air Force spokesman *didn't* state is that Caldwell's plane was a craft with a circular wing of the parasol type, or one raised above the fuselage like an umbrella. It was constructed in 1932 and tested the following year by Professor J. Owen Evans in a wind-tunnel in Los Angeles, then flown by the well known pilot, Jimmy Doolittle, displaying a top speed of 97 mph and a landing speed of 23 mph. In 1936, Caldwell produced a modified version of the prototype, but it crashed, killing the pilot, thus putting Caldwell out of business for good.'

'All very interesting,' Dwight said, 'but you're talking about a pretty crude aircraft.'

'All early prototypes were pretty crude,' Andy retorted. 'Nevertheless, it's clear from what I've picked up that US military intelligence continued to be anxious about the possibility of man-made flying saucers, particularly right after the war. They were, as

you know, even more concerned because most of the saucer sightings in the US tended to cluster around key development stations such as atomic plants, guided missile areas, and your very own Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.'

Dwight grinned. 'No argument there.'

Andy turned another page. 'It's also clear from remarks sprinkled liberally throughout these documents of the period that US intelligence findings seemed to *exclude* extraterrestrial origin of the saucers. This in turn made them increasingly concerned with the possibility that the saucers were man-made.' He looked up, nodding emphatically. 'More intriguingly, although on the one hand they were concerned with Soviet advances in this field, they soon began suspecting that the saucers might be of US or Canadian origin.'

'You think that's possible?'

'Yeah. As the Navy, Army and Air Force are always, and were then, in constant competition with one another, each would have been reluctant to inform the other of any secret projects in the pipeline. So even at the White Sands Proving Ground, used extensively by the Navy for their aeronautical and missile experiments, there are research projects so secret that even the CIA can't learn about them - and given Navy interest in vertical-ascending aircraft, these could have included saucer-shaped aircraft.' Dwight finished off his bourbon and called for two more. 'I can tell you have something else prepared. So go on. Lay it on me.'

Andy waited until the waiter had brought their drinks and departed.

'As far as I can tell, the first rumblings about Canadian flying saucer projects were made in a classified CIA memorandum dated August 18 last year - a year after the Spitzbergen flying saucer crash report. The CIA memorandum states: "According to recent reports from Toronto, a number of Canadian Air Force engineers are engaged in the construction of a 'flying saucer' to be used as a future weapon of war. The work of these engineers is being carried out in great secrecy at the A.V. Roe Company factories." He looked up from his notes. 'That report was correct - as were the widespread suspicions that the US Navy was conducting experiments on saucer-shaped, vertical-rising aircraft in secret hangars in the White Sands Proving Ground.'

Dwight gave a low whistle. 'That could make sense,' he said. 'One belief widespread in intelligence circles is that the formation of the lights in the famous Lubbock sightings, and others, weren't indicative of small glowing saucers, but of the many exhaust jets along the edge of a massive, boomerang-shaped aircraft, or advanced flying wing, that would, when viewed from certain angles, strongly resemble a flying saucer, or saucers.'

'Good,' Andy said, then went back to his leaked documents. 'Evidence for United States's involvement with disc-shaped aircraft projects surfaced with information about the US Navy's Flying Flapjack, or Flying Pancake. Designed by Charles H.Zimmerman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics and constructed in 1942 by the Chance-Vought Corporation, the Flying Flapjack, or V-173, was an experimental, vertical-rising, disc-shaped aircraft, a combination of helicopter and jet plane, powered by two 80hp engines and driven by twin propellers, with two fins, or stabilisers, on

either side of its semi-circular, or pan-cake-shaped, configuration. Reportedly it had a maximum speed of 400 to 500 miles per hour, could rise almost vertically, and could hover at thirty-five miles an hour. A later, more advanced model, the XF-5-U-1, utilised two Pratt and Whitney R-2000-7 engines of 1,600hp each and was reported to be about 105 feet in diameter and have jet nozzles - which strongly resembled the glowing windows seen on so many UFOs - arranged around its outer rim, just below the centre of gravity. It was built in three layers, the central layer being slightly larger than the other two. Since the saucer's velocity and manoeuvring abilities were controlled by the power and tilt of the variable-direction jet nozzles, there were no ailerons, rudders or other protruding surfaces. The material used was a metal alloy that had a dull, whitish colour.'

'In short,' Dwight said, 'a machine remarkably similar in appearance to those reported by so many UFO witnesses.'

'Exactly,' Andy said. 'Now do you remember the April 1950 edition of the *US News and World Report*?'

'Christ, now that I think of it, I do,' Dwight replied, feeling more excited every minute. 'Information about the Flying Flapjack was released to the public in that edition of the magazine!'

'Correct again, Dwight, and it touched off some interesting speculations. The first of these arose from the retrospective knowledge that the Navy had always expressed more interest in a vertical-rising airplane than the Air Force and had, up to 1950, spent *twice* as much money as the Air Force on secret guided missile research. Also, their top-secret missile-research bases were located in the White Sands Proving Ground, where the majority of military UFO sightings had occurred. Also, because they weren't involved officially in UFO investigations, they could conduct their own research in a secrecy unruffled by the attentions of the media and the public.'

'Right,' Dwight said, now genuinely excited. 'And according to the Project Grudge report for 1947, the UFOs viewed over Muroc AFB on July seven and eight of that year were oscillating objects that flew at remarkably low speed and had tactics unlike an ordinary airplane. Some witnesses, all trained Air Force personnel, observed two discs at an altitude of about 8,000 feet, both manoeuvring in tight circles with varying speeds - and oscillating. Also, just like the XF-5-U-1, both discs had two fins on the upper surface.'

'Go on,' Andy said, grinning with pleasure at what he had started.

'Well, another interesting point is that the measurements taken by Navy commander R.B.McLaughlin and his team of Navy scientists of the UFO they'd tracked over the White Sands Proving Ground in 1949, two years after the Muroc sightings, corresponded closely, except for the speed, with the details of the original XF-5-U-1. It's also worth noting that initial reports of the extraordinarily high speeds recorded by McLaughlin turned out to be inaccurate and that later analysis of the data brought the speed much closer to that of an advanced jet-plane... or to the original expectations for the Flapjack.'

Nodding affirmatively, Andy, now as excited as Dwight, said, 'And the *US News and*

World Report also pointed out that the Air Force had called off official inquiry into the UFO phenomenon the previous December, even in the face of overwhelming evidence that the saucers were real. This was seen by many as a clear indication that top Air Force officials actually *knew* what the saucers were and where they come from. Therefore, while still denying that the Air Force was involved, they were no longer concerned about the saucers. The article concludes: "Surface indications, then, point to research centres of the US Navy's vast guided-missile project as the scene of present flying-saucer development."'

'In other words, the White Sands Proving Ground and other secret locations right here in New Mexico.'

'Ding, dong! First prize!'

'So what happened to the Flying Flapjack?'

Andy glanced at his leaked documents. 'The production prototype of the Flapjack was due for a test-flight at Muroc AFB in 1947 - when the first flying-saucer sightings over that same base and at Rogers Dry Lake, adjacent to Muroc, were recorded. Whether such test flights were actually carried out has never been confirmed or denied by the US Navy. The only official statements given were to the effect that work on the Flying Flapjack ceased the following year... - but US involvement with saucer-shaped aircraft didn't end with that prototype.'

Andy had a sip of bourbon and lit a cigarette. After blowing a couple of smoke rings and watching them disappearing, he said, 'At this point it's worth reminding you of certain facts taken from your own Project Blue Book reports.'

'Always reliable!' Dwight quipped.

'Of course,' Andy responded, then turned serious again as he lowered his eyes to his notes. 'In the reports that started the modern UFO scare - the Harold Dahl and Kenneth Arnold sightings of June 1947 - both men observed the UFOs in the vicinity of Mount Rainier, the Cascades, in the state of Washington - which divides Oregon and Canada - and both stated independently that the UFOs flew away in the direction of the Canadian border.'

'That's right - towards Canada.'

Andy nodded. 'Shortly after, during the first week in July, there were numerous reports of unidentified, luminous bodies in the skies over the Province of Quebec, Oregon, and New England. The next major UFO flap was the so-called invasion of Washington DC in 1952; and while the official flap started on July 19, there was a record, dated June 17, of several hundred unidentified, red spheres that flew at supersonic speeds over the Canadian Air Base of North Bay in Ontario and then crossed over some of the southeastern states. Finally, nearly all of the subsequent Washington DC UFOs were reported as flying away in a southerly direction; and when they returned, en masse, on July 26, their disappearance in a general southerly direction - towards the Canadian border - also applied.' He looked up from his notes. 'Given this, it's a matter of particular interest that on February 11 last year the Toronto *Star* reported that a new flying saucer was being developed at the AVRO-Canada plant in Malton,

Ontario.'

Dwight gave another low whistle, then said, 'Christ, how did I miss that?'

'Because your research teams were only looking for UFO reports - not reports about official, saucer-shaped, experimental aircraft.' Andy puffed another cloud of smoke and looked back at his Air Force folder. 'Of course the US and Canadian governments both denied involvement in any such projects, but on February 16, after freelance photographer Jack Judges had taken an aerial photograph of a flying saucer resting outdoors in the Avro-Canada plant in Malton, the Minister for Defence Production, C.D.Howe, admitted to the Canadian House of Commons that AVRO-Canada was working on a mock-up model of a flying saucer, capable of ascending vertically and flying at 1500 miles per hour. By February 27, Crawford Gordon Jr., the president of AVRO-Canada, was writing in the company's house journal, *Avro News*, that the prototype being built was so revolutionary it would make all other forms of supersonic aircraft obsolete. That aircraft was called the "Avrocar".'

'Shit,' Dwight muttered. '*Now* I remember it!'

'I bet you do.' Andy was amused, but instantly went back to his leaked documents. 'Soon the Toronto *Star* was claiming that Britain's Field Marshal Montgomery had become one of the few people to view Avro's mock-up of the flying saucer. A few days later, Air Vice Marshal D.M.Smith was reported to have said that what Field Marshal Montgomery had seen were the preliminary construction plans for a gyroscopic fighter whose gas turbine would revolve around the pilot, positioned at the centre of the disc. Confirmation that the craft actually existed came via last year's April issue of the *Royal Air Force Flying Review*, which contained a two-page report on the Avrocar - also dubbed the "Omega" - including some speculative sectional diagrams. According to this report, the building of a prototype hadn't yet commenced, but a wooden mock-up had been constructed behind a closely guarded experimental hangar in the company's Malton plant, near Ontario. The aircraft described had a near-circular shape, measuring approximately forty feet across, and was being designed to attain speeds of the order of 1,500 mph - more than twice that of the latest swept-wing fighters. It would be capable of effecting 180-degree turns in flight without changing altitude.'

'Just like a real flying saucer.'

'Exactly,' Andy said. 'And last November, Canadian newspapers were reporting that a mock-up of the Avrocar, or Omega, had been shown on October 31 to a group of twenty-five American military officers and scientists. To date, nothing else has been reported by the press, but according to these leaked intelligence documents, the US Air Force, concerned at Soviet progress in aeronautics, has allocated an unspecified sum of money to the Canadian government for the building of a prototype of their flying saucer. The machine's been designed by the English aeronautical engineer, John Frost, who once worked for AVRO-Canada in Malton, Ontario, and it'll be capable of either hovering virtually motionless in mid-air or flying at a speed of nearly 2,000 miles an hour.'

Dwight gave another low whistle.

'Last but not least,' Andy continued, 'according to these documents, the government's hoping to form entire squadrons of AVRO-Canada's flying saucers for the defence of Alaska and the far regions of the North - because they require no runways, are capable of rising vertically, and are ideal for subarctic and polar regions.'

Realising that he had been conned all along by his superiors, who wished to protect their own flying-saucer projects, Dwight filled up with rage. With that came the urge for revenge against those who had wronged him.

'All we need is solid proof,' he said.

'I've got that as well,' Andy responded, grinning like a kid as he withdrew a brown envelope from his Air Force folder. 'When that thing landed last night, I took a photo of it. Naturally, I'm going to keep the negative, but the photo's for you. With my compliments, Dwight.'

Dwight took the photograph and examined it. His heart started racing when he saw the slightly unfocused photo of a flying saucer hovering just above the fence of Cannon AFB, gleaming in the light from the arc lamps forming a circle around it. His hand started shaking as he took in what he was seeing, but eventually, with his heart still racing too quickly, he slipped the photo back into the envelope and put it into his briefcase.

'Thanks a million,' he said. 'I don't know how to thank – '

'My pleasure,' Andy interjected. 'Now I've got to get home. Back to Cannon AFB, where you're no longer welcome. I'll keep my eyes and ears peeled.'

'Please do that,' Dwight said.

They left the bar together, shook hands on the sidewalk, then walked off in opposite directions. Andy clambered into his car while Dwight caught a cab.

He checked into a motel located near the airport, went straight to his room with a half-pint of bourbon, drank some of it while endlessly studying that photo of the man-made flying saucer, then lay down and fell into a dream-haunted sleep.

Dwight was dreaming of flying saucers that glowed magically in the night and, though serenely beautiful, filled him with fear. That fear deepened as a dazzling silvery-white light filled his vision, gradually surrounded him, and then, in an inexplicable manner, pressed in upon him.

The light seemed almost physical.

At first he thought the light was part of his dream, filling up an alien sky, but then he opened his eyes and realised it was real enough: a brilliant, flickering light that was beaming in through the window of the motel room to dazzle him and, in its oddly physical way, tighten his skull and fill it with pain.

Even as he was rubbing the sleep from his eyes, trying to adjust to the unusual, blinding light and the increasing pain in his head, he heard a bass humming sound, almost an infrasound, and felt the bed vibrating beneath him.

Fully aware that this wasn't normal and deeply frightened by it, he was trying to gather his senses together when the room door burst open and two men, both dressed in

black coveralls, entered and rapidly approached the bed.

Dwight attempted to sit upright, but before he could do so, one of the men pressed something hard and metallic against the side of his neck. He felt an electric charge course through him, like being struck with a hammer, then he went numb from neck to toe.

Terrified, unable to move a muscle, he could only look on as one of the men picked the manila envelope off the bedside cabinet, tugged the UFO photo out, examined it briefly, then nodded at the second man. The latter leaned over the bed to stare at Dwight with cold, almost inhuman eyes.

'Stop pursuing us,' he said. 'It will only bring you grief. Not only for you, but for your family. You've been warned. *Auf Weidersehen*.'

The two men left the room, closing the door behind them, leaving Dwight propped up on the bed, completely paralysed and terrified.

That strange light still filled the room, pulsating, flickering, and at times he thought it might be a line of lights forming the whole. Accompanying the lights was the infrasound - something felt, rather than heard - and Dwight felt it pressing around him, relentlessly tightening his skull, almost making him black out with pain.

He remained conscious, however, tormented by what was happening. The sweat poured down his face, the visible results of his racing heart, and he felt the panic welling up inside him as he frantically tried to move.

Now his terror was absolute, engendered by the paralysis, and he had visions of the horror of Beth and Nichola should they found him like this. The panic ballooned into mindlessness, stripping his senses bare. He was just about to tip into madness when the pressure of the infrasound decreased and feeling returned to him.

First a tingling in his toes, then warmth in his fingers. He bent an elbow, then a knee, as the brilliant, flickering light outside the window appeared to rise slightly, deliberately, swaying slightly from side to side.

The pressure of the infrasound decreased and finally went away altogether.

Dwight bent and stretched his legs. He flexed his fingers and raised his arms. The dazzling light outside ascended to the top of the window-frame, hovered there for a moment, flared up briefly and then suddenly blinked out.

Dwight knew then that it was actually a line of smaller lights blinking out one after the other, but at very great speed, giving the appearance of one great light popping out.

Darkness rushed back into the room and the sky reappeared outside.

Dwight took a deep breath. He was trembling like a leaf. Sweating profusely, with his heart still racing dangerously, he glanced at the bedside cabinet to confirm that the men in black had actually been here.

The UFO photo was gone.

The men in black had been real, too.

Still in a state of shock, Dwight slid out of bed, hurried across to the window, opened it and looked up at the sky.

There were lots of stars up there. Look too long and they seemed to move. Dwight

looked a long time and thought he saw one moving - that big one, almost directly above - but he couldn't be sure. He kept scanning the sky, looking for something unusual, but saw only the glittering lights of that sea of stars in the infinite darkness.

Shivering, though still sweating, trying to still his racing heart, he walked back to the bed, picked up the bottle of bourbon and drank too much of it too quickly.

Now, with his nerve cracking, fearful for Beth and Nichola as well as for himself, he was determined to leave the air force for good and put all this behind him.

It was best to be silent.

PART TWO

Chapter Twenty-Three

'I think you all know why we're here,' President Eisenhower said. 'Yesterday, at Cape Canaveral, Florida, Project Vanguard's first rocket, which the American people had been led to expect would put up the first earth satellite in history, blew up on its launching pad. I want to know why.'

Richard Horner, assistant secretary of the Air Force for research and development, coughed nervously into his fist, glanced at the other men in the Oval Room in the White House, then said, 'We still haven't ascertained the exact cause of the explosion, but according to Mr Fuller, here, Wilson was responsible.'

Eisenhower was standing beside his vice-president, Richard Nixon, framed by the window overlooking the Rose Garden and hazed slightly in the incoming morning sunlight. Both men, Fuller knew, were fully aware of the political seesaw arrangement with Wilson. The 34th President of the United States stared directly at him.

'That's correct, Mr President.' Fuller was unfazed by Eisenhower's stern look, which struck him as being that of a bachelor schoolteacher, rather than that of the most powerful man in the country. While admiring Eisenhower as a West Point graduate, renowned World War II military commander, supreme commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, or NATO, and active anticommunist, Fuller viewed his support of desegregation and the Civil Rights Act as unhealthy manifestations of liberal soft thinking. Nor was he keen on Eisenhower's vice-president, Richard Nixon, whose support for the sleazy Senator Joe McCarthy and his self-serving witch-hunts had gained even decent anti-Communists, such as Fuller, a bad name. 'Wilson phoned me an hour before countdown to say the explosion would occur and he's arranged it as a warning that we were making progress too quickly for his liking.'

'Maybe he's displeased with our plans for the creation of a National Aeronautics and Space Administration,' said Major General Joe Kelly of the Air Force Legislative Liaison, or SAFLL.

'He's not,' Fuller informed him. 'That's the first thing I thought of, but Wilson wasn't concerned about NASA. He's annoyed by what he described as our increasingly naked desperation to beat the Russians into space.'

'So he arranged the explosion on Project Vanguard's first rocket,' Eisenhower said, displaying anger for the first time.

'Yes, Mr President,' Fuller said. 'Of course, as soon as he'd phoned me, I passed the warning on to the launch team. A last-minute check on the rocket showed no faults at all, so it was decided that Wilson was bluffing and that the launching should

continue. Then the rocket blew up – just as Wilson had said it would.'

'So how did he manage it?' asked Major General Arno H. Luehman, director of information services.

'With some kind of explosive device,' Fuller replied, shrugging.

'We can all assume that, Mr Fuller,' Nixon said disdainfully. 'What we want to know is how he got it on board.'

'It had to be one of our men,' Richard Horner admitted. 'But with so many working on the project – and nothing found in the debris that relates to any known explosive devices – we're having great difficulty in finding out who it was or how it was done.'

'But we do at least know that Wilson has one, or even more, of his men planted in our rocket research teams.'

'It certainly looks that way, Mr President.'

'Either he has some planted in our rocket research teams,' Fuller corrected him, 'or he used some kind of remote-controlled device. Whether one or the other, he proved his point... He's way ahead of us and we're still at his mercy.'

That statement led to a brief, uneasy silence and the rising anger of Vice-president Nixon. 'It's a public humiliation,' he said. 'Made even more obvious by the fact that it was the Russians, and not us, who inaugurated the space age with their recent launching of the first man-made satellite, *Sputnik 1*.'

'That's old news already,' Fuller responded, enjoying needling Nixon. 'Last month, they sent up that dog, Laika, which orbited Earth in a second Russian satellite, six times heavier than the first.'

'Right,' General Kelly said. 'And that *Sputnik* is also equipped to measure cosmic rays and other conditions in space, a good one thousand miles above Earth.'

'That damned dog,' Major General Luehman said bitterly, 'is being tested for its response to prolonged weightlessness, so it's a precursor to future manned spaceflights.'

'They beat us into space,' Nixon said angrily, 'and now this Wilson has deliberately emphasised our humiliation and set the space programme back again. I thought we had a deal with that man!'

'We do,' Fuller said, 'but it's a seesaw arrangement. We give him a little, he gives us a little back, but whenever he thinks we've stepped out of line, he also gives us a warning.'

'Like the explosion on our Project Vanguard rocket,' Eisenhower said.

'Right, Mr President. We're only allowed to advance *behind* his technology. If he thinks we're coming close to catching up with him, he pulls these little stunts – and he's very good at it.'

'So we've learnt to our cost – as have others. I believe he was also responsible for the crash of the British Airways Viscount in March this year, for the fire in the Windscale atomic works in Cumberland in October – '

'The Windscale piles are used to make plutonium for military purposes,' Richard

Horner interjected.

'Exactly,' Eisenhower said. 'He's also suspected of being responsible for the death of that Royal Navy Commander, Lionel Crabb, found headless in the sea near Chichester Harbour, England, in June this year. That was shortly after Crabb was accused of engaging in espionage activities against the Russians. There are even reports that he might have been responsible for exposing the spying activities of Burgess and McLean in 1955, in order to sour East-West relationships.'

'He doesn't like it when we talk to one another,' Fuller explained. 'He prefers us to be in conflict. We're convinced that this deal he has with us he also has with the British and the Russians. He's one real smart cookie. As for causing a little accident each time we advance too quickly for his liking – I believe the Brits and Russians have also had disasters caused by him – we'll just have to be more careful about what we're doing in our research establishments, particularly those in the White Sands Proving Ground.'

'You mean our own flying saucers,' Nixon said.

'Correct. However, it's even more important that we continue to keep hidden the fact that the flying saucers most often seen, and also known to abduct people and animals, are in fact man-made by a highly advanced foreign power – which Wilson can now rightfully be called. If the public finds out about Wilson's flying saucers and Antarctic colony, we'll have mass hysteria to contend with.'

'I agree,' Richard Horner said. 'We must continue, as a means of disinformation, to encourage a widespread belief in the possibility of extraterrestrials. It's vital that we prevent the general public from learning that we're being threatened by a totalitarian regime using mind-control, laser-beam technology, and other highly advanced weapons and forms of parapsychological warfare. That knowledge would be more terrifying than the revelation that the saucers have an extraterrestrial source. Distance lends enchantment. The reality of the Antarctic colony could give the populace nightmares.'

'Unfortunately,' said Major General Luehman, director of information services, 'stopping speculations about UFOs won't be easy, as there have been more reports this year than any other.'

Fuller knew what he meant. In 1956, the ATIC had recorded 670 sightings, but this year, 1957, that figure had risen to over 1,000, with a gradual increase throughout the year, reaching a peak of over 500 for November alone. Remarkably, in this second week of December, those figures were continuing to climb, making this the biggest year for UFO sightings since 1952.

The sightings, Fuller knew, were due to a combination of Wilson's saucers, secret Air Force and Navy saucers, and wishful thinking, or mass hysteria, caused by the launching of the second Russian *Sputnik*. Nevertheless, their crucial factor was that Wilson was now flying more saucers than ever and doing it with impunity. In fact, Wilson controlled the skies.

'UFO speculation won't be lessened,' Major Kelly said, 'by the forthcoming

Congressional hearings, brought about by relentless pressure from that former Air Force major, Donald Keyhoe, and his civilian UFO group, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena. The problem of handling the hearings and answering Congressional enquiries about the UFO programme has fallen to us at SAFLL. So far, by using *Special Reader Report Number 14* for our information, we've been able to insist that there's a total lack of evidence for anything unusual in the skies. However, I don't know how long we can support that claim if we're forced into open hearings on the matter.'

'Congressional hearings on flying saucers!' Richard Nixon exclaimed, aghast. 'I can't believe what I'm hearing!'

Turning to his assistant secretary of the Air Force for research and development, Eisenhower asked, 'Can you help?'

Horner nodded emphatically. 'I've already told subcommittee chairman Donald O'Donnell that hearings aren't in the best interests of the Air Force. He's trying to get the subcommittee to drop the issue, but it's early days yet. Meanwhile, I'll keep stonewalling Keyhoe and the NICAP.'

'Anyway,' Major Kelly said, 'if we *are* forced into Congressional hearings, we'll simply use the subcommittee as another tool of disinformation.'

'Very good,' Nixon said, flicking beads of sweat from his upper lip and looking as shifty as always.

'Meanwhile,' said Major General Luehman, 'my department is continuing the education of the public with the use of psychologists specialising in mass psychology. We're also using military training film companies, commercial film and TV productions, such as Walt Disney Productions, and popular radio and TV personalities, including Arthur Godfrey, to put over whatever we deem fitting. We're also continuing to disseminate negative literature about the civilian UFO organisations, including Keyhoe's NICAP and Dr Frederick Epstein's Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute, based right here in Washington DC. Last but by no means least, we legally harass them on the slightest pretext. Similar treatment is being meted out to Air Force pilots and commercial airline pilots reporting UFO sightings.'

'Terrific!' That was Nixon.

'It all seems so sordid,' Eisenhower said, looking uneasy.

'But necessary,' Fuller insisted, amused when Nixon smiled encouragingly at him. 'We have to gradually kill off public talk about UFOs and trust that it then becomes a forgotten subject.'

'What about Project Blue Book?' Nixon asked. 'That damned project has done more to stimulate interest in UFOs than any other branch of the services.'

'It's now well under control,' Fuller said. 'Blue Book's been run down and is now under the supervision of the 1006th Intelligence Service Squadron, which knows practically nothing about UFO investigations. As for the vastly more experienced Captains Ruppelt and Randall, both have been pressured into leaving the Air Force

for good, ensuring that the UFO projects, our own and Wilson's, won't be discovered by either of them, accidentally or otherwise.'

'Let's hope they're not discovered by someone else,' President Eisenhower said. 'Gentlemen, thank you.'

Fuller was first to leave the Oval Room, pleased by what he had heard there.

You simply couldn't trust anyone.

Chapter Twenty-Four

Dwight was drunk again. He was in that state a lot these days, but it was always even worse at Christmas, which reminded him of the family that he'd lost after leaving the Air Force. Now, sitting at the dining table in his untidy clapboard house, by the window overlooking the rusty pumps of the gas station located on a desolate stretch of road just outside Dayton, Ohio, he was listening to the Christmas carols being sung on the radio, sipping from a dangerously large glass of bourbon, and staring out at the dark, dust-covered road.

He was really surprised when a battered Ford pulled up and Beth stepped out.

'Oh, Christ!' he whispered involuntarily, talking to himself, caught between pleasure and embarrassment that she should find him like this. Sipping more bourbon, trying to calm his agitation, he studied her as she closed the door of the car, smoothed down her hair, then glanced nervously across the yard at the house.

Dwight slipped a little sideways, to ensure that she couldn't see him, then watched her advancing up the path to the front door. Wearing a tightly belted overcoat and high heels, she looked as trim and attractive as always. When she reached the front door, vanishing from his view, a lump came to his throat. Then the doorbell rang.

Twitching as if whipped, Dwight was about to hide his bottle of bourbon, but realising instantly that he would not get through this meeting without a drink, he just shrugged, had another sip, then went to the door, carrying his still half-full glass. He took a deep breath, opened the door, and looked straight into his wife's girlish, solemn face. She seemed as embarrassed as he felt, but she gave him a nervous smile.

'Well, well,' Dwight said, 'what a surprise! Long time, no see.'

'Yes, Dwight, a long time.' The winter wind was howling across her, beating at her, making her seem touchingly fragile against the nocturnal sky. 'Are you going to keep me standing out here all night or can I come in?'

'Oh, sure, Beth, I'm sorry.' He stepped aside to let her enter. When she brushed past him, the brief touch of her body sent a shock coursing through him. He closed the door and followed her into the living room. She was studying the awful untidiness, which embarrassed him even more. 'I guess I'm not too good at housekeeping,' he said. 'And the gas station keeps me pretty busy.'

Beth stared at the glass in his hand. 'That as well, so I've heard.'

'Yeah,' Dwight said, 'that as well.' He defiantly finished off his drink, then topped up the glass. 'You want one?'

'Why not? Just a small one. Let's share a Christmas drink together. Can I sit in this chair?'

'Sure, Beth. Anywhere.'

He poured her a drink as she unbuttoned her overcoat, letting it hang open, then took the easy chair near the fire. She was wearing a white sheath dress that showed off her fine figure, and when she crossed her long, shapely legs, Dwight wanted to

stroke them. Instead, he handed her the drink and took the chair facing her. They raised their glasses in a toast, drank some bourbon, then gazed at one another in silence.

'Who told you I was drinking?' Dwight asked eventually, wanting to get the subject over and done with.

Beth shrugged. 'It's all over town. At least among our mutual friends. You've been seen and heard, Dwight.'

He grinned, though he didn't feel good. 'Yeah, I reckon I have. It's surprising how these things get a hold. I'm not cut out for a bachelor's life.'

'It's been three years, Dwight. I hear you don't even have a girlfriend.'

'We didn't separate because of that, Beth. I don't need a girlfriend.'

'Just the bottle.'

'That's right, Beth. You've got it. It deadens all needs.'

'And all fears, as well.'

'Those, too, I guess.'

He soothed those fears now by having another sip of bourbon, then he held the glass unsteadily in his lap and studied his wife. He had seen her only occasionally since their separation, usually when visiting Nichola, but it seemed like he hadn't seen her for years, and her presence consumed him.

'You should never have left the Air Force,' she said. 'You *needed* the Air Force.'

'Obviously, the Air Force didn't need me,' Dwight responded, unable to conceal his bitterness. 'You refused to accept it, Beth, but I *had* to get out. They pressured me until I had no choice. That's how they stick it to all of us.'

He meant the officers investigating UFOs. First, Flight Officer Harris of the Roswell Army Air Base, then Captain Ruppelt of the ATIC, then himself. All had been forced to leave the Air Force after receiving too much pressure from above, usually in the form of blocked UFO investigations, unwarranted criticism, midnight interrogations by intelligence officers, unwelcome transfers to bleak spots like Alaska, and even visits from the mysterious 'men in black'. In the end, you simply couldn't take it any more and just wanted out.

'Yes,' Beth said, 'I have to admit that's true. Did you hear about Captain Ruppelt?'

'Yep. After leaving the Air Force, he wrote a book, *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, claiming that the UFOs were real, solid objects. I read it. It was good.'

Beth nodded. 'But have you heard the latest? Ruppelt's done an abrupt about-face. Later this year he's bringing out a new edition of his book, recanting on his former beliefs and insisting that the UFOs aren't real at all.'

'I've heard that,' Dwight said. 'I've also heard that he's not in good health. That isn't uncommon either. Just look at me, Beth!'

She ignored the sour joke, instead glancing around the untidy room. Her look of distaste reminded Dwight of his past three years as a bachelor, mostly spent in a fog of alcohol, filled with too many fears and nightmares. It was the drinking, he knew,

that had led to the separation. In resigning his commission and leaving the Air Force, he had only given impetus to the break that had clearly been coming. It was hard to recall it clearly now, but he *did* remember the fear. It was the fear that had led to his drinking, as well as his nightmares. He had once loved the Air Force, lived for it, was proud of it, but when he became involved with Project Blue Book, the Air Force had turned against him, blocking him, chastising him, eventually humiliating him, until his life became a living nightmare from which there was no escape.

All of that had come to a head shortly after his visit to Cannon AFB, when he'd had his terrifying experience with the men in black in that motel room outside Albuquerque, New Mexico. That event, more than anything else, had set the seal on his constant dread.

He had started dreaming about flying saucers, alien entities, men in black, and eventually, as his friends in the ATIC were attacked one after the other – transferred, demoted, charged with spurious offences, haunted by anonymous phone calls – he had become increasingly isolated and then started cracking up. The heavy drinking soon started, leading to many fights with Beth, and when he told her he was resigning his commission, that was the last straw. They hadn't actually divorced, but merely separated, with Beth taking an apartment close to her parents in Dayton, moving in with a deeply upset Nichola. Shortly after that move, Dwight left the Air Force, took this job as a gas station attendant, which included the use of this broken-down house, and embarked on the worst three years of his life, trying to deaden his fear and shame with regular drinking. It pained him just to recall it.

'Anyway,' he said, 'I don't think you came here, after all this time, just to tell me about Captain Ruppelt.'

'No, Dwight, I didn't.'

'So what is it? Sounds like something serious. You think it's time for a divorce, is that it?'

'Why, would you give me one?'

'I wouldn't want to, if that's what you mean.'

'Why not? Because you still love me?'

'As a matter of fact, Beth, that's exactly it. That's the pitiful truth of the matter. Maybe that's why I'm drinking. I can't get you out of my mind, no matter how hard I try. And believe me, I've tried hard. As for Nichola, not having her around is a night-and-day torment. God, I miss her. I really do.'

Beth blushed, lowered her head, sipped some of her drink, and then looked up again.

'I still love you, too, Dwight. I really do. It's because I loved you so much that I couldn't bear to watch you destroying yourself. That's why we separated, Dwight. There was no other reason.'

'I know that. But it's been three years, Beth. So why are you here?'

'Because I still love you. Because Nichola loves you. Because I miss you, but Nichola misses you even more and needs you as well. Every year, for the past three

years, she's begged me to bring you back for Christmas. I refused her the first two years; I couldn't refuse her a third time. Also, I think it's time, Dwight. I think you should at least spend Christmas with us and see what it's like. For me. For Nichola. Most of all, for yourself. Just Christmas to start with, that's all. What do you say?'

Dwight's instinct was to refuse because, in truth, he felt scared. He was frightened of being with them, of resurrecting buried feelings, but the very thought of being home released those emotions and brought a lump to his throat. He was also moved by Beth's presence, still loving her, wanting her, and though feeling awkward with her, embarrassed by his condition, he was moved by a desperate yearning to get back what he had lost.

'My pleasure,' he said.

During the drive to Beth's apartment near Carillon Park in Dayton, Dwight was increasingly nervous, but the instant Nichola threw herself into his arms, his problems were over. Now twelve years old, with an oval face and long dark hair, Nichola shared her mother's natural grace and beauty. After a light supper and long talk with his daughter – during which he lied blatantly about the joys of his job at the gas station and then discussed Nichola's progress at school – Dwight retired to the bed in the spare room. There, for the first time in months, he had a sleep undisturbed by dreadful nightmares.

The next morning, Christmas Day, they were joined by Beth's parents, Joe and Glenda McGinnis, whose customary good humour removed the last of Dwight's discomfort at being back temporarily with his wife and child. Thoughtful as always, Beth had made Dwight sign the labels on some of the presents she had bought for Nichola, and when Dwight saw the delight on his daughter's face, he was deeply moved. Later, when he received his own presents, some from Beth, some from Nichola, he had to turn away in order to hide his brimming tears; though he practically broke down when Beth kissed him lightly, tentatively, on the lips.

'God, Beth!' was all he could murmur, trying to catch his breath.

They shared a fine Christmas dinner, drank far too much, revived themselves with an afternoon walk through the park, then passed the rest of the afternoon in front of the TV set, which showed snow in many parts of the country while Bing Crosby, appropriately, sang 'White Christmas'. By the early evening, after Beth's parents had left, Dwight was in a mellow mood, perhaps dangerously sentimental, and had to wipe tears from his eyes a second time when he tucked Nichola into bed her bed and returned to the living-room.

'God, I miss her,' he said.

'And me, too, I hope,' Beth retorted. She was stretched out on the sofa, wearing slacks and a loose sweater, holding a glass of white wine in one hand, her gaze fixed on the TV.

'Yeah, right,' Dwight said, 'you, too.'

He wanted to fall to his knees beside her, to thank her for bringing him home, even

if just for Christmas, thus reminding him of what he had lost by giving in to his fears.

'Beth…' he began, about to pour out his heart... Then the front doorbell rang.

Beth glanced up, blushing guiltily, then swung her legs off the sofa and hurried past him, letting her hand slide over his shoulder, as if in encouragement.

'I have a surprise visitor,' she said. 'I just hope you'll be pleased.'

Though initially frustrated at the thought of this unexpected intrusion, Dwight was at first startled, then delighted, when Beth led former USAF Captain Bob Jackson into the living-room. Dwight hadn't seen his old friend for three years, but Bob looked pretty much the same: still sleek-faced and sassy, if a little thicker around the waist. Wearing a plain grey suit with white shirt and tie, he was grinning from ear to ear and looking a lot healthier than the man who had been posted to Alaska just after Dwight had left the Air Force. He embraced Dwight, then vigorously shook his hand.

'Hell, man,' he said, 'it's good to see you. It's been too long, buddy.'

Stepping away from each other, they both grinned in a kind of dumb disbelief, until Beth said, 'Okay, you two, sit down and I'll get you a drink.'

'I've been drinking all day,' Bob said, 'so a beer will do fine. Christmas Day, don't you know?' He grinned at Dwight as he took a soft chair near the fire. 'Had a good Christmas yourself, did you, Dwight?'

'Terrific,' Dwight replied, sitting on the sofa facing his old friend. 'My first Christmas with my family in three years.'

'Yeah, I heard. I only got back from Washington DC yesterday and Beth told me when I called. She also said she was hoping to have you home for Christmas and told me to drop in. Said it might do you some good. Am I doing you good, Dwight?'

'Feels just like old times, Bob.' Beth handed Bob a beer, then joined Dwight on the sofa. He was still nursing a glass of white wine and letting it last. 'So obviously you know what happened to me. What happened to you?'

Bob sighed. 'Life at the ATIC was hell after you left. They kept transferring me here and there, from one lousy place to another. Promotion was refused. I was repeatedly charged for petty infractions, so in the end I just got the hell out. Most of the others on Project Blue Book had similar experiences – just like you and Ruppelt.'

'When did you resign your commission?'

'Two years ago.'

'So what have you been up to since then?'

'Well, you know, Dwight, I just couldn't forget this UFO business. Couldn't get it out of my goddamned head. So after a couple of months just fooling around, including getting married to our former secretary, Thelma Wheeler – remember her?' he asked, briefly changing the subject.

'Hell, yes!' Dwight responded, instantly recalling the sexy blonde WAC corporal from Huntsville, Alabama, with whom Bob had had a lengthy flirtation.

'She was harassed as well,' Bob continued. 'Harassed until she couldn't take it any more and packed it in, like me. Anyway, when we were married, we decided to get out of Dayton entirely, so I took a job as technical advisor for an aeronautical

engineering company located in Greenbelt, Maryland. In truth, I was kind of a salesman, using my Air Force background to sell the merits of the company to the many military establishments in that area. The job was okay – it got me out and about a lot – but I still couldn't shake off all those questions that Ruppelt had raised about the UFO phenomenon. They haunted me night and day. Finally, through one of my acquaintances, I was introduced to Dr Frederick Epstein, a former astronomer who'd become obsessed with UFOs and now heads the Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute, a civilian UFO organisation located in Washington DC.'

'I know him,' Dwight said. 'I interviewed him way back in 1953, shortly after he'd formed the organisation.'

'That's right,' Bob said. 'He reminded me of that interview the first time we met. Anyway, I went to work as an investigator for the APII, initially on a part-time basis, then full time. And that's what I do now.'

Beginning to understand that there was more to this meeting than a casual Christmas visit, Dwight glanced at Beth. She merely offered a slightly teasing smile, sipped her drink, then said, 'Bob's come to Dayton to carry out some investigations on behalf of the APII. Until this evening, I hadn't seen him for three years either.'

'That's right,' Bob said. 'I'm here to investigate the growing claims that there's a storage facility in Wright-Patterson AFB for corpses found in crashed UFOs.'

'There was no such room when *we* were there,' Dwight said.

'No, but the base has changed a lot since we left and the ATIC was virtually dissolved. There are lots of restricted areas in Wright-Patterson – more now than ever before – and one of them *could* contain a top-secret storage facility for crashed UFO parts, or even dead crew members.'

'This whole business of alien corpses at Wright-Patterson is based on the notorious Aztec case of 1948,' Dwight reminded him. 'It all began with a book by one Frank Scully, a former Hollywood *Weekly Variety* columnist who alleged that a flying saucer crashed east of Aztec, New Mexico, in 1948, and was found virtually intact, with sixteen dead aliens, or UFOnauts, inside. According to Scully, the flying saucer was dismantled and the pieces, along with the remains of the sixteen aliens, were transported in secret to Muroc Dry Lake, now Edwards AFB, California, then on to a so-called top-secret Hangar 18 in Wright-Patterson. Scully also alleged that there'd been three other flying-saucer landings during the same period and that a total of thirty-four dead aliens had been found and were also being held at Wright-Patterson.'

'But having been at Wright-Patterson at the time, you didn't believe it.'

'Right,' Dwight said emphatically. 'Precious little substantiation could be found for Scully's claims. In fact, two years later, an investigative reporter, J.P.Cahn, revealed that Scully had received most of his dubious information from Silas Newton and a Dr Gee, later identified as Leo A.Gebauer. Both men were experienced confidence tricksters who'd been arrested that very year for trying to sell worthless war surplus equipment as oil detection devices. They probably based their whole story on the Roswell Incident of 1947, which we both know so well.'

Dwight certainly knew that case well and could still recall virtually every word of his conversations with Flight Intelligence Officer First Lieutenant William B.Harris, who had compiled the official report on the Socorro sighting. He also recalled that at the insistence of General Hoyt Vandenberg, then Deputy Chief of the Air Force, the three charred corpses and the debris from the Socorro crash had been picked up by an intelligence team from the 509th Bomb Group and transported under strict secrecy to an unknown destination, though rumour had it as Carswell AFB, Fort Worth, Texas.

'If Scully based his Aztec landing on the Roswell Incident, at least he picked a damned good case,' Bob insisted. 'You and I both know that the crash at Roswell was a real one – just as real as some of the reported landings.'

'What landings?' Dwight asked, becoming interested despite himself.

'One of our leading test pilots, Gordon Cooper, has claimed that while at the Edwards Air Force Base Flight Test Centre in California last year – the same place where Scully's crashed flying saucer and its dead occupants were reportedly taken in 1948 – a team of photographers assigned by him to photograph the dry lakes near Edwards AFB spotted a strange-looking craft hovering just above the lake bed. Then the object descended slowly and sat on the lakebed for a few minutes. According to the photographers, it was at least the size of a vehicle that would carry normal people. They also insisted that it was a circular-shaped UFO that took off at a sharp angle and rapidly flew out of sight.'

'Naturally they took photos.'

'Yep.'

'So what happened to their film?'

'According to Cooper, it was forwarded to Washington DC for evaluation, but no report came back and the film never resurfaced.'

'No film, no evidence – the same old story.'

Bob was unfazed by Dwight's cynicism. 'Dr Epstein has shown me the certified statements of two USAF pilots, confirming that UFO landings took place at Cannon AFB, New Mexico, on May 18, 1954, at Dewed Nike Base on September 29, 1957. He also has CIA-censored reports on another two UFO landings that took place at Holloman AFB. You might be convinced about Cannon AFB, since it was your own experience there, in 1954, that finally encouraged you to get out of the Air Force.'

Shocked to be reminded of that fearsome experience, Dwight glanced at Beth and was rewarded with an encouraging smile. Sipping the last of his wine, he recalled his visit to the road outside Cannon AFB, New Mexico, where his friend, Captain Andrew Boyle, had given him a good description of his personal sighting of the landing of a saucer-shaped craft outside a hangar in a restricted area of the base. After showing him the specific hangar, Boyle had given him a photograph of the UFO as proof.

Even more vivid and frightening that this recollection was the memory of how, when Dwight had been lying on his bed in the motel room, located on the outskirts of Albuquerque, a dazzling pulsating light had filled the room, a bass humming sound

had almost split his head, and three men dressed in black coveralls had entered. One of them had temporarily paralysed Dwight was some kind of stun gun, another had whispered a warning in his ear, and the third had stolen his invaluable UFO photograph. Shortly after the men in black left the room, the pulsating light and head-splitting noise went away and feeling returned to Dwight's body. What was not to go away was the fear that subsequently drove him to the bottle and out of the Air Force for good.

He felt that fear now.

'Okay,' he said, 'you've got me on that one. What about the other two?'

Grinning, Bob said, 'The first one took place shortly before 8.00am on an unspecified day in September, 1956, when a domed, disc-shaped UFO landed about fifty yards from US 70, about twelve miles west of the base. The ignition systems and radios of passing cars went dead and the peak-hour commuter traffic backed up as amazed witnesses – including two Air Force colonels, two sergeants, and dozens of civilian Holloman AFB employees – watched the UFO for over ten minutes, until it took off with a low whirring sound. Shortly after its disappearance, word of the sighting flew from Holloman to Washington DC and the area was soon inundated with Air Force intelligence officers and CIA agents. Base employees who'd witnessed the sighting were sworn to secrecy and the Pentagon's evaluation team wired a report stating that the UFO wasn't any type of aircraft under development by the US or any foreign terrestrial power.'

Bob sipped some beer, then took a deep breath and let it out again. He was clearly enjoying this.

'Then, just this summer, a mechanic at Holloman AFB was working on a grounded Lockheed F-104 jet interceptor when he saw a disc-shaped object hovering silently over the tarmac. After watching the object retracting its ball-like landing gear, he called another mechanic and both of them watched the UFO take off vertically at great speed. During a subsequent interrogation, both men identified the craft type they had seen from a book of over three hundred UFO photographs. They were then informed that personnel in the base control tower had observed the same object for two or three minutes. They were also warned not to discuss the sighting and made to sign a statement swearing them to secrecy.'

'Very persuasive,' Dwight said, impressed by Bob's enthusiasm and responding instinctively to it, feeling more alive than he had done for three years. 'But I still don't believe you'll find a Hangar 18 in Wright-Patterson AFB, let alone alien corpses or crashed UFO debris. What *did* you find there?'

Bob grinned like a Cheshire cat. 'According to my informant, all requests to Wright-Patterson AFB for information regarding Hangar 18 are routinely given the reply that it doesn't exist. But he insists that Wright-Patterson's top-security Area B contains a building numbered 18-A. Indeed, he said he's personally seen it, though he's never been allowed in. It's a building – not a hangar – with a tall wire fence around it. All of its windows have been knocked out and replaced with concrete.'

'Anything else?'

'Yes. He was adamant that similar storage facilities would be found in the White Sands Proving Ground, Los Alamos, New Mexico, and Carswell AFB, Fort Worth, Texas.'

Dwight involuntarily sat upright when he heard the last named. 'And we both know what was shipped to Carswell AFB, don't we?' he asked rhetorically.

Bob grinned. 'Sure do,' he said. 'The corpses and debris from the Roswell crash of 1947. Your eyes are gleaming old buddy.'

Dwight realised that he had been set up, probably for his own good. Glancing sideways at Beth, he saw her widening smile as she reached out to hold his hand and squeeze it. 'Bob called me,' she confessed, 'to find out what you were up to. When I told him – about you working in the gas station and drinking too much – he was as upset as me and insisted that we somehow get together to persuade you to help him in his work for the APII. I believe it's what you need, Dwight, to get you off the drink and give you something better to do than pumping gas. Please think about it.'

Dwight thought about it, feeling frightened, but wanting to do it, soothed by the warmth of Beth's fingers around his hand, revitalised by her presence.

'You won't have to move to Washington,' Bob explained. 'You can be our Ohio stringer. Naturally you'll come and visit us occasionally, all expenses paid, but in general you'll remain here in Dayton. You'll be our eyes and ears here.'

'I don't get it,' Dwight said. 'As far as I recall, Dr Epstein believes the UFOs are of extraterrestrial origin.'

'He's pretty open-minded about it, but so far he hasn't come up with any more rational explanation.'

'You know what Andy Boyle told me during my visit to New Mexico,' Dwight said. 'He presented me with the possibility that the crashed or landing UFOs might have been man-made – known to, and protected by, our own military intelligence. Have you told Epstein that?'

'No, I haven't. I don't think the time is right. It's a possibility I'd like you to pursue, but on your own, not through the APII. If what Boyle says is true, it'd be too big – and possibly too dangerous – for the APII to deal with. We'll have to keep the lid on that, Dwight, until we're sure of our ground.'

'So I investigate general UFO cases for the APII while surreptitiously gathering information on man-made UFOs.'

'That's it, exactly. We keep the lid on the latter cases. They're between you and me, Dwight. In this regard, I've no guilt about using the facilities of the APII, since I'll be helping them with what you uncover in other areas. I need you, Dwight, and you need this work. So what do you say?'

Beth squeezed his hand again. 'Please do it, Dwight. It'll help you to find your way back. Your home's here, in this apartment, with Nichola and me, not in that damned gas station. Work with Bob, Dwight. *Come home*.'

'Yes,' Dwight said, already feeling renewed and excited. 'Yes, damn it, I'll do it!'

Grinning from ear to ear, Bob shook his hand again, even as Beth, her eyes brimming with tears, turned into his arms, where she had always belonged.

'Welcome aboard,' Bob said.

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Chapter Twenty-Five

Rocking nervously in his rocking chair on the veranda of his log-house in the enlarged compound buried deep in the jungle near the Paraguay River, Ernst was feeling like an old man as he looked at the moonlit sky to observe the majestic descent of the biggest flying saucer he had seen so far. Though an awesome 350 feet wide, this transport craft was otherwise like the others: two immense, inverted plates that were rotating around the dome-shaped, gyroscopically stabilised central fuselage. Though not hindered by normal heat and drag, thus giving off no sonic booms or other noises, other than an almost physical infrasound, the saucer was creating violent currents of air that were making the grass and plants flutter wildly, noisily.

As usual, the native workers who lived in the shacks located around the inner edge of the compound were standing outside their modest homes, untouched by the precisely edged whirlpool of wind, looking up in awe and fear as the immense craft descended.

Also looking up, and clearly terrified, were the many captured Ache Indians being held like cattle in the big bamboo cages located near the shacks of the compound workers. These unfortunates, who had never seen an aeroplane, let alone such a gigantic flying saucer, started wailing and shaking the bamboo bars of their cages, wanting to break free and run away. They only quietened down when threatened by Ernst's armed *Federales* and *contrabandistas*. Those who failed to respond to threats were hammered by rifle butts until either they shut up or collapsed, unconscious, to the ground.

Gradually the great flying saucer, still descending, covered most of the compound. Its central dome was as high as the craft was wide, about the height of a three-storey building. The whitish glow of its electrically-charged, minutely porous magnesium orthosilicate, which was ionising the air surrounding it, darkened to a more normal metallic hue as it hovered just above ground level, rocking slightly from side to side. Just before touching down, its thick hydraulic legs emerged from six points around the base to embed themselves deeply in the soft soil. The whole craft bounced gently on the legs, then settled down and was still. Its rotating wings gradually slowed and then stopped moving altogether, as did the wind that had been created by its electromagnetic gravity-damping system.

Still sitting in his rocking chair on the veranda, Ernst was deeply moved by the sight of the magnificent craft, though he also felt embittered at being condemned to this hellish jungle, rounding up Ache Indians instead of being involved in the great scientific achievements of the Antarctic colony. His feeling of loss was in no way eased by the knowledge that in truth he could never return to engineering, because it was now too far behind him and the technological advances of recent years had rendered his old engineering knowledge redundant. Trained as a military policeman by the SS, that's what he would now remain as: a hunter of men and prison warden

for Wilson.

Ernst's bitterness was like acid in his stomach, almost making him retch.

With the outer rings of the saucer no longer rotating, the infrasound faded away and a panel in the concave base dropped down on hinged arms to form a ramp leading to the ground. Armed guards wearing black coveralls emerged to form a protective ring around the ramp, then Wilson appeared, wearing his customary black shirt and pants, followed by some short, nightmarish creatures who had a jerky mechanical gait and were, Ernst assumed, the first of the promised cyborgs.

Surrounded by his own bodyguards of heavily armed *Federales* and *contrabandistas*, Ernst went to greet his master.

This time, when Wilson shook his hand, Ernst was no longer surprised at how youthful he appeared to be. Though nearing ninety, Wilson looked like a healthy sixty-year-old, with a good head of silvery-grey hair and smooth skin on a handsome, though oddly inexpressive, face, dominated by unusually piercing, icy-blue eyes. Like his facial muscles, his movements were slightly stiff, reminding Ernst that he'd had numerous joint and organ replacements, as well as extensive plastic surgery.

This man, Ernst thought sourly, is a prototype of the creatures gathered around him. Steel-and-cobalt joints, artificial heart and grafted skin. He only *looks* normal.

Ernst shook Wilson's hand and murmured words of greeting while studying the nightmarish creatures spreading out behind him. He realised immediately that they were Ache Indians, which explained their short stature, but that now they were part man, part machine. Their hideous appearance was caused by the fact that their jawbones and mouths had been replaced with metal masks, they were also wearing metal skullcaps, and some of them were dressed in tight, one-piece, silvery-grey coveralls of a material resembling Thai silk.

They looked, Ernst thought, like extraterrestrials: creatures out of a bad dream.

'Your first cyborgs,' he said.

'Yes,' Wilson replied.

'Can they speak?'

'Not yet, but they function otherwise.'

'Are they still human in any sense that we'd recognise?'

'They still possess fragments of their former memories and reasoning, but their thoughts and actions, even their emotions, can be remote-controlled by the electrodes implanted in their heads through those stereotaxic skullcaps.'

'The metal caps.'

'Correct.' Wilson glanced approvingly at the nearest cyborg, then tapped his knuckles against the metal plate covering the unfortunate creature's lower jaw and mouth. 'Deprived of speech by the lower-jaw prosthetic,' he explained, 'they communicate via the stereotaxic skullcaps, which act like miniature radio receivers, operated by thought-waves. As an interesting side effect, their inability to speak is gradually producing in them what appears to be a primitive form of mental telepathy, which may soon make even skullcap communication redundant. This is an

unexpected, novel development that we must follow through.'

Ernst nodded, intrigued despite his instinctive revulsion. 'And the metal hands?'

'Myoelectric prosthetics, developed by our excellent Dr King, formerly of the Powered Limbs Unit of West Hendon Hospital, London, England. They're really miniature versions of what we intend developing in larger form for the exploration of the seabed, the surface of the moon and, eventually, the planets: remote-controlled CAMS, or Cybernetic Anthropomorphous Machine Systems, of the kind presently being developed by NASA for space exploration. Naturally, we're already well ahead of NASA – indeed, we give them our obsolete prosthetics and CAMS as part of our trade with the US – and we've installed larger versions of these remote-controlled, steel limbs as handling devices in this particular transport craft. Come, let's have a drink on the veranda.'

'But how can they stand being like that?' Ernst asked, as he and Wilson turned towards the log-house. 'They're so inhuman. So... hideous.'

'I told you. The stereotaxic skullcaps control even their emotions, so they're programmed to forget everything that went before and to consider themselves perfectly normal. The skullcaps also direct the impulses from the brain to the severed limbs, thus controlling the movements of the myoelectric, prosthetic hands. As we direct those impulses via the stereotaxic skullcap, we can control everything they remember, desire, and fear, as well as their every physical action. I know they look like creatures from another world, but they're highly effective as totally obedient slaves and ruthless bodyguards. In the latter context, their dreadful appearance is actually helpful, because it frightens the average human being to the point of paralysis.'

'I was abducted by aliens,' Ernst said, quoting from a host of recent articles about UFOs and their so-called extraterrestrial occupants.

'Exactly,' Wilson said with a rare, slight display of amusement. 'It's just what we need.'

They returned to the veranda and took high-backed chairs on opposite sides of a bamboo table containing a tall bottle of iced white wine and two glasses. A bare-footed servant girl, Rosa, dark skin gleaming with beads of sweat, poured the wine, then stepped back into the shadows of the awning while Ernst and Wilson touched glasses.

'*Skol*!' Ernst said by way of a toast. After drinking, he wiped sweat from his forehead – how he loathed this constant heat! – then cast his gaze over the immense flying saucer, which practically filled the whole clearing and towered above him like a cathedral of pure, seamless steel. He then studied the nightmarish creatures, the cyborgs, forming a protective cordon just below him, facing his armed *Federales* and *contrabandistas*. His native workers, he noticed, were also staring at the cyborgs, their eyes wide with fearful fascination.

'They're merely prototypes,' Wilson explained, noting Ernst's interest. 'Soon they'll be even more advanced. As far as these cyborgs go, what you see is what they

are: restructured breathing and digestive systems, implanted skulls and myoelectric hands. They're fed intravenously, which gives us yet another hold over them. However, in later models, to be used for long-term undersea and space exploration, while the kidneys, lungs and original intestines will remain, they'll be strengthened and supported by a two-chamber pacemaker. Advanced prosthetic joint replacements have already been perfected – indeed, I have some myself – and will help defeat the rigours of the ocean bed and extended journeys through outer space. Soon, with our latest innovation – an electronic larynx – they'll be able to speak as well, though we'll reserve that privilege for the few, as we wish to encourage the evolution of mental telepathy in the speechless. As for the larger CAMS installed in this particular transport craft – watch!'

Wilson aimed a small, hand-held device at the front of the enormous saucer, then pressed a button. A bass humming sound emanated from the craft and the ramp leading from its base to the ground was pulled up automatically to form a sealed door. As soon as the door closed, another section of the base was lowered on hydraulic supports to form a much wider, brilliantly illuminated ramp between the interior of the saucer and the ground. Two smaller panels hidden in the otherwise seamless upper surface of the saucer then opened to emit beams of an even more dazzling light that converged on Ernst's jeep, parked close to the saucer's nearest edge. The beams of light flickered so rapidly, they hurt Ernst's eyes, but then, to his amazement, the parked jeep was pulled forward, as if the beams of lights were chains. When the jeep was about ten yards from the wide ramp, a CAM consisting of extendable arms and steel platform emerged from inside the saucer to pick up the vehicle and draw it up the ramp, into the saucer. When the jeep had vanished inside, the beams of light blinked out, the panels closed, and the ramp withdrew until the base of the saucer was sealed again.

'A form of magnetism created by powerful electrical forces in the laser beams drew the jeep towards the remote-controlled grips of the CAMS,' Wilson explained, 'allowing it to take hold of the vehicle and draw it up into the saucer. When the uninitiated find this happening to their own cars, they assume it's some kind of miracle – or the highly advanced paraphysical activity of extraterrestrials. As with the appearance of the cyborgs, their terror makes them easier to handle if we wish to abduct them. Do you want your jeep back?'

'Yes, please,' Ernst replied, suitably impressed.

Wilson pressed a button on his remote-control and the previous process was reversed, with the base of the saucer dropping down to form a ramp and the CAM pushing the jeep out on its extending arms and steel platform, to deposit it back on the ground. Then the ramp was withdrawn back up into the saucer and again became a sealed door in the base.

'We've made even greater advances in our strobe-light and laser-beam technology,' Wilson said, speaking academically, without the slightest trace of pride in his voice – just doing his job. 'Now we're using wave-lengths and rhythmic

patterns that temporarily freeze skeletal muscles or certain nerves, thus producing either paralysis or a trance-like condition. Observe!'

Some of the captured Ache Indians were still wailing in terror in the cages near the shacks of the compound workers. When Wilson activated his remote control, another small panel facing the cages opened in the sloping top-body of the saucer. A dazzling beam of light shot out, like a spotlight, and wandered across the clearing until it illuminated the cage from which most of the wailing was coming from. Once caught in the beam of light, the captured Indians became even more vocal in their panic, but when the beam of light started flickering on and off rapidly, like a strobe light, turning the clearing into a bizarre, slow-motion movie, the Indians caught in it not only fell silent but began collapsing and falling against each other, until eventually all of them were unconscious. When Wilson then turned off the flickering beam of light, the Indians regained consciousness, picking themselves up off the floor of the cage and glancing around them as if in a daze.

'As we learn more about the wave patterns of the brain,' Wilson explained, 'so we learn that most emotions – fear and anger, docility, even self-hatred – can be released by exposing the subject to the stimuli of strobe lights flickering in one of the four basic rhythmic patterns: alpha, beta, delta, and theta. In doing this, we can induce just about every kind of condition, from drowsiness, dizziness, mesmerism, or psychological paralysis, to epileptic or other violent seizures. Indeed, by combining strobe lights flickering in the alpha-rhythm range, between eight and twelve cycles per second, with infrasounds, we can cause an epileptic seizure in the human subject – as you can see. Recently we perfected this to the point where we can force a subject to turn against himself in the ultimate manner. Observe, Ernst.'

This time, when the beam of light shot out of the saucer and began flickering on and off at a blinding, disorientating rate, while making what was, to Ernst, a barely discernible, though oddly physical, sound, it picked out one of Ernst's compound workers. The man, wearing only a loin cloth and with a machete strapped to his waist, initially stepped back, dazzled, and started covering his eyes with one hand. However, before his hand reached his forehead, it started trembling violently, as did his whole body, then he screamed, clasped his head in his hands, and fell to his knees. Trembling even more violently, shaking his head from side to side as if in terrible pain, he collapsed to the ground, went into a fit, then managed to clamber back to his knees and remove the gleaming machete from his belt.

In the rapid flickering of the light, all his movements appeared to be in slow motion, as if in devilish pantomime – an illusion that rendered even more horrible what happened next.

Releasing another scream of anguish, the man shook his head violently again, then reversed the machete and rapidly slashed his own stomach open. Even as his entrails spilled out, he was hacking at himself again, repeatedly, dementedly, and kept doing so until he toppled sideways, to lie still in the flattened, blood-soaked grass.

Some friends, including a woman, possibly his wife, wailed in grief and fear, then

bent down to examine the dead man as the flickering strobe light blinked out, returning the night to star-draped darkness.

Within seconds, Ernst's armed thugs were hammering the grieving people with the butts of their weapons, forcing them back, as another two *contrabandistas* picked up the dead man and carried him out of sight, to be buried, as Ernst knew, in the unmarked communal grave outside the compound. When the dead man's relatives and friends continued wailing in grief, Wilson again demonstrated the power of the strobe light by rendering them unconscious with it, after which they, too, were carried away.

Feeling nothing for the murdered man, Ernst was suitably impressed. Though increasingly resenting being kept in this hellhole, he still had a healthy respect for Wilson – and, indeed, practically worshipped him. He often despised himself for this reverence, but could not fight the feeling.

'Finally,' Wilson said, knowing exactly how to impress his disciple, 'look at this.'

Again aiming his remote control at the immense transport craft, he activated the opening of panels located at half-a-dozen different points, equidistant around the top body, below the level of the mushroom-shaped central dome. With a speed that startled even the expectant Ernst, silvery objects shot out of the openings and ascended to a height of about a hundred feet, where they stopped abruptly and hovered in the air.

They looked just like the old World War II *Feuerballs*.

'They are,' Wilson confirmed, when Ernst had made this observation. 'They're highly advanced models based on the originals.'

'How highly advanced?'

'Though still only three to six feet in diameter, they have most of the capabilities of the larger saucers and are used for reconnaissance and as antiradar and sensing devices. As they can emit strobe lights and laser beams, they're also used as mesmerising or stunning devices, as well as to draw mechanical vehicles close enough to the mother ship to be within reach of the CAMS.'

'So they're used in abductions.'

'Correct,' Wilson said. With what seemed like a sigh of regret (though Ernst suspected that such an emotion would be alien to him) he returned the advanced *Feuerballs* to the transport craft and closed the panels. He then reopened the wide ramp at the bottom of the saucer and ordered the cyborgs to herd the imprisoned Ache Indians up into it. The cyborgs turned away without a word and walked in their oddly mechanical manner to the cages where, with the help of stun guns that clearly stung, rather than inducing unconsciousness, they began marching the hurt, terrified Indians towards the saucer's ramp.

'The infrasounds,' Wilson said, 'are so condensed that they can create physical pressure on the human brain and the body's organs, even bursting blood vessels in the head. Thus, they're useful as weapons, which is why we've incorporated them into the saucers. As for the stereotaxic skullcaps, we also plan to use them to hypnotise or

otherwise control human beings by remote control. We'll abduct those we want, impregnate their heads with minute, remote-controlled electrodes, then return them to the world, to do our bidding as and when required. Eventually, in this way, we'll be able to enslave the world's most powerful men and women without resorting to war and with few aware that they're under our control. In other words, they'll become our brain-implanted robots – even those in the highest seats of government.' He offered a smile that failed to warm the Antarctic blue of his eyes. 'So how are you, Ernst? I must say, you look well.'

It was a lie and Ernst knew it, though he was wise enough not to argue. He had aged overnight towards the end of World War II, when his wife and two children were killed in an air-raid on Berlin, making him realise that he had no one left but Wilson. At least he had aged in appearance – he had seen it in the mirror – though since coming to Paraguay he had aged in an even worse way: inside, in his spirit. Now his skin had a yellow pallor, his handsome features were wrinkled, and his body, though bone-thin, felt heavy and lifeless. As for his spirit, it was trickling out of him with each passing day, leaving nothing but the ghosts of old dreams that were long dead and buried. Ernst knew that he was paying for his sins and that hell was right here on Earth.

'I feel fine,' he lied, not yet having the courage to say otherwise. 'How are things in Antarctica?'

'Things run smoothly,' Wilson said. 'No problems so far. Our secret agreements with the Americans, British and Russians have ensured a constant supply of all the materials we require. As for general manpower and slave labour, we continue to replenish those lost through experimentation or natural causes by simply abducting more people and, of course, by supplementing them with your invaluable supply of Ache Indians. You're still having no trouble in obtaining them?'

'It's easier than it was. With General Stroessner now the President of Paraguay, we have total freedom of movement. The general always wants money.'

'Greed makes strong men weak, which is what we can utilise. The former war allies are greedy for our technology, which is why I can use them.'

'I sometimes worry,' Ernst said, 'that we'll give away too much.'

'You worry too much,' Wilson said.

'Do I? Please let me remind you that earlier this year Werner von Braun's first satellite, *Explorer*, was launched successfully into space. Subsequent *Explorer* satellites made the first scientific discoveries of the space age by locating the radiation belt around Earth. In July, a US nuclear submarine, *Nautilus*, made a successful four-day journey under the ice of the North Pole. I should also point out that the past year has seen the discovery of electronic miniaturisation in the shape of the silicon chip; and that the British and the Americans are both presently involved in Zeta programmes designed to harness the power of the H-bomb. This represents an unprecedented speed of advancement – and it's my belief that it was possible only through the West's access to our innovations, particularly those in the field of

electronic miniaturisation, which will revolutionise every branch of technology.'

'I understand your concern,' Wilson said, 'but I think it's misplaced. We can only pass on what we've already surpassed, and each time they've tried to trick us, or planned to turn against us, we've easily scared them back into line with a display of our superior powers – as we did with the so-called UFO invasion of Washington DC in 1952 and when we arranged for the explosion in the US *Vanguard* rocket during its launch in December, 1957.'

'I'd *assumed* that was your doing,' Ernst said admiringly. 'How did you manage it?'

'We abducted one of the NASA engineers, flew him to the Antarctic base, implanted minute electrodes in his head, using a stereotaxic skullcap, then programmed him to forget his experience with us, while doing for us exactly what we wanted. He planted one of our explosive devices in the rocket – a device so minute, it leaves no traces after it's exploded. Naturally, the Americans never guessed who had done that – since they never thought to examine the heads of their engineers for electronic implants. So our brain-implanted slave is still there, at NASA, to do our bidding as and when required. The seesaw arrangement is working, Ernst, and we're in control of it. Now I have to be going.'

The abruptness was typical of Wilson. It was not a sign of rudeness, but of his impatience and inability to sit still and do nothing.

As Wilson pushed his chair back and stood upright, Ernst noticed that the last of the terrified Ache prisoners had been herded up into the transport craft by the stun-gun-toting cyborgs and that the saucer was therefore ready to depart. Swelling with a sudden, startling desperation, Ernst followed Wilson across the clearing, through his own armed *Federales* and *contrabandistas*, as well as Wilson's grim, black-clothed bodyguards, before stopping at the brilliantly lit, sloping ramp that led up into the saucer. Glancing up, Ernst caught a glimpse of gleaming white, curving inner walls, a stretch of steel-railed catwalk, figures silhouetted in dazzling light. He was gripped by the pain of loss when he thought of how all of this had begun: thirty years ago, when some primitive, liquid-fuelled rockets had been shot up from an abandoned 300-acre arsenal in the depressing Berlin suburb of Reindickerdorf. Ernst had been there at the beginning, but not for too long. Each time he had been sidestepped, which had happened too often, he had lost another piece of his soul and hope for the future. Now he wanted that back, to recapture his lost youth, and so he turned to face Wilson, his idol, his master, fighting to keep control of his emotions and brimming self-pity.

'I lied to you,' he confessed. 'I'm not feeling fine at all. In fact, this place is driving me mad and I yearn to escape it. This jungle compound is a pestilence. These moronic natives are my despair. I have no-one to talk to, no-one educated, and now pressure from the West to find and punish former Nazis has made it too dangerous for me to even visit Asuncion, which I used to do regularly when I needed a break. I repeat, Herr Wilson, that I'm going mad in this place. Please take me back with you.

Replace me with someone else. Give me a respite from this hellhole and let me do more important work. Let me work on the saucers.'

Wilson stared steadily at him, his blue gaze intense, revealing neither sympathy nor contempt, but merely the icy-bright gleam of pure pragmatism. When he then placed his hand on Ernst's shoulder, Ernst felt his heart sinking, knowing what the answer would be, not able to challenge it.

'I'm sorry, Ernst,' Wilson said, 'but the time isn't right. I understand your frustration, but I have to be hard with you, to keep you doing what you must do until this job is completed. Your time will soon come, Ernst. Soon you won't be needed here. In the meantime, however, you just have to be patient and continue to do the best that you can. You have to stay here, Ernst.'

'But I'm going mad here!' Ernst blurted out, ashamed of the self-pity in his voice, but unable to hide it. 'There's no one for me here. I can't go to Asuncion. If I can't get away now and then, I'll truly go crazy.'

Wilson squeezed his shoulder. 'Don't worry, Ernst. The next time we come, we'll bring you a thirty-five-foot, single-pilot flying saucer, solely for your personal convenience. You can use it to make trips away from here, when it becomes too much for you. This small craft will take you anywhere you want, allowing you to avoid Asuncion. It possesses all the capabilities of the larger saucers and is easy to fly. Compared to this, driving a car is complicated.' He squeezed Ernst's shoulder again, trying to reassure him. 'The next time we visit, Ernst. In two weeks. I can offer you nothing else for the time being, so I trust you'll accept.'

'Yes, Herr Wilson. Thank you.'

Yet even as Ernst said this, lowering his eyes, unable to meet Wilson's gaze, he was filled with the chilling conviction that his idol was toying with him, not telling the whole truth, hiding something, planning something else for him, perhaps something not good.

When he raised his eyes again, to search for the truth in Wilson's gaze, the older man had already turned away from him and was entering the saucer. The cyborgs and armed guards followed him in, then the ramp gave off a low humming sound as it slotted back into the outer body of the saucer, once more leaving it solid and visually seamless.

Instantly, Ernst retreated to the relative safety of his front veranda. He sat in his rocking chair, started rocking automatically, staring upwards as the mighty saucer ascended slowly to just above the canopy of the trees. There it hovered majestically, silently, for a moment, then it suddenly shot off as a ball of light that shrank at great speed. Soon it became just one of the many stars above the jungle, briefly hovering in outer space, then it abruptly blinked out, as if it had never been.

Lowering his gaze and glancing around his compound, Ernst saw the high walls of wood and thatch, the guards in machine-gun towers, the open fires burning outside the shacks of the native workers, the bamboo cages for the Ache prisoners, the flogging posts and coffin-shaped, windowless boxes used for punishment; the dogs,

goats, chickens and pigs, the shit and piss in the open latrines. In the day it was all shadowed by the soaring tropical trees; but most nights, as right now, it was wrapped in a suffocating humidity, besieged constantly by every imaginable kind of insect and reptile, half of them venomous, others carrying deadly diseases. Surveying it all with his weakening eyes, through senses jaded and increasingly numbed, Ernst accepted that he really *was* in hell and receiving God's punishment.

When he thought back on World War II and his early days as an idealistic young engineer, then of Himmler and Kammler and Nebe and the SS, then of his wife and children (all betrayed by him, before dying in an Allied air-raid) and, finally, of what he was doing in this vile jungle, he understood why he was being punished and knew that he deserved it.

Ernst shed sentimental tears, then called out for his servant-girl, Rosa. When she advanced reluctantly from the darkness, on bare feet, clearly frightened, Ernst knew that he would make her suffer as he was suffering, easing his pain by inflicting it on someone even less fortunate.

He had created his own hell on Earth and now had to rule it. The devil, he knew, did not need disciples; he just needed victims.

Ernst now needed a lot of those.

'Tonight we will do things you can't imagine,' he said to Rosa as she knelt obediently, fearfully, in front of him. 'Now go into the bedroom, take your clothes off, and lie down on the floor. Don't move a muscle, don't make a sound, until I come to you. Do you understand, woman?'

'Yes, master,' she whispered.

Ernst burned in the scalding light of his sick desires and sad self-destruction. Waving Rosa away and glancing up at the stars, he wondered which one of them was actually Wilson's flying saucer. Then, in the full knowledge of his loss, he filled up with choking fury and pain.

'I won't stay here,' he whispered. 'I won't! *As God is my witness*!'

So saying, he stood up and entered the spacious, eerily empty log-house, to take out his frustration on Rosa in ways unimaginable.

Chapter Twenty-Six

Flying into Washington DC at the end of January, 1959, Dwight was picked up at the airport by Bob Jackson and his wife, Thelma, the sexy blonde WAC corporal who had acted as secretary to both of them during the good days at the ATIC. Though not quite as slim as she had been when Dwight had last seen her, Thelma was still an attractive, good-humoured woman.

'A matinée idol!' she exclaimed as she gave Dwight a hug. 'You haven't changed a bit, sweetheart.'

'If I weren't in a public place,' Dwight replied, 'I'd throw you on the floor and try my best.'

'Which wouldn't be good enough,' Thelma said.

Dwight laughed. 'Don't you know it?'

The ice was broken as easily as it only can be with true friends and they left the airport, driven by Thelma in a battered old Ford, like folk who had never been parted. Dwight sat in the rear.

'A damned mess,' he said.

'My car?'

'Yeah, Bob, your car. Sooner or later we all need a hearse, but it doesn't need to be *this* bad.'

'In American society,' Bob retaliated, 'a man's judged by his automobile and his woman. Given this, though my wheels aren't of the best, I'm still on top of the heap.'

'Now you know how he suckered me,' Thelma said, lighting up a Camel and exhaling a cloud of smoke as she drove. 'I couldn't resist his Irish blarney. He made me feel like a queen.'

'Which you are,' Dwight said.

'You're so straight-laced, Dwight,' Thelma replied teasingly, 'that hearing those words coming out of your mouth makes me melt and have wicked thoughts.'

'Sorry.'

'Don't apologise,' Bob said. 'Instead, take her words as words of wisdom. Never ignore a good woman.'

'I won't,' Dwight promised.

He said it without confidence, even as his chest heaved with a spasm of overwhelming love. It was love for Beth, stabbing through him like a knife, opening him with a surgeon's precision to all the pain, joy and uncertainty of being back with her.

Getting together again hadn't been all that easy, though it had certainly been worth it in the end. At first, when Dwight moved back in, he and Beth had been awkward with each other, no longer protected by the ease of familiarity and having to inch slowly towards one another. As with most such relationships, their greatest difficulty was in approaching each other in bed after having spent so much time apart. The first

night had been bad, an embarrassed, tentative touching that had filled Dwight with the shock of renewed desire, yet simultaneously unnerved him, making him feel like an inexperienced schoolboy who didn't know what to do. Giving up, they had slept in each other's arms and awakened self-conscious with each other – though the rest of that day Dwight felt remarkably alive, skin glowing with the indelible touch of Beth's soft skin on his. It had made him feel exalted.

The next night, however, was the breaking of the ice, with Beth taking the initiative, exploring him with her hands and lips, finally taking his hardness into her mouth and exciting him to the degree where he forgot the inhibitions he had developed over the barren years of separation. Set free by her equally shy, caring administrations, surrendering to the ecstasy of pure, sensual pleasure, he had lain there, breathing heavily, his body on fire, as she sat up and straddled him, her naked body pale in the moonlight, beads of sweat glistening on her breasts and thighs, running into her pubic hair.

It was possibly a tribute to the depth of their love that even now, at his age, Dwight was convinced that he would never forget that image of Beth for as long as he lived: naked, sweat-slicked, her hair falling across her face, legs spread and spine curved, full breasts thrusting out, emphasising the hardened nipples, as she moved up and down on him, turning this way and that, kneading his chest, belly and thighs with electrified fingers and an instinct that seemed to anticipate his every need and desire. He had stared up at her, wide-eyed, running his hands frantically over her, squeezing her breasts, stroking her belly, gripping her hips to let their movement excite him to the limit; then thrusting up with his groin, trying to penetrate even deeper, to bury himself so deeply inside her that he became a part of her – all of that in beams of moonlight that fell on the bed they had purchased two days after returning from their honeymoon in Niagara Falls, thirteen years ago, when they were younger and less complicated. For that reason, when Beth came, her body shuddering astride him, and he followed closely, feeling as if he was dying, he knew that their love had a solid basis that could see them through. That thought, also, exalted him. Though even now he could not shake off the anguish caused by the knowledge, gained painfully through the separation, that nothing was permanent.

'So how's Beth?' Bob asked, as if reading Dwight's mind.

'She's fine, Bob. So's Nichola.'

'God, Nichola!' Bob exclaimed, shaking his head from side to side in wonder. 'When I saw her last Christmas I nearly freaked. They grow up so fast.'

'How old is she?' Thelma asked.

'Twelve,' Dwight said.

'Oh, boy!' Thelma exclaimed, driving the car in a distracted, deceptively careless way. 'I can't believe you have a kid that age already. She was just a *baby* in Dayton.'

'Born there,' Dwight explained. 'When you and I were young, Thelma.'

She chuckled at that, exhaling more cigarette smoke. 'Yeah, right, back in the ATIC at Wright-Patterson AFB. Weren't *those* the days?'

‘Good days,’ Bob said. ‘You used to let me feel your leg beneath your desk, right there in the office, and my car was our regular passion pit when the sun had gone down. Now we only get together in bed, which shows how much we’ve aged.’

Thelma laughed outright at that. She had an infectious ‘dirty’ laugh. ‘True enough,’ she confessed without blushing. ‘But you’ve got your times mixed up. You were feeling my leg under the desk in 1948, Bob. The passion pit entered the vernacular about 1955, along with Elvis the Pelvis. God I love Elvis!’

‘Elvis killed us all,’ Dwight said. ‘He had the voice, the looks and the swinging groin; we only have the latter.’

‘I’m sure Beth’s perfectly happy with that,’ Thelma said, puffing another cloud of smoke from brightly painted grinning lips. ‘I know that deep down *I* am.’

‘Deep down,’ Bob said mournfully. When Thelma affectionately squeezed his arm, he grinned and glanced at Dwight’s reflection in the rear-view mirror. ‘So the reunion’s working out okay, I take it? You and Beth are okay?’

‘Yes, Bob, we’re fine.’

‘Are you sure?’

‘Yes.’

‘You seem a bit down right now.’

‘I’m just a bit nervous, that’s all. Meting this Dr...’

‘Epstein.’

‘Right, Dr Epstein.’

‘Nothing else?’

Brushing his windblown hair from his eyes, Dwight glanced out of the open window of the car. They were crossing the Potomac, on Memorial Bridge, and Dwight could see all the way along the Mall to the Capitol building. Washington DC always made him think of London, England, though he had never been there. He’d only seen it in books.

‘Well,’ he confessed finally, ‘there *is* something else. The reunion’s been fine – I mean physically and emotionally – but something’s a bit off with Beth. I don’t mean her and me... It’s something else... I mean..’

‘Out with it,’ Bob said.

Dwight nodded. ‘She’s having bad dreams. Nightmares, in fact. Even when we’ve had a good night together, making love, once asleep she often wakes up screaming.’

‘UFO dreams?’

‘Yep.’

‘Men in black?’

‘Yep. All the things she’s read about and been told about, not only when we were at the ATIC, but since I left home and went on the bottle. Thing is, she never had those dreams, or nightmares, until I returned home. We’re happy being back together – I swear to it, folks, and I think I can speak for Beth – but she only started having those dreams when we got back together. I guess that’s what’s bothering me.’

Even Thelma, normally so ebullient, was silent for a moment, her lips slightly

open, exhaling a stream of smoke, eyes focused on the buildings slipping past as the car cut into New Hampshire Avenue, heading for 21st Street.

'These dreams?' Bob asked eventually, as if reluctant to do so. 'That's all they are? Dreams?'

'What do you mean?'

'She dreams of UFOs and men in black?'

'Right.'

'Has she said she's had actual contact? I mean, any experiences *other* than dreams?'

'No,' Dwight replied emphatically. 'Definitely not. I specifically asked her that very question and she was adamant that she was only having dreams and...' He shrugged. 'Feeling... *haunted*. She says she *feels* that she's being watched, but that's all it is – only a feeling. She thinks the feelings might be related to the dreams – a kind of hangover from them – so she's not worried about that aspect of it. It's the dreams, specifically, that are bothering her. What do *you* think, Bob?'

Bob took his time replying as Thelma, still puffing clouds of cigarette smoke, turned the car into 21st Street.

'Well,' Bob said carefully, 'obviously the dreams are related to all she's heard from you, me and others during our years of UFO investigations – the very investigations that broke up your relationship.'

'Agreed,' Dwight said.

'On the other hand, I'm concerned that she didn't have similar dreams when you and I were actually at the ATIC – and, in fact, didn't have them during your three-year separation – but has only had them since you returned home.'

'That's my concern,' Dwight said.

'So given that your reunion has been successful – '

'Which it has been – wonderful for both of us.'

' – I can only say that I'm concerned that your return home and, more unfortunately, my visit to your home, has possibly put you back in the spotlight – which would, of course, include Beth. Jesus H.Christ, I certainly hope not, but that could be the case.'

Dwight felt the darkness moving in to enclose him in broad daylight. 'You mean the people who stole my UFO photos – the men in black – might be back on my trail.'

'Yes, Dwight, I do.'

'And you think they can affect people's dreams?'

'Affect their minds, yes. And since it's known that I'm now working for the APII and have been to see you...'

'Oh, my God,' Dwight whispered.

Thelma braked to a halt outside the Hampshire Hotel, smiled as brightly as she could manage, and said, 'Here you are, Dwight. Your overnight stop. I'm going shopping while you check in and then go off with Bob to see Dr Epstein. Just remember that after I've been shopping, I'll be coming right back here, so no belly

dancers with walnuts in their navels, no bored business ladies in your room. You can go see Dr Epstein, then come back here and read the Gideon bible until I return. You got that?'

'Absolutely,' Bob said.

'Damned right,' Dwight added.

He and Bob clambered out of the car, removed the former's overnight bag from the trunk, and entered the Hampshire Hotel as Thelma drove away.

Driving back to Carillon Park after dropping Dwight off, Beth felt good for five minutes – the frost gleaming everywhere, the sky blue and brilliant, the air sharp and invigorating. Dwight's smile as he waved goodbye before disappearing through the departure gates – but within seconds of leaving the airport, even warmed by the recollection of Dwight's fond smile, she was attacked by that frightening feeling of being... *pursued*.

It was a feeling that had dogged her every day since Dwight had returned home: the feeling that no matter how good they were together, they were being threatened by something that neither could see or identify. That suspicion, which was based on all the things that had caused Dwight harm before – mainly reports of UFOs and stories about men in black – had led Beth, by night, to a succession of frightening dreams and, by day, to this feeling that she was never alone, that she was being watched somehow.

Now, as she drove along the stretch of road that passed the gas station where Dwight, when drinking heavily, had lived his bachelor life, she recalled the Dwight she had met for the first time as a fellow student at the University of Dayton. Though notably handsome and a member of the baseball team, therefore highly desirable to the other female students, he had been surprisingly reserved and even, as some put it, old-fashioned in his beliefs, which included respect for his parents, the family unit and the Roman Catholic Church, a non-fanatical but genuine patriotism, and the general conviction that a man must do what a man must do. Those slightly chauvinistic but otherwise admirably virtuous views he had picked up as one of the four children of Ralph Randall, an aeronautical engineer working as a freelance consultant for some of the many experimental aviation laboratories in the area, and his wife, Barbara, a public relations writer for the Miami Conservancy District flood-control project. Both were church-going Roman Catholics, highly active in the community, but possessing a healthy sense of humour. Beth, whose own Roman Catholic parents shared similar views, was totally charmed by Dwight and fell in love with him shortly after meeting him at the college Prom, to which she was taken by another young man, now scarcely remembered.

Bound by convention and being typical of their times, Beth and Dwight had dated formally, swooned together numerous evenings in Dwight's car, usually at drive-in movies, but did not actually consummate the relationship, agreeing that they should wait until they were married, which they planned to do shortly. This plan, however,

was thwarted by the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour. Almost immediately after that shocking event, with America entering the war on the side of the Allies, Dwight, who had inherited his father's interest in the aviation history of Dayton, was drafted into the Army Air Force and served as a bombardier and radar operator, flying to India, China and the Pacific with the original B-29 wing. Returning to college at the end of the war, four years later and a lot more mature, he was convinced that he had found what he wanted to do in life – be a full-time member of the Army Air Force – and so kept his reserved status, flying as a navigator in an Air Force Reserve Troop Carrier wing while working night and day to gain his degree in aeronautical engineering. He also married Beth, finally consummating their relationship during their honeymoon in Niagara Falls.

Though their initially shy sexual explorations gradually blossomed into an even more deeply satisfying emotional relationship, Beth knew that Dwight could not forget his wartime experiences and would not be kept at home by love alone. She was therefore not surprised when, after gaining his aeronautical engineering degree, he applied to go back on active duty. Luckily, he was posted straight to the recently formed Air Technical Intelligence Centre, located at Wright-Patterson AFB, right here in Dayton, where he and Beth moved into married quarters.

Driving past the garage where Dwight had worked during his period as an alcoholic 'bachelor' – the darkest days of their marriage – Beth was reminded of how, while loving Dwight, she had resented being an Air Force wife, loathed the insular life of the married community in and around the base, and had made her resentment known to him – too loudly, too frequently. To make matters worse, her resentment had become most vocal even as Dwight was suffering from the problems created by his UFO investigations for the ATIC. She therefore blamed herself, at least in part, for his plunge into alcoholic despair and subsequent departure from the Air Force he had once loved so dearly.

Now reunited with him, her residual guilt made her work even harder at keeping him happy and providing a degree of protection from the troubles that would, she was convinced, come about from his return to UFO investigations. She also knew, however, that only by returning to that work would he fully regain the pride he had lost when he left the Air Force. For that reason, and that reason alone, she had asked his old friend and Air Force buddy, Bob Jackson, to persuade him into going to work as the Dayton stringer for Dr Frederick Epstein's highly respected Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute, based in Washington DC. It was Beth's belief that the many trips Dwight would be compelled to make to the organisation, which would also give him the opportunity to visit Bob and Thelma, would be good for him. It was also her belief that Dwight was still obsessed with solving the mystery of why the Air Force was harassing UFO investigators, even to the point of ruining their lives, and that he could only do so through a dedicated, well funded civilian UFO organisation like the APII. On both counts, then, she felt that his teaming up with Bob and Dr Epstein, while certainly inviting trouble of one kind, would in the end be good for him.

Whether Beth was right or wrong in that assumption, it was, she had decided, a chance they would both have to take.

So thinking, Beth glanced out of the open window of the car... and saw that she was still passing the garage where Dwight used to work.

Startled, she then realised that she was not in fact driving, but had pulled into the side of the road and parked, almost opposite the garage in this otherwise desolate area. Unable to recall having done so, she felt disorientated and checked the time on her wristwatch.

The hands had stopped moving.

Shocked, suddenly frightened, she glanced left and right, behind the car, to the front, hardly knowing what she was looking for. The fields on both sides of the road were empty, as was the road itself, front and rear, but she was convinced that something was nearby and exerting some kind of force against her.

She tried the door of the car, but found that it was jammed shut. When she tried turning on the ignition, the car would not start.

Trapped, feeling oddly violated, she just sat there, gazing about her, trying to see what it was that she could feel as an invisible... *presence*.

Yet there was nothing unusual out there... Only the flat fields, the straight, empty road... and the garage at the far side of that road.

There was something strange about the garage. Its front door was open, swinging in and out with the wind, and banging repeatedly against its frame.

There was no sign of the new owner, Frank Bancroft... neither inside at the cash register, nor outside by the gas pumps.

Beth thought that was odd.

Something else was odd... When she looked more carefully, she noticed that the tall grass around the garage was quivering and being bent as if by the wind... but in an unnatural way. Behind and at both sides of the garage, the tall grass of the fields was virtually motionless, indicating that no wind was blowing there. The grass was only bending in a long, narrow line that formed an immense semicircle, enclosing the garage and stopping on the verge where the field met the tarmac road.

At least Beth *thought* it stopped there... until she noticed that the dust on the road was also being whipped up – again, only in a fine line that ran across the road to the front and rear of her car, the same distance away in both directions, about 170 feet in both directions. Within and outside those two fine lines of spiralling dust, no dust or debris was stirring.

Feeling increasingly unreal and frightened, Beth glanced in the opposite direction, at the fields on the other side of the road – the side she was parked on – and saw that the two lines of dust curved into that field where the grass was also bent and quivering, forming another large arc that ended on both sides of the road.

The lines of dust across the road, in front of, and behind, the car, joined the two arcs of bent, quivering grass to form an immense circle that enclosed the car and garage. Outside that circle, the grass was not moving at all.

Even as Beth studied that huge circle, she saw the tips of the grass slowly turning black and smoking a little.

Suddenly, the car started shaking, as if on a conveyor belt. Startled, Beth grabbed hold of the steering wheel. The car continued shaking – even though it wasn't otherwise moving – and Beth looked on, disbelieving, as the bent, quivering grass turned blacker and formed a great circle covered in smoke. Just as she thought the smouldering grass was about to burst into flames, it crumpled into black powder and the smoke started drifting away. Soon there was nothing but that immense, dark circle, formed by the ashes of grass, dead and charred black.

The car stopped its unnatural shaking and the door locks, which had been jammed in the closed position, clicked free of their own accord.

When Beth turned the key in the ignition, the engine kicked into life again.

Impelled by a combination of terror and helpless curiosity, Beth turned the engine off, then opened the door and leaned out of the vehicle to glance along the road in both directions. No other cars were approaching and the road was deserted, running as straight as an arrow under a sky filling up with low clouds.

Looking across the road, Beth saw that the door of the garage had stopped its banging, though it was now hanging open and there was still no sign of Frank Bancroft.

Taking a deep breath, Beth glanced directly above the car. At first she saw nothing but the gathering clouds, pregnant with rain... Then, above the clouds, she saw what looked like a circular light, about the size of a dime but shrinking rapidly, though still casting its striations downwards through the clouds. Even as Beth studied that light, trying to ascertain if it was a separate entity or merely an illusion caused by a combination of cloud and striated sunlight, it shrank to no more than a gleaming speck, then abruptly blinked out.

Without thinking, though with racing heart, Beth clambered out of her car and crossed the road to the forecourt of Frank Bancroft's garage, where Dwight had once lived and worked. When she had passed the gas pumps and was approaching the open front door of the store, she slowed down, feeling more frightened than ever by the unnatural silence and realising that sweat was trickling down her face.

Stopping by the open door, she glanced up at the sky again, checking that the strange, circular light had indeed disappeared. Satisfied that it had, she glanced across the flat field and saw that the great circle of black ash was still clearly visible.

Shivering, though sweaty and flushed with dread, she reached the open door and glanced tentatively into the store, scanning the shadowy space behind the cash register for a sign of Frank Bancroft. He was nowhere to be seen. The store, though empty, seemed untouched.

With her heart now racing so fast she thought it would burst, Beth entered the store and glanced about her. All the stock on the shelves – cans of oil, cleaning solvents, light bulbs, tools, maps, rubber floor mats, seat coverings and other automobile and driver products – was as it should have been. The cash register, Beth noticed, was

firmly closed.

No sign, then, of a hold-up.

Relieved just a little, but with her heart still racing, Beth advanced farther into the store and stepped around the far side of the counter containing the cash register.

There she gasped instinctively and froze in horror.

Frank Bancroft had fallen out of his chair and was lying flat on his back, but in a dreadfully contorted position and with his eyes popping out of his head, staring at something that had clearly terrified him. He had foamed at the mouth, evacuated his bowels, and fallen out of his chair as he collapsed.

Beth didn't need a doctor to tell her what had happened. This man had died of a heart attack brought on by sheer terror.

Now terrified as well, Beth gasped again, covered her mouth with her hand, then ran back to her car. She turned on the engine, which started with no trouble, then raced the car along the road, not stopping until she came to her local police station, near Carillon Park. There she informed the officer in charge, Deputy Marshall Tom Clooney, red-faced and pot-bellied, about Frank Bancroft's death. She said nothing about her blackout, the stopping of her wristwatch, the malfunctioning of her car, the smoking grass and the great circle of black ash. Convinced that the amiable Clooney would think she had gone mad, she decided to keep her mouth shut and relate only the details concerning her finding of Frank Bancroft's corpse.

When the report was completed, the cop on duty promised to have the body collected and the garage closed up. Relieved, Beth left the police station and drove on home.

She was still terrified.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Once booked into the Hampshire Hotel, downtown, Dwight and Bob walked the short distance along 21st Street to the Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute – the same modest, Federal-styled building located just off Pennsylvania Avenue where, six years ago, Dwight had given a deep background interview to the well-known astronomer and astrophysicist, Dr Frederick Epstein, Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and now the dedicated, hard-working head of the APII.

Epstein, Dwight noted, hadn't changed much in the intervening years. Back in 1953, because of his rather old-fashioned, prematurely greying Vandyke beard, he'd looked older than his age; now, though still only forty-seven, but with his beard even greyer, he looked ten years older than that. Nevertheless, he had good-natured, distinguished features, lively hazel eyes, a ready smile, and a tendency to stroke his beard when thinking. Slightly dishevelled, he seemed right at home in an office cluttered with filing cabinets, loose files, heaped reports, old newspapers, magazines and photos of UFOs.

The walls, also, were covered in photos of UFOs and poster-sized charts. One showed the most commonly reported UFO shapes, grouped into flat discs, domed discs, Saturn or double-domed discs, hemispherical discs, flattened spheres, spherical, elliptical, triangular and cylindrical. Another chart was divided into two illustrated sections, one showing the most commonly reported UFO formations, the other showing UFO manoeuvres both singly and in formation. Other charts showed the world-wide locations and flight directions of the major UFO waves from 1896 to the present; major UFO events in the United States and overseas; the major areas of alleged magnetic deviation around the world, including the North and South Poles; and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the world's leading civilian organisations.

'A major problem we're having,' Epstein was saying as Dwight removed his gaze from the wall charts, 'is that the checking of UFO reports is being made more difficult by the man-made satellites circling Earth in increasing numbers and now, in the case of the unmanned Soviet *Lunik*, passing the Moon to go into orbit around the sun.'

'Which it did only yesterday,' Bob reminded them as he unwrapped a stick of chewing gum and popped it into his mouth.

'Correct,' Epstein said, distractedly stroking his beard. 'For that very reason, Dwight, I'm really glad you're considering getting back into this business. We can certainly do with all the expert help we can get. You remember the Levelland sightings?'

'Yep,' Dwight said, feeling comfortable in this company, particularly since Bob Jackson had been indirectly responsible for reuniting him with Beth and Nichola, thus

giving him back his sense of purpose. ‘Texas. November 1957. The sightings caused quite a stir.’

‘They surely did.’ Epstein picked a report off his desk and studied it thoughtfully. ‘I’ve been studying this case in detail, Dwight, so let me refresh your memory by reading from my completed report.’

As Epstein read out the details, it all came back to Dwight in a rush. The events in Levelland, Texas, had formed the spectacular climax to the biggest year in UFO reports since 1952. The sightings had begun at 11.00pm on November 2 and ended at 2.00am the following morning. All the reports were of glowing, yellow-white, torpedo- or egg-shaped objects, approximately seventy-five to 200 feet long or in diameter, that had landed on the roads around Levelland, forcing oncoming cars to brake, stopping their ignitions, and emitting quite a bit of heat before taking off again, after which the cars’s ignitions had restarted.

The first sighting was at 11.00pm on the night of November 2, just north of Levelland, when one of the objects flew towards the automobile of two witnesses, causing the motor and lights to fail. When the witnesses got out of their vehicle to view the object more clearly, it came so close, they were forced to throw themselves to the ground. Considerable heat was felt as the object passed over them. When the object left the area, the automobile’s ignition and lights came back on.

An hour later, at midnight, a driver four miles east of Levelland was stopped by a brightly glowing, egg-shaped object, about two hundred feet in diameter, that was resting in the middle of the road. As the driver approached the object, his car’s engine and lights failed. When the object took off, rising vertically to a height of approximately two hundred feet and then shooting off rapidly, the witness’s car started up again.

A few minutes later, another witness, driving eleven miles north of Levelland, called the police to report having exactly the same kind of sighting and experience.

Five minutes after midnight, a witness driving nine miles east of Levelland got out of his car when its engine and lights failed. He was about to look under the hood when he saw an egg-shaped object sitting on the road ahead. He later described it as being about seventy-five to a hundred feet wide, made of what looked like aluminium, and giving off a white glow with a greenish tint. Frightened, he got back into his car and watched the object for a few minutes, until it took off and disappeared. When the object had flown out of sight, the witness’s car started again.

Fifteen minutes later, nine miles north of Levelland, another car stalled as it approached a similar object sitting on a dirt road. When the object ascended vertically to an altitude of about three hundred feet, then shot off and disappeared, the car’s engine started up again and its lights came back on.

After receiving this latest report, Levelland Patrolman A.J.Fowler sent two deputies out to investigate. They later reported seeing bright lights in the sky, but had no ignition problems with their vehicle. However, a few minutes after they called in their first report, a witness driving just west of town saw a ‘large orange ball of fire’

coming towards him. It settled on the road about a quarter of a mile ahead. When the witness approached it, his car's engine cut out and its lights failed. When the lights ascended a few minutes later, the car started up again.

Thirty minutes later, a truck driver informed the police that as he was driving northeast of Levelland, his truck's engine and headlights failed when he approached a brilliantly glowing, egg-shaped object that was straddling the road ahead. When he got out of his truck to investigate, the object shot up vertically with a roar and then flew away. The truck's engine and headlights then came back on.

By this time, other deputies in the area had received similar reports and were out on the roads, frantically investigating. While driving about five miles outside the city, a sheriff and his deputy saw a 'streak of light' with a 'reddish glow' on the highway, about three or four hundred yards ahead, lighting up the whole area. A few miles behind the sheriff and deputy, on the same road, two patrolmen saw a 'strange-looking flash' that appeared to be close to the ground about a mile in front of them. The last sighting of the evening was made by another policeman, who saw an object travelling so fast it looked like no more than 'a flash of light' shooting from east to west.

'In other words,' Epstein now summarised from his own report, 'twelve drivers, including police patrolmen, reported seeing a large, glowing, egg-shaped flying object and three more reported an unusual flash – all in a single, three-hour period covering the midnight of November second and third.'

'Forming a kind of grand climax to the biggest UFO flap since 1952,' Bob added, 'the sightings caused the Air Force a lot of embarrassment. They didn't investigate the affair until days after it took place, sent only one man to do the job, failed to interview nine of the fifteen witnesses, and stated falsely that lightning had been in the area at the time of the sightings. Under pressure from the public, the assistant secretary of defence insisted that the ATIC submit a preliminary analysis to the press. When Captain George Gregory – the head of our once beloved, now relatively useless Project Blue Book – did so, he claimed that the evidence was too slight for proper investigation, that only three of the witnesses could be located, and that contrary to reports, the object, or objects, had only been visible for a few seconds. He also reiterated that the sightings had been caused by lightning and storm conditions in the area – none of which were actually present at the time. Nevertheless, the Air Force's final report blamed the sightings on unusual weather phenomenon of an electrical nature, suggesting ball lightning or St Elmo's Fire, and again dragged up non-existent stormy conditions, including mist, rain, thunderstorms and lightning. With the aid of Donald Menzel, they then tried to blame the recent wave of sightings, including the Levelland affair, on the launching of the second Russian *Sputnik*. But when this failed to wash, the public uproar became so loud that the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, NICAP, was able to press for Congressional hearings.'

'Yeah, I read about that,' Dwight said. 'But I haven't heard much about the

hearings since then.'

'No, you wouldn't have,' Bob told him. 'In August last year, John McCormack's House Sub-Committee on Atmospheric Phenomena requested a week-long hearing in closed, secret session, but any hope that the hear would be a fair one was destroyed when the House Sub-Committee decided to take no further interest in the matter.'

'However, what we discovered right here at the APII,' Epstein said, 'has given us even more cause for concern. Last December, the Air Force published a staff study that came down heavily on the three major civilian UFO groups, accusing us of being biased and sensationalist. To make matters worse, we also learned that the Robertson Panel, in making their recommendations back in 1953 regarding civilian UFO groups, had used the chilling phrase...' Epstein paused for a moment to pick up another well-thumbed sheet from his desk and read from it. '*The apparent irresponsibility and the possible use of such groups for subversive purposes should be kept in mind.*' He let the sheet fall back on the desk, as if it was contaminating his fingers. 'We've also recently learnt that the FBI and the CIA are keeping extensive records on people involved in UFO investigations, including the members of our own organisation. Should you be considering joining us, I feel it's only fair that you know this. You've already had a lot of trouble with the Air Force; you'll get more if you join us.'

Recalling his dire experience with the Air Force, due to his involvement with UFO research, Dwight knew exactly what Epstein meant. Nevertheless, he said, 'I'm willing to take that chance. Now that Bob's got me interested again, I won't rest until I find out why the Air Force, which so clearly was concerned about UFOs when we were in Project Blue Book, went to such lengths to frustrate our investigations and turn Project Blue Book into a farce. It was, and remains, a contradiction that still keeps me awake at night.'

'That's precisely why we want you,' Epstein said, standing up and coming around his desk to shake Dwight's hand again. 'Welcome aboard.'

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Even before opening his eyes in his bed in his suite of rooms near the summit of the mountain in Antarctica, Wilson recalled his dream and realised that it had *not* been a dream, but a powerfully vivid, telepathic exploration of his colony. Having practised meditation and astral projection for years, he had at last developed the ability to see with his 'inner eye'. This morning, in a state of half sleep, just before awakening properly, he had roamed from his bedroom near the summit, down through the hacked-out interior of the mountain, to the various layers of the colony: the guard rooms just below him, then the computer rooms; then, farther down, the laboratories and surgeries, the machine-shops and storage facilities, then the slave accommodations, dining rooms and ablutions; and, finally, at the base of the mountain, the great landing pads and maintenance hangars for the flying saucers. He had made that journey in his mind, seeing everything clearly.

Even as his body was rotting with age, with its various organs being replaced one after the other, his Extra-Sensory Perception, practiced daily for about seventy years, was increasing dramatically.

Opening his eyes, he gazed through the panoramic windows of the suite at the vast, snow-covered wastelands of the Antarctic. All white. Everything. Except for the sky. The gleaming mountains and valleys stretching out to where that sheet of sheer blue met the white horizon, though that, too, was often rendered a silvery white by wind-swept snow and frost. Light. Lots of light. A unique and dazzling vision. The light flashed off the mountain peaks and glaciers as snow broke up, rolled down the mountain slopes, or drifted like powder on the wind, reflecting and bending the rays of the blinding sun. The Antarctic was vast, supremely beautiful, and empty. There were no people out there. No noise. It was the end of the world.

Sitting upright, Wilson glanced around the bedroom: a functional room, with pine-board walls, clothes closets and a couple of chests-of-drawers. There were no paintings on the walls, no decorations or ornaments of any kind. There were, however, a series of TV monitor screens banked along one wall and controlled from the control-panel on his bedside cabinet. Though Wilson was now able to use his ESP to scan the colony, he could more easily do so by means of the spy cameras located in more areas of the underground complex and transmitting back to the TV monitors in his bedroom and study.

Switching on the monitors, as he did every morning before getting out of bed, he used his hand-control to flick from one screen to the other and check that everything was in order: the great saucers on their landing pads in the cavernous space hacked out of the mountain's rock; the massive workshops where the saucers were constructed; the laboratories where surgical experiments were conducted on captured human beings and animals, some dead, others alive; the storage rooms for the collection of frozen human heads, limbs and organs; the slave accommodations where

the nightshift workers were sleeping; and the dormitory-styled quarters for the comfort girls. Everywhere he checked, he saw hundreds of men and women at work, including white-coated scientists, technicians and surgeons; slave-workers in grey coveralls; and the flying-saucer crewmembers in their black flight suits – all illuminated in the arc lights powered by self-charging generators and fixed high on the walls of solid rock, as were the spy cameras. The underground colony was a hive of activity. Everything was in order.

Satisfied, Wilson slipped out of bed and padded on bare feet into the adjoining bathroom where he attended to his ablutions, then had an invigorating cold shower. After drying himself, he put on a silk dressing gown and returned to the bedroom, where he sat on the edge of the bed, again facing the panoramic window with its breathtaking view of Antarctica. Phoning through to the quarters of the comfort girls, he asked the matron to send him someone trained in electronic stimulation. Then he placed the phone back on its cradle and patiently waited.

The girl arrived within minutes, entering via the elevator in the study and coming into the bedroom from there. Wilson's taste in comfort girls changed from time to time - sometimes he enjoyed Eurasians, other times blacks, sometimes the Ache women flown in from Paraguay by Ernst Stoll – but his present taste was for slim white girls, preferably no younger than eighteen, no older than twenty. The girl who now entered fitted the bill exactly, being slim, blonde, eighteen years old, and dressed in a diaphanous robe that emphasised every curve in her body with each step she took. Though subdued with a constant supply of Valium and other sedatives, she was still a little nervous of Wilson and kept her head bowed.

'Your name?' Wilson asked.

'Clare Collins.'

'Where are you from?'

'Albuquerque, New Mexico.'

'When were you abducted?'

'I think about eighteen months ago.'

'You don't know the precise date?'

'No, sir, I've forgotten.'

'Have you forgotten a lot about your previous life?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Forgetting more every day?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Good. Soon you won't remember a thing about it. Then you can come off your daily sedation. Do you know what I want?'

'Matron said the stimulator.'

'That's correct. You've used one before?'

'Yes, sir.'

'On me?'

'No sir. On some others. This is my first time up here.'

‘Take your robe off,’ Wilson said.

The girl nodded, then took hold of the hem of her garment to tug it up her shapely legs, off her perfect body, and finally over her head. After letting the garment fall to the floor, she stood there with her hands by her sides and her head slightly lowered. She had long legs, broad hips, a slim waist and firm breasts. Her skin, which had been sun-tanned when she was abducted, was now milky white.

Seeing her, Wilson wanted her, though he could do little about it because he could no longer obtain an erection without special help. Nevertheless, for the good of his mental health, he required sensual stimulation and the sight of this lovely, naked girl was an aid in obtaining it.

‘The stimulator is in there,’ he said, pointing to a closet. ‘Bring it out and proceed.’

Opening the closet door, the naked girl wheeled out a mobile electronic console. Pushing it to the side of the bed, she raised its lid and lay it backward until it formed a tray. Withdrawing vibrating pads and electrodes fixed to cables from inside the console, she laid them side by side on the tray. She then glanced questioningly at Wilson, received his nod of consent, and reached out to untie the belt of his dressing gown. After slowly drawing the robe off his shoulders and down his body, she started when she saw the numerous scars criss-crossing his skin – the visible signs of his many surgical operations.

‘Don’t worry,’ Wilson reassured her. ‘They don’t hurt anymore.’

Instinctively, he ran his fingers along the most recent scar, which ran across his left breast. This was from an operation to replace his old piezoelectric crystal pacemaker with a new model. Eventually, so he hoped, he would receive a pacemaker with a plutonium power source, weighing practically nothing and lasting much longer, but a successful model had yet to be developed.

The girl nodded, relieved. ‘You want oil, sir?’

‘Yes,’ Wilson said, stretching out on his back on the bed to let her begin. She did so by pouring slightly heated olive oil onto her hands, then rubbing it into his skin, starting with his chest, moving down to his stomach, then sliding her fingers through his pubic hair and around his penis. Once down there, she rubbed the oil in around his scrotum, onto his inner thighs, then around his hips, back over his belly and down again to the genital area. Then, taking his penis in her oil-soaked right hand, she massaged it tenderly, expertly, eventually managing to raise it a little.

Watching her with his unblinking gaze, taking in the rise and fall of her breasts, the full nipples, the flat belly running down to her blonde pubic hair between perfectly formed, smooth thighs, Wilson recalled how, even in adolescence, though helplessly aroused by sexual thoughts and feelings, he had translated his desire into a set of equations that enabled him to disassociate himself from the fallacy of romantic love and treat sex as a purely physiological necessity, like pissing or shitting. Now, even as his ‘comfort girl’, the abducted young beauty, Clare Collins, released his slight erection from her oil-soaked fingers and, instead, used the electric vibrating pads on the most erogenous parts of his body, he was caught between his human need to

surrender to pure sensual feelings and his scientific need to transcend those same feelings and remain in control.

Yet sensual feelings, he knew, were inextricably linked to mental health, and so, when the comfort girl dabbed paste onto his temples and fixed electrodes to him, he closed his eyes, shutting out the real woman, and let himself surrender to the voluptuous visions created by the stimulator. The Theta rhythms being passed through his brain at a rate of four cycles per second altered his mood and, in conjunction with the comfort girl's expert massaging, both with her oil-soaked fingers and the exquisitely soft vibrating pads, replaced his icy intellectualism with steadily rising, temporary desire. As the Theta rhythms increased gradually to a rate of seven seconds per second, filling his head with carnal visions worthy of an adolescent, the comfort girl massaged his stomach, loins and inner thighs with the vibrating pads, manipulated his hardening penis with her oil-soaked fingers, and finally, when she sensed that he was coming, covered his penis with her lips and let him come into mouth. Without sex, or, at least, without penetration, Wilson shuddered, orgasmed, found physical release, and was returned to his intellectual concerns, above distracting desires.

Opening his eyes, he watched the comfort girl wiping her lips dry with a tissue; she then turn off the vibrating pads and removed the electrodes from his temples. Her naked body now seemed offensive to him and he wanted no part of it.

'Put your robe on immediately,' he told her, 'then return the stimulator to the closet and take your leave.'

'Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.'

Backing away from him, keeping her head bowed, the girl put her robe back on and then wheeled the electronic console back into the closet and hurriedly left the room. Wilson heard her crossing the lounge. He waited until the door of the elevator had opened and closed, then he put on his dressing gown and picked up the phone to order breakfast.

'I'll have a fruit-and-nut cereal,' he said, 'and a glass of white wine. Very dry. Very cold.'

He had a single glass of dry white wine with every frugal meal of the day, including breakfast. Apart from those three glasses of wine, he did not partake of alcohol. Nor did he eat meat or fish.

His breakfast was delivered by an Ache Indian who had been lobotomised to render him passive, totally obedient and easily trained. He was dressed in grey coveralls, his feet in soft felt slippers. Knowing better than to speak to Wilson, he simply placed the tray on a table that wheeled over the bed – a steel-framed hospital trolley – and then left the suite as unobtrusively as he had entered it, taking the elevator back down to the slave accommodations located near the base of the mountain.

When the Indian had departed, Wilson had his breakfast while watching the world news on his satellite-dish TV monitors, flicking repeatedly from one screen to

another, one country to another, one news item to another, impatient with the triviality of human beings and their idiotic conflicts, most of which were, in his view, based on primitive notions of patriotism or religion.

Finishing his breakfast, he pushed the wheeled tray to the end of the bed, then swung his feet to the floor, shucked off his dressing gown, and proceeded to dress in his standard working outfit of black coveralls. Leaving the bedroom, he passed through his spacious, dome-shaped, steel-and-concrete study, which also offered a wonderful view of Antarctica, and took the elevator down to the parapsychological laboratories.

Like most other experimental areas of the underground colony, the laboratories had been hacked out of the interior of the mountain, with the exposed rock face covered in black pitch. The irregular shape of the walls made the enclosed spaces seem even more cavernous than they were in reality. Light came from the arc lights fixed high above the stone-flagged floors. While being adequately heated by phase-change solar-heat pumps located outside the mountain, the laboratories, with their pitch-covered rock, looked bleak and unwelcoming. Though not quite as hideous as the laboratories where doctors King and Eckhardt kept their Frankenstein's collection of severed human heads, limbs and internal organs, the parapsychological laboratory now held its fair share of similar horrors. These included electric chairs with buckled straps on the arms and head-braces with microphones, used for experiments that could cause haemorrhaging from the eyes, ears and nose, as well as inducing cardiac arrest or bursting the blood vessels of the brain, leading to madness or death; water tanks used for sensory-deprivation experiments on human subjects; and small, dark cells with leaded-steel doors, used for a combination of other sensory-deprivation experiments and even more cruel experiments with strobe lights flickering at a rate that caused drowsiness, nausea, acute depression or fear, absolute obedience, uncontrollable violence, and epileptic seizures.

The most notable of the horrors in this laboratory, however, was the severed head of the unfortunate Marlon Clarke, which, almost thirteen years after Clarke's abduction, was still functioning in an inhuman way with the aid of a special stereotaxic skullcap and numerous electronic hairpin implants. At one stage Clarke's severed head, then kept in a class casing with an inner temperature reduced to just above the point of freezing, had been recording dying brain-waves on the EEG machine to which it had been wired. But before those brain-waves died out completely, Dr King had used a combination of electronic implantation and injections of chemicals to revitalise them enough to keep the brain functioning. By that time, Clarke's brain, though certainly functioning again, was doing so in an insane, chaotic manner; but eventually, when attached by the severed neck to a steel-clamp base containing artificial blood vessels and wired to the still beating human heart in a temperature-controlled glass case nearby, as well as to a pair of amputated hands, it had been able to manipulate the latter in a crude fashion, making the fingers open and close as the hands crawled across the table like large, deranged spiders.

Since then, further advances had been made and now the jaw, mouth and nose of the severed head had been removed and replaced with a metal prosthetic, the neck of which was attached by a combination of electric wiring and artificial blood vessels to the body of a small Ache Indian whose head and hands had been surgically removed, the former to be replaced with Clarke's head, the latter to be replaced with myoelectric hands that looked like steel claws.

Clarke's eyes, which once had been filled with unutterable incomprehension and dread, were now unseeing and could only be revitalised by the carefully controlled input from the electronic implants of his stereotaxic skullcap. With his metal claws, metal lower-face prosthetic and bizarre metal skullcap, the once normal human being now looked like a monstrous creature from outer space.

'He seems pacified at last,' Wilson said, speaking fluent Russian, to the head of the laboratory, Dr Nikoloi Tugarinov, world-famous physiologist and former Vice President of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Listed officially in the Soviet Union as 'missing', Tugarinov had actually been abducted by one of Wilson's saucer teams, 'indoctrinated' with a combination of drug therapy and hypnotic suggestion that did not otherwise impair his faculties, and then became a willing – or, rather, helplessly obedient – member of the parapsychological laboratory, working hand-in-glove with doctors King and Eckhardt in the adjoining laboratories, where the development of cyborgs and much larger Cybernetic Anthropomorphous Machine Systems, or CAMS, was racing ahead, regardless of the cost in human suffering.

'Yes,' Tugarinov confirmed, also speaking Russian. 'As you know, Dr King's main problem was not in perfecting the psychophysical interaction between head and body, but in somehow retaining the orderly functioning of the severed head – given that it was in a state of delirium, or insanity, caused by disbelief and trauma. Having revitalised the head's dying brain-waves, which potentially opened the brain again to shock and insanity, we solved the problem by inducing amnesia with a combination of chemicals and electric stimulation. Hideous though Mr Clarke now looks, he has no recollection of himself ever looking any different and, indeed, thinks of himself as being perfectly normal. Mr Clarke is now a prototype cyborg who, when activated, will have no recollections of his former life, will therefore think of his controller as a god, and subsequently will do exactly what he is told.'

'Excellent,' Wilson said. 'But his focus seems turned inward at the moment. What's happening to him?'

'Amazing,' Dr Tugarinov replied. 'What we're finding through the parapsychological experiments relating to cyborg mentality is that being deprived of most of their senses – the loss of a sense of smell because of the lower-face prosthetic; the breathing with lungs created artificially to enable them to withstand the extreme pressures of outer space or the seabed; the inability to speak because of the severing of the vocal cords; and the general loss of their past memories and emotions – this particular form of deprivation has heightened their mental processes in another manner, enabling them to communicate telepathically, often over very great

distances. Clarke appears to be focused inward at the moment because he's been programmed to cast his thoughts elsewhere.'

'I've developed such talents myself,' Wilson reminded him, 'by the ruthless suppression of all redundant emotion and feelings.'

'True – but look!' Dr Tugarinov pointed up at a row of monitor screens that were tilted just above the encased, severed head of the surgically mutated, partial cyborg, Marlon Clarke. The screens showed a series of different images, cloudy but distinct enough, of barbed wire fences, military installations, aircraft on the ground or in flight, and long-distance views of parabolic radar dishes. They were, as Wilson knew, all located in the United States, mostly military establishments chosen by Clarke's 'controller', Dr Tugarinov, and being telepathically relayed to the TV monitors wired up to the cyborg's stereotaxic skullcap and keyed into a highly advanced computer system.

In the West, electronic miniaturisation with an integrated circuit using a single tiny chip of silicon had been demonstrated for the first time the previous year, but Wilson's scientists, unrestrained in every way, were already well advanced in computer technology and had, in fact, used their first crude silicon chips as part of their secret barter with the United States government.

'I know what you're showing me,' Wilson said. 'But what's so special this time?'

'Watch closely,' Tugarinov said, using the computer keyboard to increase or decrease the basic rhythmic patterns of Marlon Clarke's brain while flooding it with other impulses from the implants of the stereotaxic skullcap. The eyes in the severed head now attached by the neck to a cyborg torso – half man, half machine – suddenly widened, moved left and right above the hideous lower-face metal prosthetic, then seemed to lose focus as the mental impulses thus agitated leaped over time and space. The screens above Clarke's head, which had previously shown a series of murky monochrome images, now cleared to show what Wilson recognised instantly as, first the exterior, then the interior, of one of his own large flying saucers. This, however, dissolved almost immediately and was replaced by the image of a smaller, less sophisticated saucer ascending vertically from what appeared to be part of the White Sands Proving Ground.

Surprised, Wilson practically stood on tiptoe in order to check the images more clearly. The flying saucer on the screen wobbled in an ungainly manner from left to right, trying to find its centre of gravity, then it ascended vertically, languidly, above the doors of what were plainly aircraft hangars. Soon it passed off the monitors, leaving only the ghostly image of the aircraft hangars, beyond which was a barbed-wire fence and a vast stretch of desert.

'That wasn't one of our saucers,' Wilson said. 'Is that the White Sands Proving Ground?'

'Yes, sir.'

'So what's so unusual about this transmission? We've managed to project to there before.'

'I didn't programme Clarke to telepathically leap to that area. I programmed him to track one of our own saucer flights – which you saw – and then he tuned in by himself to that new image – or, to be more precise, someone else tuned in to *him*.'

'So where are the images coming from?'

'Please observe. I'm going to key in a non-verbal request to Clarke, to identify the source of his present images. Though unable to speak, he can show you on the screens just what's going on.'

Tugarinov tapped his request into the computer keyboard, then stepped back and waited. After what seemed like a long time, but was actually less than a minute, a murky image of a city skyline appeared on the monitor screens.

'I recognise it,' Wilson said. 'Portland, Maine.'

Once Wilson had identified the location, Tugarinov tapped it into the computer to let the cyborg, Clarke, know that they had received the information. When he had done so, the image changed to an apartment block in the same city, then this dissolved to the inside of an apartment in the same building. A middle-aged woman with black hair and a look of pain on her face was tossing and turning on her bed. There were tablets on her bedside cabinet and she appeared to be having a migraine.

'She's in a telepathic trance,' Wilson said.

'Yes. And she's obviously suffering severe stress. Which suggests that she's tuned in accidentally to someone else, somewhere else. We have to find out who and where that source is.'

Tugarinov keyed another request into the keyboard and then watched as Marlon Clarke's eyes, framed between the metal band of the stereotaxic skullcap and the top of the lower-face prosthetic, turned left and right, desperately searching for something, then rolled upwards and went out of focus again, like the eyes of someone lost in their own thoughts.

On the monitor screens above, the woman from Maine gradually faded out and was replaced by a repeat of the crude flying saucer ascending above the aircraft hangars of what was clearly a US Air Force or Navy aeronautical establishment in the arid wastelands of the White Sands Proving Ground.

'Back where we started,' Wilson said impatiently.

'No. Wait.' Tugarinov tapped a few more instructions into the computer keyboard. 'He'll now find the source for us.'

In less than a minute, the aircraft hangars dissolved and were replaced by the exterior of a clapboard building that had barbed-wire fences beyond it and was guarded by US Army Air Force soldiers. A closer image of the same building showed signs clearly marked 'US Army Air Force' and 'Top Secret'. Those signs dissolved to make way for an image of a man wearing army dungarees sitting on a chair in a booth, wearing earphones and either writing notes or drawing sketches of what he was seeing.

The telepathic communication was not sharp or close enough to reveal what those drawings showed, but Wilson had no doubts at all.

‘That man is an ESP-trained soldier tuning into the US-Canadian flying saucer we just saw taking off from the White Sands Proving Ground. As that building, also, is in the White Sands Proving Ground, he obviously can’t transmit that far yet and is practicing on reasonable local subjects. The woman from Portland, Maine, is obviously a psychic who tuned in accidentally to him, just as our cyborg tuned into her thoughts, confusing the US-Canadian saucer for the one he was tracking – namely, our own.’

‘The accident doesn’t matter,’ Tugarinov said. ‘What matters is that the Americans, like my Russian friends in the Parapsychology Laboratory in the University of Leningrad, are now experimenting with ESP.’

‘Correct,’ Wilson said. ‘They thought they could keep it secret, but there are no secrets any more. I think my American friends might need another hard lesson, so keep monitoring that woman from Portland, Maine.’

‘Yes, sir,’ Tugarinov said.

Wilson glanced briefly at the hideous, surgically mutated head of the former Marlon Clarke, then nodded approvingly at Dr Tugarinov and left the laboratory.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

For the first six months of 1959 Dwight commuted on a regular basis between Dayton, Ohio, and Washington DC, investigating UFO sightings in the former and personally delivering his reports to Dr Frederick Epstein's Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute in the latter. As Beth had anticipated, the frequent trips to the Capital were a welcome break from the previous monotony of his life in Dayton and rendered even more appealing because they offered him frequent contact with Bob and Thelma Jackson, both resident in Greenbelt, Maryland, where Bob had gone to work after leaving the Air Force and before joining the APII. When not at the APII, Dwight had many a good lunch or evening with Bob and Thelma, who had lost neither their good humour nor their warmth.

Returning to the investigation of UFO sightings in Dayton was indeed an experience for Dwight, not only because of his ongoing fascination with the subject and the many people he was meeting again, but even more so because of his shock at the lack of co-operation he found amongst his old friends at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Not that there were, in truth, many old friends left there, since most had been transferred out of the ATIC even before his departure. Nevertheless, the few still working there were singularly unhelpful, claiming that the Air Force no longer had any interest in the matter and viewed civilian investigators as a nuisance.

Apart from those who worked for Dr Epstein's APII, the other reliable civilian investigators came from the many different UFO organisations now scattered widely across the whole country. The most notable of these was the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), founded in 1956, headed by former Marine Corps Major Donald Keyhoe, and also located in Washington DC. Though these two major Washington DC organisations frequently were in competition with one another, it was from the NICAP that Dwight had gained a lot of the mainly young, sometimes eccentric, but always lively UFO investigators who had made his life more interesting during the past six months.

They had a language all their own, being fond of the use of acronyms such as CE1 (Close Encounters of the First Kind), phenomena that cause a transient effect on the witness, such as time loss or radio interference; CE2 (Close Encounters of the Second Kind), phenomena that cause effects that are semi-permanent and observable by those who did *not* share the experience; CE3 (Close Encounters of the Third Kind), phenomena that include animate entities such as extraterrestrials or robotic crew members; and CE4 (Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind), events that cause the witness, or witnesses, to have unnatural or seemingly impossible experiences, such as psychic interaction, levitation and paralysis, or which affect the witness, mentally or physically, for a long time after the event occurs.

Spouting such scientific-sounding phrases and armed with survey maps, binoculars, theodolites, tape recorders, cameras, notebooks, drawing pads, pencils and

pens, these enthusiasts swarmed across the country, most to desolate wastelands such as those in New Mexico and Arizona, to visit the site of a UFO sighting and take measurements and photos; interview witnesses, cajoling written statements and sketches from them; contact weather centres to check for temperature inversions or other atmospheric phenomena that could be misinterpreted as UFOs; check local civilian and military airports for information regarding general air traffic and weather balloon launches; and approach local police stations for facts regarding related sightings or witnesses not already interviewed. Considered by many, especially those in positions of authority, to be a great nuisance, they did in fact turn many a UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) into an IFO (Identified Flying Object) while also supplying invaluable written and visual material to the major civilian UFO organisations.

Apart from their contribution to the APII, Dwight enjoyed meeting them because so many of them were young, optimistic and enthusiastic in a manner that was both contagious and encouraging. He needed the encouragement because Beth had told him about her inexplicable blackout and CE1 experience on the road opposite the garage where Dwight had once worked – and where the new owner, Frank Bancroft, had experienced something so terrifying that it had caused him to die of a heart attack. Beth's story had only reinforced Dwight's belief that he – and perhaps other UFOlogists – were being watched and were also, almost certainly, in constant danger.

While Dwight's brief with the APII was restricted solely to an investigation of UFO sightings as potential extraterrestrial visitations, he was also secretly keeping his eyes and ears open for any further information on the possibility that they, or other UFOs, were man-made.

This possibility had obsessed him ever since his old friend, US Air Force Captain Andrew 'Andy' Boyle, had told him about spherical-or-disc-shaped experimental aircraft, notably the Avrocar constructed at the A.V.Roe Aircraft Company in Malton, Ontario. Though reportedly this man-made 'flying saucer' had failed to fly with any great degree of efficiency, the fact that its existence had been officially denied until it was photographed on the ground by a press photographer lent some credibility to the notion that the same project, or similar projects, but of a much more advanced kind, were still being undertaken, either in Canada or in the top-secret military research establishments of the White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.

As long as he lived, Dwight would not forget his experience with the men in black in that motel on the outskirts of Albuquerque in 1954, five years ago – the event that had finally made him decide to leave the Air Force for good. The description given by Andy Boyle of the dome-shaped 'aircraft' he had seen landing outside a secret hangar at Cannon Air Force Base was also an indelible memory for Dwight, since the 'aircraft' as described by Andy was almost certainly a flying saucer: its fuselage formed by two plates, one placed upside down on the other, with a raised Perspex dome in the middle – obviously the pilot's cabin – and circular, gyroscopically balanced plates revolving around it. Whether extraterrestrial or man-made, that flying

saucer had undoubtedly been kept for an indeterminate period in that heavily guarded hangar at Cannon AFB.

Later, after his terrifying experience with what may have been a flying saucer hovering outside his motel window, followed by a frightening encounter with a group of men dressed all in black, who had threatened him and stolen Andy's invaluable UFO photo, Dwight had tried to contact Andy again to find out if he'd had a similar experience. First he learnt that Andy had been transferred to Alaska with hardly any notice at all. A week later, he learnt that Andy had died in an unexplained helicopter crash over Mt McKinley. Neither his body nor that of the pilot had been found.

From that moment on, Dwight had been haunted by Andy's contention that the flying saucers could indeed be man-made. It was not a hypothesis he had dared to raise so far with Dr Frederick Epstein at the APII, since he had not come across any supportive evidence for what Andy had told him before his untimely death. He had, nevertheless, asked one of his NICAP researchers, Tony Scaduto, to bring him anything he happened to find along those lines. Now, he was on his way to meet Scaduto in a bar in Georgetown, to hear what he had sworn on the phone was a fascinating story relating to man-made flying saucers.

Dwight and Scaduto met in an Irish pub in Connecticut Avenue. Downstairs the bar was packed with drunken marines from Quantico; upstairs, where Dwight and Scaduto met, it was even more packed, but with a mixed crowd joining in the songs being played by a four-piece Irish band - autoharp, fiddle, flatpick guitar, mandolin – while turning red-faced from Guinness stout, Harp on tap, and dangerously large whiskey chasers. Tony was a twenty-five-year-old Brooklyn boy, still single, who loved rock 'n' roll music and dressed like Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*. A good-natured, fun-loving young man, he was also bright, if potentially self-destructive when it came to drinking, smoking and women.

'This is a good place to meet for a talk,' Dwight informed him, glancing at the energetic, noisy Irish band. 'I can hardly hear myself speak.'

'They go off in a minute,' Scaduto said. 'Then we can have a proper talk. Meanwhile, what's your poison?'

'I haven't been in an Irish pub for years, so make it a pint of Guinness. Anyway,' he added, after Scaduto had ordered his drink and another for himself, 'I thought you were a rock 'n' roll fan – not a fan of *this* kind of music.'

'This is the year the music died,' Tony replied laconically. 'Buddy Holly, the Big Bopper and Richie Valens – all killed in a plane crash. Meanwhile, Elvis, *sans* sideburns, is serving out his time with the goddamned US Army in West Germany, leaving us with Pat Boone, Frankie Avalon, Bobby Rydell and all the other puke-making mother's boys. No wonder I'm listening to Irish music! It's all we've got left.'

Eventually, just as the barman brought them two more pint glasses of Guinness, the band on the stage took a break to enthusiastic applause.

'They'll be off-stage for about half-an-hour,' Scaduto told Dwight. 'That should be

enough time for our discussion.'

'So what's this fascinating story you have for me?'

'Pretty bizarre, to put it mildly,' Scaduto replied, 'so I couldn't resist it.'

'Stop teasing,' Dwight told him.

Scaduto grinned, sipped some Guinness, then wiped foam from his lips with the back of his band. 'I picked this story up from one of my informants: a civilian secretary at the Office of Naval Intelligence.'

'Sounds well placed,' Dwight said.

'She's often well placed in my bed,' Scaduto said, grinning. 'Anyway, according to my lady friend – a great lay, incidentally – a woman psychic in Portland, Maine, recently informed the CIA that she'd had telepathic contact with extraterrestrials in what she thought was a space-ship.'

'A crank,' Dwight said, unable to hid his disappointment.

'Not necessarily – though that's exactly what the CIA thought at first. Since to them it seemed like a classic scam – a woman, a supposed psychic, using automatic handwriting for communication with extraterrestrials – the CIA gave it a miss. However, the Canadian government got their hands on the CIA report and, instead of dismissing it, which seemed the logical thing to do, they sent their leading UFOlogist, accompanied by a government-trained hypnotist, to interview her where she lived in Portland. According to the UFOlogist, the woman, in a hypnotic trance, correctly answered highly complex questions about space flight, about which she had formerly known dip-shit.'

Scaduto had another sip of his Guinness and glanced at the women scattered around the bar as he licked the foam from his lips.

'Not surprisingly,' he continued eventually, 'when the US Navy learned about this, they sent two intelligence officers to talk to the same woman. During the subsequent interrogation, one of the Navy intelligence officers, who had, please note, *been trained in ESP*, tried to tune in to the woman's contactee. When this experiment failed, he and his colleague returned to Washington DC and informed the CIA at Langley, Virginia.'

Though the Irish band had stopped playing, a few of the older patrons of this generally youth-orientated pub, their faces flushed with drink, began rocking from side to side while tearfully singing, 'I'll take you home again, Kathleen.'

'Someone should take *them* home,' Scaduto said as he glanced at them and then turned back to Dwight. 'So, where was I?'

'When the ESP-trained Navy intelligence officer failed to make contact with the woman's contactee, he and his friend returned to report their failure to the CIA at Langley. So how did the CIA react?'

'Well, instead of expressing their disappointment, the CIA – possibly impressed because Navy intelligence had gone to so much trouble for a case that they, the CIA, had ignored – displayed more interest than before, In fact, they arranged for the ESP-trained intelligence officer to try making contact from CIA headquarters, right there

at Langley Field, Virginia. Six witnesses – two of them CIA employees, one of whom was agent Jack Fuller, the others from the Office of Naval Intelligence - got together in the office in Langley to observe the results of the experiment.'

Trying to ignore the tuneless singing of the maudlin drunkards nearby, Dwight, becoming intrigued despite his initial scepticism, leaned closer to Scaduto and asked, 'Well?'

'This time, when the ESP-trained intelligence officer went into his hypnotic trance, he made contact with *someone*.'

'Was the identity and whereabouts of that someone made known?'

'Not at first. When the intelligence officer, in his trance condition, was asked if he was in contact with ordinary men, spirit beings or extraterrestrials, he said it was the latter. When one of the men in the room then demanded some kind of proof for this assertion, the intelligence officer, still in his hypnotic trance, said that if they looked out the window they would see a flying saucer high in the sky over the Capitol building. When the men went to the window and looked out, that's just what they saw: a large flying saucer hovering silently in the sky, approximately over Capitol Hill.'

'Did they have the sense to try for confirmation of their sighting?'

'Surprisingly, they did. A quick phone call from one of the CIA officers – almost certainly Fuller – to Washington National Airport, established that at that very moment the radar centre there was reporting that its radar returns were being blacked out in the direction of the sighting over Capitol Hill.'

Dwight gave a low whistle. 'So what happened then?'

'The operator at Washington National Airport had no sooner finished complaining about his blacked-out radar returns when the flying saucer shot up vertically and disappeared – reportedly as quickly as a light bulb blinking out.'

'What was the saucer like?'

Scaduto shrugged, sipped some more Guinness, then placed his glass back on the counter. 'That's the problem,' he said. 'No description of the flying saucer was released. A lid was slammed on the whole thing.'

Dwight shook his head in despair. 'Damn!' he exclaimed, lowering his head. Then he looked up again. 'So how did your friend, the great lay, come to hear the story?'

'Good one.' Scaduto grinned from ear to ear. 'Major Robert J.Friend, present head of the increasingly impotent Project Blue Book, was informed of the events of that day by the CIA and promptly arranged for Duke University's parapsychology lab to investigate both the psychic from Maine and the ESP-trained intelligence officer. That investigation led to the mistaken declassification of the original reports – and those reports eventually passed through the Office of Naval Intelligence, thus through my friend's hands.'

'Then on to you.'

'Right. When we were sharing her warm bed.'

'She didn't give you the original reports?'

'No, of course not!' Scaduto pretended to be affronted, before grinning again. 'She just lovingly whispered the info into my ear.'

'Before sticking her tongue in it, no doubt.'

'A gentleman never tells.'

Dwight grinned and nodded. 'So what were the results of the Duke University investigations?'

'God knows. Their report never materialised, Project Blue Book released no analysis of the sighting report, the government did nothing about the unexplained Washington DC radar blackout, and the origin of the flying saucer seen over Capitol Hill remains a secret to this day. As for the men present at the hypnotic trance session in that room in Langley, the CIA took *punitive* action against them by transferring them to other positions – with the single exception of CIA agent Jack Fuller.'

'So why didn't you ask Fuller what happened?'

Scaduto grinned and tapped the side of his nose with his index finger. 'I did. He denied any involvement in such a matter, then laughed and cut me off.'

'He's a sharp bastard, that Fuller. Sharp and hard.'

'He is that, sure enough,' Scaduto said, automatically influenced by the pub and sounding rather Irish.

Dwight had another sip of his drink, licked his lips, then gazed down thoughtfully at his glass. 'A nice little story,' he said, 'but it seems too far-fetched to be true.'

'It may seem that way to you,' Scaduto responded without pause, 'but the incident – or something very like it – must have taken place, because Major Friend later wrote about the whole business in an official Memorandum for the Record. That Memorandum has since been filed in the Air Force Archives at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama – but it wasn't filed until a copy found its way into the hands of a few UFOlogists. The Memorandum is genuine – either that, or Major Friend, the present head of Project Blue Book, is submitting fiction in his official reports.'

Dwight nodded affirmatively, acknowledging this undeniable truth. 'So just what are you trying to tell me, Tony?'

'You want another Guinness?'

'No. I'm catching a plane back to Dayton when I leave here. Home sober when greeted by wife and daughter, then sit down, respectably sober, to dinner.'

'Yeah, I get the picture.' Only twenty-five years old, still single, and filled with sexual vitality, Scaduto glanced sideways, to where an attractive, raven-haired girl in tight blue jeans and sweater was studying him slyly in the mirror angled over the bar. More wily than she would realise until it was too late, he had ascertained her interest and was about to move in on her.

'Okay,' he said. 'Before I offer that little sweetheart a drink or two, I'll tell you exactly what I think.' He smiled at the girl, then lowered his gaze as if shy, though in fact he was concentrating again on Dwight. 'I've always been intrigued,' he said, 'by the unusual amount of official interest paid to the so-called Woman from Maine – a civilian female with supposed telepathic abilities. I am, however, wise to the fact that

both the Russian secret police – the KGB – and the CIA have, for years, been investigating the espionage potential of mental telepathy, psychic photography, and other forms of parapsychology. So I'm naturally starting to wonder if there could be any connection between that fact and the Woman from Maine.'

'What kind of connection?'

'Since communication by mental telepathy has already been attained with some degree of success in Soviet *and* American laboratories, and between submarine and land bases, it's possible that the CIA was genuinely concerned with that technologically-ignorant woman's inexplicable knowledge of the more complex details of space flight. As the CIA is interested in the espionage potential of telepathy, it stands to reason that they'd have certain men trained in ESP and would send one to attend the trance session. If we then accept that telepathic communication was made with *someone* in that office in CIA headquarters, Langley, Virginia, and that the agent in a trance, if not actually making that UFO materialise, had at least been informed telepathically of its existence, it then seems possible that the Woman from Maine had been in contact with a telepathically-trained US *government* employee, albeit by accident.'

'Are you suggesting that the UFO seen over Capitol Hill was a *US government* flying saucer?'

'Yes,' Scaduto said.

'Man-made?'

'Exactly. The more I look into these damned things, the more I'm convinced that the White House, the Pentagon, and certainly Army, Navy and Air Force intelligence of the White Sands Proving Ground and other top-secret areas, are deliberately causing confusion, doubt and fear regarding UFO sightings because they're protecting their own. While the more technically advanced saucers might indeed be extraterrestrial, I think the US Army, Navy or Airforce also have their own models. I don't know for sure – but I believe so.'

'Have you raised that belief with Dr Epstein or anyone else at APII?'

'No. This theory goes completely against the grain of most of the UFO organisations, including APII and NICAP, so I'm keeping my big mouth shut for now. You're the first person in the business who's told me he's interested in the same possibility, so that's why I've told you this.'

'And you're still interested?'

'Damned right I am.'

'It could be a dangerous thing to pursue,' Dwight told him.

'I don't scare easily.' Scaduto retorted, then he turned his head to smile deliberately, invitingly, at the raven-haired girl farther along the bar. She crossed her shapely legs and returned Scaduto's winning smile.

'You're in like Flynn,' Dwight told him, slipping off the barstool and taking his overnight bag in his hand. 'If you come across anything else, please give me a call.'

'I will,' Scaduto promised, already slipping off his stool to make his move on the

girl still smiling at him.

'Meanwhile, try to stay out of trouble, Tony.'

'The only trouble I'm going to get into,' Scaduto said, 'will be found between that sweetheart's legs.'

Dwight sighed, recalling the days of his own youth. Then he left the bar.

Chapter Thirty

The biggest flying saucer to date, the *Goddard*, named after Wilson's only hero, the American rocket genius Robert H.Goddard, was known as the 'mother ship' because it was 350 foot in diameter, 150 foot high at the central point between dome and base, built in three layers, and carried not only a crew of over fifty men, but also the smaller manned saucers, those the size of the original *Kugelblitz*, the even smaller, three foot to twelve foot diameter, unmanned, remote-controlled probes, and a variety of large and small CAMS either piloted by small, surgically mutated Ache Indian cyborgs, remote controlled from the mother ship, or programmed to react robotically to certain stimuli for the exploration of the sea bed. Technologically even more advanced than its predecessor, *Kugelblitz III*, the gigantic *Goddard* was powered by a highly advanced electromagnetic propulsion system that ionised the surrounding air or sea, an electromagnetic damping system that aided the craft's lift and hovering capabilities, and bodywork composed of an electrically charged magnesium orthosilicate so minutely porous that it managed to be waterproof while ensuring, when airborne, an absolute minimum of friction, heat and drag.

It was Wilson's intention to have even bigger 'mother ships' for sea-bed exploration and flights in outer space, but at the moment this 350-foot craft, submerged deep in the Sargasso Sea between Florida and Bermuda, was the best he could manage for the most ambitious series of underwater experiments he had so far attempted. These included the capturing of marine beasts and fish never before seen by man, a general exploration of the sea-bed and the collection of samples from it, the abduction of crew members of boats afloat in the area known as the Bermuda Triangle, and, in two instances, the capture of whole motorboats, complete with their terrified passengers.

'A truly great achievement,' Vance Whitaker, the new Flight Captain of the mother-ship, said as he gazed through the viewing window – he was standing between Wilson and Sea Captain Ritter Dietrich – at the artificially and naturally illuminated wonders of the deep, including all kinds of plankton, bizarre fish, and other creatures never before seen by man and either remarkably beautiful or, by human standards, hideous. 'Absolutely magnificent!'

Wilson did not bother explaining to the chemically 'indoctrinated' former NASA astronaut that the colony's great advances in submersible technology had only been made possible because of the many undersea prototypes tried out in Antarctica with living crewmembers, none of whom had volunteered, many of whom had lost their lives when the prototypes leaked in the ice-covered sea or broke up underwater. *Goddard*, however, was the superb result of those experiments and could be used either under the water or in the stratosphere. For this reason it had a Sea Captain, Ritter Dietrich, for undersea voyages, as well as a Flight Captain, Vance Whitaker, for atmospheric and stratospheric flight. As the last pilot, another abducted USAF

officer, had never managed to learn the complexities of stratospheric flight, he had recently been terminated and replaced by this new man, Whitaker, who, the previous month, had supposedly crashed in the sea near the Bahamas, 360 miles from Cape Canaveral, during a fifteen-minute sub-orbital test flight of NASA's new Mercury spacecraft.

The three men were standing at one of the many windows of the control room, which had about a dozen reinforced viewing windows around its circular wall and a dome-shaped ceiling of heat-resistant, reinforced Perspex over which was what resembled a great umbrella of seamless steel, though it was actually minutely porous magnesium orthosilicate, like the rest of the hull. The dome-shaped steel covering of the Perspex ceiling – seen from outside as the central dome of the flying saucer – was divided almost invisibly into two concave sections that could slide apart in opposite directions and curved back down into the floor, thus giving the crew members a 380° view from any part of the flight deck.

The latter was composed of what looked like the standard hardware for a normal airliner, including switch panels, pitch-trim controls, autopilot engage switch, inertial navigation, navigational radio selector, weather radar, radio equipment, intercom switches, an unknown brand of ADF (automatic direction finder), computer selection switches, and an unusually small but exceptionally powerful computer that controlled most of the flight-deck functions and could be activated by an electronic 'voice' composed of minute vibrations transmitted at varying speeds and frequencies.

Such orders were conveyed by the small Ache cyborgs who, though having had their vocal cords severed as part of their lower-face surgery, including the removal of the nose, mouth and jaw, communicated electronically from their metal prosthetics to the electronic-voice activated computer. Instructions to the cyborgs were communicated via a pinhead microphone strapped to the throat of a human superior, such as Sea Captain Dietrich or Flight Captain Whitaker, and activated by an on/off switch built into his international date-time wristwatch. As Flight Captain Whitaker had already learned, the flight deck did *not* contain such standard aircraft controls as thruster reverse light, nose gear tiller, speed brake handle, or even brake pressure or aileron and rudder trims, as these were not required for the unique propulsion system of the *Goddard*.

Dubbed the 'mother ship' because it was actually a carrying ship, the *Goddard* used its wide variety of large and small CAMS to pick up exotic marine life, lost treasure from ancient sea wrecks, and a wealth of normally unavailable minerals from the ocean-bed and from Earth – notably, in the latter case, the bodily parts of animals, which were required for the continuing medical experiments in the Antarctic colony.

The Goddard could also release, and receive, highly advanced versions of the original *Feuerballs*, the latest models being used mainly as spy-satellites and radar-blocking devices, but with the added capability of laser-beam technology that could make the engines of automobiles and aircraft malfunction, as well as stunning or hypnotising human beings.

Looking at the battery-charged lights beaming out through the murk of the ocean, revealing ever more as the great craft surfaced, Flight Captain Whitaker said: 'Aren't you frightened that the lights, if seen by the crews or passengers of ships or aircraft, will give your presence away?'

'No,' Wilson replied with confidence. 'USOS, or Unidentified Submarine Objects, are even harder to identify than UFOs because of the wide diversity of marine biology, which includes a surprising amount of phosphorescent plant and animal life. Look!' He pointed at the window, to what appeared to be unusual plants that were drifting through and around the beams of the *Goddard's* lights, giving off their own eerie illumination. 'Single-celled, luminous, planktonic organisms. They glow even brighter when near the surface of the sea, being stimulated by the movement of the waves. Others, such as the *Cypridina Noctiluca*, actually *respond* automatically to beams of light, such as searchlights, by ejecting a luminous cloud in the water. Luminous crustaceans, such as copepods, some living on the water's surface, some in the ocean depths, can be found in seas all over the world. Then, of course, you have jellyfish and other coelenterates and ctenophores, which also create patches of light in the water – some very big. So, as you can appreciate, experienced sailors or pilots who see our lights under the water aren't likely to be too concerned. That only comes when we surface. Which, of course, we'll be doing shortly. Come with me, Flight Captain.'

Leaving Dietrich to supervise the surfacing of the *Goddard*, Wilson led Whitaker out of the flight deck and along a curving, steel-walled, white-painted corridor (for it was, in fact, circular, running around the inner rim of the giant saucer, as did the corridors on all levels) until they came to a closed door, which opened automatically when Wilson aimed his remote control at it. The doorway led to the top level of an immense, silvery-grey dome filled with ladders and catwalks. Below were glittering doors and platforms, modules of steel and glass, shining mazes of pipes coiled around generators, bright lights flashing off more white-painted walls. There were people down there, looking tiny and far away, climbing ladders, crossing catwalks, moving up and down that 150-foot drop in elevators constructed like steel cages.

About halfway down, fifty feet above the lowest floor, on a centrally positioned, circular-shaped, third-level platform, in the centre of the lowest, largest workshop, the smaller man-made saucer, *Kugelblitz II*, which Whitaker estimated was 150 foot in diameter, was resting on its launch pad, surrounded by four even smaller, unmanned flying-saucer probes, each about fifteen foot wide.

'This way,' Wilson said, leading Whitaker across the catwalk, above that dizzying drop, until they arrived at the cage-like elevator that descended through the centre of the *Goddard*, from just under the floor of the flight deck to the third-level platform. Once down there, Wilson, followed by the obedient Whitaker, advanced to the lowered ramp of the *Kugelblitz II*.

Just as they reached the smaller saucer, the *Goddard* broke the surface of the Pacific Ocean, with the sea suddenly roaring and pounding as water parted around the

outer steel covering of the dome and rushed down its sides. The great mother ship rocked gently for a moment as it floated in the turbulent waves created by its own surfacing, but eventually, when the sea's surface had returned to normal, the rocking stopped and the metallic dome divided in two, forming separate concave plates that moved away from each other, then sank back out of sight, leaving only the immense dome of special heat-resistant, reinforced Perspex, through which sunlight beamed down to form a dazzling web of silvery-white striations that illuminated the gloomy interior.

Glancing upwards, Wilson and Whitaker saw the different floors more clearly, with men in grey or black coveralls hurrying across catwalks, clambering up and down ladders, or moving back and forth in the glass-panelled offices located around the curved inner wall of the mother ship.

'What a sight!' Whitaker whispered, clearly awe-struck.

Even as he was speaking, immense panels in a section of the wall of the mother ship slid apart like the doors of an aircraft hangar, offering a view of the vast, sunlight sky and a glimpse of the sea below.

'The level upon which this landing pad is located,' Wilson explained to Whitaker, 'is approximately fifty feet above the surface of the sea. Let's go in.'

They entered the *Kugelblitz II* by walking up the sloping ramp that would, once they were inside, be retracted to form the underside of the bottom disc. This is exactly what happened: the ramp moved back up into the loading bay on thick steel hinges, until it formed part of the wall, slotting back where it belonged with such precision that the joins around its edge could scarcely be seen and formed a perfect waterproof, airtight seal.

The loading bay was actually a space in the revolving lower disc, used only as a passageway for men and equipment; in other words, anyone, or anything, entering the loading boy from outside had to continue on until they were in the non-rotating main body of the saucer. For this reason, Wilson and Whitaker hurried through the loading bay, which could have been that of any large aircraft, and emerged to the central, non-revolving main body, which also was circular, being the bottom of the large, dome-shaped superstructure. After following the corridor around for a few more feet, they stepped into an elevator that took them up nearly fifty feet, past the engine rooms, storage rooms, barred cages for abducted people, a surgery where those abducted could be medically examined or even dissected during flight, latrines, foodstores, a small recreation room containing books, maps, and a recently invented video-TV set that could show films on tape, and, finally, into the flight deck.

For the time being the meniscus-shaped, porous-metal covering for the Perspex dome was open, giving those on the flight deck a 360° view of the interior of the mother ship, though from their position on the landing pad they could see only the third-floor level and most of what was above it. The flight deck was, at that moment, being prepared for take-off by another crew of surgically mutated and robotised Ache Indians who, being small, and with their lower-face metal prosthetics and myoelectric

metal claws (actually small CAMS), looked even more frightening than they would have had they been taller.

No sooner had Wilson and Whitaker entered the flight deck than two massive plates in what had appeared to be the seamless facing wall of the mother ship slid apart and kept opening until they formed a rectangular space about the same size as the entrance to an aircraft hangar. That great space framed a sheer blue sky, the clear horizon, and a strip of green-blue sea.

As Wilson and Whitaker strapped themselves into seats at the control panel – between the busy cyborgs whose metallic throats were giving off infrasounds that enabled them to electronically 'talk' to the computerised controls – the *Kugelblitz II* throbbed with that familiar bass humming sound, then vibrated slightly, swayed from side to side, and finally lifted a couple of feet off the landing pad. While it was still hovering, Wilson nodded to Flight Captain Whitaker, who, now taking command, spoke his instructions, in plain English, into the pinhead microphone strapped to his throat, as part of a communication system that included a covert ear piece for receiving. Those spoken instructions would be converted by the computer into an electronic language understood by the saucer's control console, which would react accordingly.

Because the saucer utilised a gravity shield that came on automatically when required, its passengers needed no protection against the pull of gravity or increasing outer pressure and were only strapped into their chairs during the initial stages of take-off. Now, under Whitaker's supervision, the hovering saucer advanced horizontally to the large opening in the sloping side of the hull, hovered again halfway across the lip of the opening, then moved outside altogether and stopped again, hovering just a few feet from the *Goddard*, but a good fifty feet above the surface of the Sargasso Sea. There, at a command from Whitaker, the meniscus-shaped, metallic outer casings of the dome emerged from the floor at both sides of the flight deck and curved upwards and inward to meet at the top of the dome, forming what looked deceptively like a seamless whole. Matching windows in the lower half of the metallic casing ensured that the flight crew still had their 360° view, though they could no longer see directly above them.

As the dome was being sealed, the four fifteen-foot diameter, unmanned probes also emerged from the mother ship to surround the *Kugelblitz II* and prepare for take-off.

Being already in the air, the five craft did not follow the usual two-stage pattern of flying saucer take-offs: a tentative, vertical rise of between fifty and a hundred feet, then a spectacular, remarkably quick blast-off, either vertically or at a sharp angle. Instead, they hovered beside the mother ship until the gravity shield had come on, then abruptly shot off to the west, heading for Florida.

Protected by the *Kugelblitz II'*s gravity shield, those inside had no need to keep themselves strapped to their chairs. There was absolutely no sign or feeling of movement. However, as the journey from the Sargasso Sea to the Florida Keys took

only a few minutes, neither Wilson nor Whitaker thought it worth while unbuckling his safety belt. Indeed, so fast was the saucer flying that at first, when the passengers looked straight ahead, they saw no more than what appeared to be a rapidly whipping, frantically spiralling tunnel of shimmering white light streaked with silvery-blue, a vertiginous well of brightness that gave no indication of which direction they were flying in: up, down, or straight ahead. It was, of course, the latter. Flying at a speed well beyond the sound barrier, Mach 1, over fifty miles high, on the very edge of space, they appeared to be suddenly blasted through the very sky itself, a giant envelope tearing open to reveal a vast azure sea that convulsed and turned purple, and then, just as abruptly, actually being the same sky, filled up with the dazzling radiance of a gigantic sun, even as the moon and stars also came out, clearly visible in the middle of the day, now present, with the sun, in an atmosphere so thin that even dust particles could not exist.

Seconds later, the *Kugelblitz II* and its four probes all slowed down to hovering speed, then hovered directly over Bimini, which could be seen as glowing dots on the radar screen and as it actually was on the TV monitor wired to a high-powered aerial camera. What the TV monitor showed, in fact, was a photomosaic of the western end of the Bermuda Triangle, the Gulf Stream flowing northward between Florida and the Great Bahama Bank, and, in the middle of the picture, Bimini itself, here in monochrome, but in actuality a ravishing tapestry of green and blue streaked with so-called ‘white’ water, containing sulphur, strontium and lithium, which often made it glow eerily.

‘Send the probes down,’ Wilson ordered into his throat microphone.

Within seconds, the four unmanned ‘probe’ saucers had flown out horizontally in the four directions of the compass, stopped abruptly, hovered briefly, then shot down towards the sea off Bimini, moving so fast that they looked like no more than tiny lights, then disappearing completely as they plunged into the water and descended, still fully operational, to the sea-bed. There, under robotic control and with the use of their CAMS, they would explore and collect samples of rock, stone, soil, plants and plankton from what might be the remains of the cyclopean walls, truncated pyramids, carved pillars, causeways and stone circles of a lost civilisation, possibly Atlantis. While Wilson was not yet ready to embrace this theory, his encyclopaedic knowledge of ancient history impelled him to explore the possibilities and see what could be learnt from them. This was the job of the four small ‘probe’ saucers that were almost certainly, right now, extending their crab-like metallic claws to start picking up items from the sea-bed between Bimini and Andros.

‘So,’ he said when the probes had disappeared into the sea, ‘let’s head for Cocoa Beach.’

When the relevant instructions had been transmitted, the saucer ascended vertically about fifty feet, then shot off in a blur of speed towards Miami. With its gravitational shield also functioning as an inertial shield, the mass of the UFO with regard to gravity was reduced to a minute fraction of its former value, permitting exceptional

buoyancy in the atmosphere, extremely high accelerations (so fast, indeed, that the human eye could not see the saucer's take-off and would imagine that it had abruptly disappeared) and the capability of coming to a remarkably fast stop or going into abrupt, right-angle turns without harming those inside, they also being protected by the gravity shield.

Now on programmed autopilot, the saucer knew where it had go. Upon approaching the mainland, it suddenly stopped, made an abrupt turn, and then shot off in a northerly direction, automatically following the topography of the land by means of a control system that bounced radar-like signals off the ground and back to the saucer for instant computer analysis and constantly changing flight directions. Because of this, as well as the weakening and strengthening of the gravitational pull of Earth when the saucer dropped low enough, the saucer appeared to be bobbing repeatedly as it sped on its horizontal flight path towards Cocoa Beach.

It stopped abruptly and precisely over the prearranged meeting place in a field in a protected area just outside Patrick Air Force Base, two miles from the village of Greater Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral, the swamp-land from which dozens of Atlas, Thor, Titan and Snark missiles, as well as America's first Earth satellite, *Explorer 1*, had been launched.

As the *Kugelblitz II* hovered high above the normal civilian and Air Force flight paths, waiting for the fall of darkness, Wilson and Whitaker partook of a light meal – the usual fruit-and-nut cereal, with a glass of dry, white wine – while discussing the many changes that had taken place down there on the east coast of Florida, where Whitaker had also trained and flown as a budding astronaut, before being abducted by Wilson.

'When I first went there,' Whitaker said, 'about seven years ago, Cocoa Beach consisted of a couple of dozen families strewn amongst the sand dunes and palmettos. Strangers rarely turned up and the villagers did little other than fish for their food and swim for their leisure. Now it's called Greater Cocoa Beach, which includes the original village and its environs, and it has a population of approximately ten thousand souls, including astronauts, aircraft pilots, scientists, rocket engineers, ballistics experts, and a local community obsessed with making money out of the space race. Some amazing things are happening down there.'

'Only amazing relative to the accomplishments of the rest of the West,' Wilson noted. 'Only amazing because of what we *let* them do. But we're now so many years ahead of them, they'll never catch up with us.'

'Jack Fuller thinks differently,' Whitaker said. 'And that man's no fool.'

'He's not a scientist, either, Flight Captain. That's his major weakness. His others are vanity, material greed and excessive patriotism, all of which can be used against him, if and when necessary. We've no cause for concern there.'

Feeling nervous, as he always did when outside the Antarctic colony, this being part of the chemical 'indoctrination' process undergone upon his arrival, Whitaker checked his wristwatch. 'Maybe we should have arranged the meeting somewhere in

Cape Canaveral,' he said. 'It's now a restricted military zone of about fifteen thousand acres, including a lot of uncleared jungle. We might have been more secure there.'

'Or we might have been eaten by a puma,' Wilson retorted, knowing that those animals still roamed wild there. 'Besides, these days the Cape is crawling with tourists – even around the restricted zone, which they try to spy upon with binoculars and cameras. Also, most of the military personnel in that zone still don't know about us, so they could prove to be troublesome.'

'What about the personnel of Patrick AFB?'

'The US-Canadian saucers are tested there,' Wilson explained, 'and kept hidden in hangars in a heavily guarded, top secret area – pretty much like Wright-Patterson's legendary Hangar 18. For this reason we trade with them and deal only with those on the base who've been told about us.'

'Like that CIA agent, Jack Fuller.'

Wilson smiled bleakly. 'Jack Fuller trades all over the place – where we go, he goes. So, yes, like Jack Fuller.' Glancing through the curved viewing window at the other side of the flight deck console, he saw that the sun now looked like blood pouring along the great bowl of the silvery horizon. 'The sun's setting, so they should be there by now. Complete the descent.'

Instantly, the *Kugelblitz II* started vibrating, wobbled a little, then, with its circular 'wings' rotating and their flashing lights forming a kaleidoscope, it steadied and descended vertically, first through the civilian and military flight paths, its radar constantly checking for approaching aircraft, then through the clouds, and finally all the way down to the circle of lights that marked the LZ, the landing zone, in the middle of a broad field that was encircled by electrified barbed-wire fences and further guarded by a large contingent of well-armed US Marines, spread equidistant around the perimeter.

Mere feet above the ground, whipping up dust, loose soil and leaves, the flying saucer bobbed a little and swayed gently as its hydraulic legs emerged obliquely from its convex base to dig into the ground. The bass humming sound faded away, the flashing lights blinked out in sequence, and then the saucer came to rest and was still.

Silence reigned.

Beyond the circle of upward-facing marker lamps in which the flying saucer had landed, nothing was visible except that broad, dark field and the starry sky above it. Neither the electrified barbed-wire fence nor the Marines positioned around the perimeter were visible. For a while the saucer just sat there like a massive, silvery-grey mushroom, making no movement, producing no sound at all; eventually, however, the sound of a coughing engine broke the silence and a US Army jeep materialised out of the darkness to stop just outside the circle of marker lamps. The jeep's ignition was turned off, then its lights were extinguished, thus plunging it back into the darkness just outside the illuminated LZ.

In that darkness, Jack Fuller, wearing a light-grey suit with shirt and tie, clambered out of the jeep, followed by two Marines armed with 0.3-inch M1 semi-automatic rifles and carrying spare thirty-round detachable box magazines on their webbed belts. After staring thoughtfully at the flying saucer, Fuller nodded at the two soldiers, indicating that they should follow him at a reasonable distance. As they spread out behind him, he stepped between two of the marker lamps and walked slowly, carefully, towards the flying saucer.

Even as he was approaching the nearest edge of that immense, silvery-grey discus, a bass humming sound emanated from it and the top of a large plate, which before had formed part of the apparently seamless outer surface, moved away from the lower body, opening just enough to let out a long, thin blade of subdued whitish light. The top of the plate kept moving away from the wall, swivelling on hinges along its bottom end, falling backwards all the way to the ground, until it formed a wide ramp, eerily illuminated by the pale light pouring out from the loading bay of the saucer.

Three figures were silhouetted in that deliberately reduced lighting: a tall, slim man with two child-sized, oddly shaped creatures whose features could not immediately be defined. Only when Fuller had stopped near to where the ramp met the ground did he recognise the three figures as Wilson and two unfortunate Ache Indians, who had been surgically mutated to be fitted with metal prosthetics, including the replacement of the lower face and hands, thus turning them into robotic cyborgs, half man, half machine. What remained of their original faces was rendered even more visually dreadful by the fact that the only remotely human aspects to them were the oddly glassy eyes that turned this way and that, between the metal band of a studded stereotaxic skullcap and the metal nose of a prosthetic that had replaced the lower half of the face, including the mouth, jawbone and throat. Even Fuller, who took certain horrors for granted, shuddered when he saw those pitiful, yet terrifying, creatures.

No wonder UFO contactees keep babbling about alien beings, he thought. What else could they possibly think, seeing creatures like these?

The cyborgs stood well apart and a little distance behind Wilson as the latter walked away from the ramp, to stop directly in front of Fuller. Glancing at Fuller's two armed Marines, he said, 'You know that bringing these men here is a waste of time. If you displease me, or in any way turn against me, they won't be able to help you.'

Fuller glanced at the two child-sized cyborgs standing behind Wilson and saw that they were holding what appeared to be stun guns in their myoelectric metal hands.

'Laser weapons?' he asked.

'What a bright boy you are, Fuller.'

'I like to keep up to date. So what do you want this time, Wilson?'

'Are you still here on behalf of President Eisenhower?'

'Yeah, right.'

'Why doesn't he send someone who has more authority. Why does he always send you?'

'Because, as you've doubtless noticed before, when dealing with the likes of generals Vandenberg and Samford, I'm a lot less antagonistic to you than men of a military mind-set.'

'You're antagonistic, all right. You just don't show it as openly.'

'That may be true, but the President still thinks it's best to keep the military out of this as much as possible. Also, he believes that if the wrong person finds out that the top brass of the White House and Pentagon are negotiating secretly with the likes of you, public outrage could lead to the fall of the whole government, including himself. Me, on the other hand... Well, I'm small fry and can be made to carry the can if we're found out. I'm not sure that's true at all, but that's what he believes.'

'You're not sure, but you know it's possible.'

'Right.'

'And you're willing to be sacrificed this way?'

'I love my country,' Fuller said.

'You're a fool.'

'So Fuller's a fool. What the hell? Now what do you want?'

For a moment it seemed that Wilson might actually display anger, but he simply stared steadily at Fuller, as if trying to read him. Obviously believing he had done so, he smiled bleakly and said, 'As best I recall, when last you met my request for mass-produced components and other items, it left me owing you something.'

'True enough. So you've come to pay off your debt to the US government?'

Again Wilson refused to rise to the bait by showing anger over Fuller's bland mockery. Instead, he just said, 'Yes.'

'So what are you offering? Obviously not more scientific information. If so, I wouldn't be here alone; you'd have asked for someone who could properly assess such information – not a scientific dumbhead like me. No, it must be to do with something else... Something to do with intelligence.'

'You're a fool, but you don't lack common sense. That's exactly it, Fuller.'

'So *what* is it?'

'I note that NASA has finally named the test pilots it's selected for its first manned space project.'

'Yeah, right: Project Mercury.'

'I thought I should warn you not to let NASA become too complacent.'

'Why?'

'Almost certainly the Soviets will succeed, this September, in landing their *Lunik 2* spacecraft on the moon.'

'Really?'

'Yes. Over the past two years I've been abducting a variety of Soviet scientists, engineers, academics and cosmonauts, to brainwash them with chemicals, take control of their minds with minute brain implants via stereotaxic skullcaps, and send them back to where they came from as my spies. Right now I have such spies in the Moscow headquarters of the Academy of Sciences, where the *Lunik 2* flight was

planned; in Moscow University, where the space experiments were carried out; at the cosmodrome living quarters in East Kazakhstan, where the cosmonauts are being trained; in the airfield at Baikonur, two hundred miles north of the Aral Sea, where the launch will take place; and at the radio tracking complex at Burokane, Armenia, where the flight and moon landing will be monitored. So, yes, I know what I'm talking about. I've already landed on the moon – albeit in secret – but now the Soviets are about to do the same, leaving the US well behind in the space race.'

'That could be humiliating,' Fuller confessed.

'Which is exactly why the Soviets are working so hard to do it.'

'That's an important piece of intelligence, Wilson, but not exactly repayment for that last shipment of US supplies to your base in Antarctica.'

Wilson's smile was bleak. 'No, I'm forced to agree with that. I do, however, bring you something else.'

Fuller glanced at the two cyborgs standing behind Wilson in the eerie, subdued lighting emanating from the holding area of the 150-foot diameter flying saucer. Wondering what they were thinking, if anything, about what had happened to them, their surgical and mental mutation, he shivered involuntarily, then glanced beyond them, to the illuminated holding bay. The light coming out of the saucers was usually dazzling, even blinding, but this light was pale, almost yellow, and not all that bright, which meant that he could actually see more than usual – and what he saw was nothing. Clearly, the holding bay was only an entrance to the main, fixed body around which the massive rings revolved.

Disappointed, he glanced back over his shoulder, first at the two armed Marine guards behind him, then beyond the wide circle of marker lamps. The light of the lamps, however, made it impossible to see as far as the barbed-wire perimeter, where the other Marines would be standing guard, preparing to fire at the saucer, if so signalled. Still, it was no comfort to Fuller to know that Wilson was right: that if he, Fuller, said the wrong thing or made the wrong move, he wouldn't have a prayer. He'd be paralysed by a stun gun, dragged up into the saucer, and almost certainly never be seen again. It wasn't a comforting thought.

'So what's the offer?' he asked.

'You'll take this to the White House?'

Fuller sighed. 'Yes, Wilson, direct to the President. So what am I to tell him, other than what you're already told me?'

'As you probably know...' Wilson began.

'Don't tell me what I already know.'

'As you already know,' Wilson repeated, almost gritting his teeth in the first sign of anger that he had ever displayed, 'at the end of this year, in an unprecedented international agreement, a total of twelve countries, including Britain, America and the Soviet Union, will be signing a treaty stating that no country can claim any part of Antarctica as its own, and that the continent must be held as a common preserve for scientific research.'

'A noble idea,' Fuller said.

'Once the agreement is signed,' Wilson continued, ignoring Fuller's sarcasm, 'scientific and exploratory bases will be springing up all over Antarctica.'

'Which gives you a problem,' Fuller said.

'Yes.' Wilson's gaze was as icy as the continent he seemed to love. 'So in return for a guarantee that there will be no attempts to locate or capture my base and that all sightings of my flying saucers over Antarctica will be treated with ridicule or suppressed entirely – as already they are in the United States and elsewhere – I'll guarantee that America will be the first to land men on the moon.'

'Well, we'd certainly appreciate that,' Fuller said. 'But unfortunately the US can't place restrictions on the other nations signing the Antarctic agreement.'

'The US is the only nation with the capability of launching an attack on my otherwise inaccessible part of Nue Schwabenland – still known to the West as Queen Maud Land – so I'm not yet concerned with the other nations, but only with the US.'

Realising that Wilson was as genuinely concerned as his kind could be, which wasn't much, though it was at least something, Fuller felt a flicker of pleasure, while also accepting that this trade, no matter how indecent, could not be refused. Whether or not he – or the White House or the Pentagon – liked it, they could not afford to let the Soviets be the first to land on the moon and would therefore have to accede to Wilson's demands – just as they had done so often in the past. This was truly a bitter pill to swallow.

'I'm still not sure that we can do as you ask,' Fuller lied, 'but I'll certainly present it to the President with my personal, strong recommendation.'

'Good,' Wilson replied, showing no sign of gratitude.

After a lengthy silence, in which Wilson seemed deep in thought, Fuller, losing patience, said, '*Well*? Anything else, Mr Wilson?'

'Yes, there *is* another matter. I'm concerned that a certain Professor J.Allen Hynek, well known UFOlogist and codirector of the Smithsonian Institution's satellite tracking programme, has been allowed to head an unofficial UFO advisory group recruited by Project Blue Book and including, as well as the redoubtable Hynek, an astronomer, a physicist, a psychologist, and Major Robert J.Friend, the present head of Project Blue Book and a man too co-operative with civilian UFO groups for my liking.'

'Stop worrying about Hynek and his group,' Fuller said. 'Project Blue Book is practically on its knees and its so-called advisory group is just another red herring for the increasing number of professional and amateur UFO sleuths. That advisory group, believe me, will be disbanded by the end of next year, after serving its real purpose, which is to spread so much doubt and confusion amongst the UFOlogists that most of them will give up completely and go back to playing with toy submarines in their baths.'

'And Hynek?'

'What about him? When the group sinks, he'll probably go down with it. As for

Project Blue Book, while it's continued to make a strong show of examining UFO cases, it's now under pressure from above – don't look at me! – to produce a report stating that after twelve years of investigating and analysing UFO sightings, the ATIC has *no* evidence to suggest that UFOs are either space vehicles, a threat to national security, or of any scientific value whatsoever. The same report will describe the UFO programme as a costly and unproductive burden on the Air Force. Finally, it'll recommend that Project Blue Book's staff could be more constructively used on other programmes.'

'Very good, Fuller.'

'I've nothing to do with it,' Fuller lied again, though he couldn't resist a proud grin. 'Anyway, while that report's being prepared, we're still encouraging the public to think of the UFOs in terms of extraterrestrials – your men in black are widely believed to be just that. So all in all, the UFOlogists are imagining everything *except* man-made UFOs.'

'I know you're reluctant to take credit for this,' Wilson said, 'but I have to tell you it pleases me.'

'Good. So we're even until you next need supplies. Can I leave now, Wilson?'

'Your detestation is all too obvious,' Wilson said, 'if badly misplaced. Look to your own government – the one you revere – and then tell me which one of us is truly moral.'

'I'm not up to that, Wilson.'

'No, I don't suppose you are. Morals aren't your strong point.' Wilson glanced across the field, to where the other Marines were hidden in darkness. Though he couldn't see them, he knew that they were there and was amused by the thought. 'One last thing,' he said, returning his gaze to Fuller.

'What?'

'Have you heard about the woman from Maine?'

'No.'

'Stop lying. If I know about her – and I do – you must know that I know you were involved.'

Now understanding that Wilson really *did* have eyes and ears everywhere, Fuller, badly shaken, which was rare, simply shrugged as if it was of no consequence. 'Yeah, right, I know about her. So? *What* about her?'

'I'll tell you about her,' Wilson said, suddenly sounding as angry as Fuller had ever heard him. 'I've learnt from this case that the CIA, like the KGB, is heavily involved in parapsychological research, particularly the possibilities of telepathic communication with regard to spying. Before you try denying it, please let me say that regarding the woman from Maine, I can tell you that she accidentally broke into an experimental communication between a land-based, ESP-trained Naval intelligence officer and a submerged submarine. Any story to the contrary is nonsense.'

That Wilson had found this out was a truly frightening revelation to the normally

fearless Fuller.

'I can't confirm or deny that,' he said, knowing how lame it sounded.

Wilson shook his head from side to side, as if pitying the attempted deceptions of Fuller and his kind. 'You're hoping to reach our level of achievement in this field,' he told him, 'but you're wasting your time. I know about your woman from Maine because I broke into your telepathic communication in that office in CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, and arranged for that flying saucer to hover over Capitol Hill as a demonstration of how advanced we've become telepathically. So you see, Mr Fuller, no matter how advanced you believe you're becoming, we'll always be at least one step ahead of you – just as we are with our flying saucer technology. Your men are wasting their time.'

'Maybe' Fuller responded, trying to sound more confident than he felt. 'Maybe not. You're playing a dangerous game with these trade-offs, so you just might slip up some day.'

'I don't think so,' Wilson said. 'Thank you and good night.'

Flanked by his two hideous, deadly cyborgs, he turned away without another word and marched back up the ramp, into his towering flying saucer. Knowing better than to be within that circle of marker lamps when the saucer took off, Fuller hurried away with his two armed Marines, clambered back into his jeep, and let himself be driven back to the other Marines keeping guard around the electrified barbed-wire fence. From the other side of that fence, Fuller and the soldiers looked up in awe as the flying saucer turned into a magically glowing, egg-shaped craft that had lights of different colours flashing in rapid sequence around its revolving rings. It lifted off vertically, hovered a few seconds above the ground, illuminating the surrounding darkness with its eerie whitish glow and kaleidoscopic lights, then suddenly shot up vertically, made an abrupt turn to the west, about a hundred feet high, hovered again for a moment, then shot off and dwindled rapidly, until it was no more than a glowing light the size of a diamond. That light also shrank, merging with the stars, then abruptly blinked out.

Though nothing usual could now be seen up there, Fuller and the many men around him kept scanning the night sky.

'Jesus Christ!' one of the soldiers behind Fuller exclaimed in a stunned, disbelieving way.

'No,' Fuller responded, now staring at the sky and accepting that he might indeed be defeated. 'Jesus Christ was in the past, soldier. You've just seen the future.'

He clambered back into the jeep and told the driver to return him to the Vanguard Hotel in Cocoa Beach. He didn't anticipate getting a good night's sleep, but at least he could be alone there.

Fuller needed a dark cave.

Chapter Thirty-One

'I don't scare easily,' Scaduto told Dwight when they were having cold beers in the sweltering heat of an outdoor bar in Carillon Park, Dayton, Ohio, in July 1960. 'But I don't mind admitting that this business is starting to put me on edge. Particularly this latest piece of news.'

'What news?'

'Haven't you heard?' Despite the heat, Scaduto was wearing his customary black-leather jacket, blue denims and high-heeled boots. His sideburns were ink-black and prominent. 'It was in yesterday's newspapers. Your former Project Blue Book chief, Captain Edward J.Ruppelt, has died of an unexpected heart attack.'

Dwight was shocked to hear that. Captain Ruppelt was even younger than he was. The last time Dwight had seen him was that sad day in December 1953 when he had informed them of the dire results of the Robertson panel report and, even worse, told them that Project Blue Book was being run down and most of its staff, including Ruppelt, dispersed to other locations. It had been a sad day for all of them, but Ruppelt had at least been his relatively young, decent, healthy self. Certainly not heart attack material.

'I don't like it,' Scaduto said. 'In 1953, Ruppelt leaves the Air Force. Three years later he writes a book in which he states categorically that UFOs are for real. Three years after that, he revises the book, reversing his previous opinions and insisting that UFOs are probably natural phenomena. And approximately one year later, in 1960, weary before his time, he dies of a heart attack. It sure makes you think, doesn't it?'

'Yet, it does.' In fact, this shocking piece of news had reminded Dwight not only of the many other people involved in UFO investigations who had died unexpectedly, been killed in surprising ways, or committed 'suicide' for no discernible reason. It had also reminded him of the many other ways in which UFO investigators had been made to suffer, including financial hardship, problems at work, sudden transfers to far-flung locations, actual threats and other forms of harassment from the mysterious 'men in black', and marital breakdowns based on one or other of the former. Something else not easy to forget was the fact that many UFO researchers had disappeared completely, leaving no indication of why or where they had gone. They had simply never been seen again.

Last but by no means least, the news of Ruppelt's unexpected death, added to the mysterious nature of his unexplained reversal regarding the reality of the UFO phenomenon and subsequent slide into depression and poor health after leaving the Air Force, had brutally reminded Dwight of Beth's bizarre, frightening experience eighteen months ago, when she had been driving (or so she had thought) past the garage that Dwight had worked and lived in during the years of their separation.

For months prior to the incident, Beth had been complaining that she was having bad nightmares, relating to UFOs and tormenting men in black, that she felt she was

being followed, though she had never actually seen anyone following her, and that she was haunted by the general feeling that something unknown was making her constantly fretful. The day of the incident in question, when she had just dropped Dwight off at the Dayton airport for his flight to Washington DC for his first normal visit to Dr Frederick Epstein at the APII, she had imagined she was driving past the garage, taken over from Dwight by bachelor Frank Bancroft, then realised that she had actually being *staring* at it for some time through the window of her car, which was parked inexplicably by the side of the road. She then noticed that her wristwatch had stopped two hours previously – at approximately the time she would have passed the garage after leaving the airport. Yet her wristwatch was not the only item to have malfunctioned: when she tried to switch on the ignition of her car, it wouldn't start. Presumably, then, it had stopped of its own accord, just as Beth was driving past the garage, about ten minutes after leaving Dayton airport. Which in turn meant that Beth – who could not recollect having stopped and had, for some time, clearly been *imagining* that she was driving past the garage, not just parked across the road from it – had blacked out, either just before or just after the vehicle had stopped, and had then remained unconscious for almost two hours.

It was damned mysterious.

Even worse was what Beth saw when she awakened... the immense circle created by the unnatural blowing of the wind, then given sharper definition by the inexplicable scorching of the windblown grass, which ended up charred and smouldering; and then, infinitely more frightening, the discovery of Frank Bancroft, who had clearly died suddenly in mortal terror.

Since that incident, Beth had been more frightened than ever and Dwight, though he tried not to show it, had become more concerned for her and himself – he had even started worrying about Nichola's safety. Indeed, from that day on he had begun worrying that his UFO investigations were putting them all in mortal danger; but when he discussed this matter with Beth, she insisted that no matter the danger, he must continue the work and solve the mystery that was tormenting him, thus ridding himself of the obsession once and for all. Dwight had been deeply moved by her concern and courage.

'The news about Ruppelt is terrible,' he said to Scaduto, 'but obviously it isn't why you called this meeting. You could have told me about Ruppelt on the phone, so what you have brought me?'

'Man-made flying saucers,' Scaduto said.

Dwight glanced left and right, at the other customers packed around the trestle tables to take in the sun while drinking and eating. There were really too many people here... too many... too close to him.

'Finish your beer and let's go for a walk,' he said, feeling paranoid.

'Sure,' Scaduto said. 'I understand.' He hurriedly gulped the last of his beer, threw the can into the trash can near the table, then proceeded to stroll with Dwight through the park, which was, on this sunny day in July, filled with local people walking their

dogs, teenagers careening about on roller-skates or bicycles, children playing with bats and balls. 'I think it's becoming more certain,' he began, 'that the UFOs seen over various Air Force installations are actually top-secret, highly advanced US-Canadian aircraft.'

He fell silent for a moment, letting Dwight take this in, but also relishing the melodrama, and continued talking as they meandered on through the park.

'I should remind you, Dwight, that at least *some* kind of saucer-shaped prototypes were actually constructed by the US and Canada: first, the US Navy's Flying Flounder and the Air Force's Flying Flapjack – projects reportedly worked on sometime between 1942 and 1947 – followed by the flying saucer that the Canadian government claimed had been aborted and passed over to the US in 1954.'

'Right,' Dwight said. 'I remember.'

'Now the most interesting thing about those projects is that the US Navy claimed to have dropped its project back in 1947, though it was known to be still involved in super-secret aeronautical projects scattered around the White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico – where so many flying saucers have been reported. Also, the Canadian government, while admitting that the enormous UFO seen over Albuquerque in 1951 was similar to the one they'd tried to build, claimed that they'd passed the project on to the US because they couldn't afford it... In other words, the UFO over Albuquerque could have been a US product based on the Canadian designs of 1947.'

'Where's all this leading, Tony?'

Scaduto stopped to light a cigarette and contaminate the pure air of the park with smoke. Though bright, he had an addictive personality that, so far, had given him a taste for alcohol, cigarettes and easy women. He had also flirted with marijuana, but so far had kept a decent reign on it. Inhaling, then exhaling a cloud of smoke, he started walking again.

'Ever since I began this man-made UFO business,' he said, 'I've found myself harping back on the fact that the first major contemporary sightings, the Kenneth Arnold sightings of June 24, 1947, took place near Mount Rainier in the Cascades in the state of Washington – which divides Canada from Oregon – and that Arnold had stated that *nine* silvery discs had disappeared in the direction of the Canadian border. As I've since found out, however, what wasn't so widely known at the time was the fact that on that very same day another man, Fred Johnson, prospecting about four thousand feet up in the Cascades, reported seeing six similar objects; and three days before that, on June 21, Harold Dahl, on harbour patrol in Puget Sound -–which runs from the Canadian border to Tacoma – was following the coastline of Maury Island when he saw five UFOs manoeuvring fifteen hundred feet above the coast, before disappearing towards the open sea.'

'So what?' Dwight said, surprised by his own lack of patience. 'It's true that those facts weren't widely known at the time, but we covered the Arnold case pretty extensively at the ATIC, so we learnt about those other sightings a year or so later.'

'Okay,' Scaduto said, not remotely deterred by Dwight's show of impatience.

'Let's take it from there.'

Two young people were lying in the middle of the field on the right, under the shade of an elm tree. The girl, wearing tight blue jeans and a figure-hugging sweater, was practically buried under a young man wearing the same kind of jeans, but stripped to the waist. Writhing together and kissing passionately, they were lost to the real world – something that Scaduto clearly noticed with his envious gaze.

'Throughout that whole month,' he continued, tearing his eyes away from the couple on the grass, 'there were a hell of a lot of sightings over the northwestern corner of the United States. By the first week in July there were also reports of strange, luminous bodies in the skies over the Province of Quebec, Oregon and New England. The following week, those sightings spread to California and New Mexico. By the end of the year – the same year the US Navy had, reportedly, *dropped* their flying saucer project – flying saucers were being reported from all over the country.'

'And the next major UFO flap was the Washington invasion of 1952,' Dwight said, 'of which I had personal experience.'

'Dead on the nose, pal.' Scaduto glanced back over his shoulder at the young couple making love on the grass, now a good distance away. The sight of them gave him distracting thoughts and forced him to concentrate. 'On reinvestigating that case,' he said, 'using your old ATIC reports as my map, I discovered that while the real flap had started on July 19, there was a record dated June 17 of several unidentified red spheres that flew at supersonic speeds over the Canadian air base of North Bay, in Ontario, then crossed over some of the southeastern states. I also discovered that nearly all of the subsequent Washington DC UFOs were reported as disappearing to the north, and that when the UFOs returned en masse, on July 26, their disappearance in a general northerly direction also applied.'

'All heading towards the Canadian border.'

'Right, Dwight, you've got it.'

'Well, it's certainly true that Lake Ontario and Lake Erie are as notorious as the Bermuda Triangle for the unexplained destruction of hundreds of aircraft and ships, the failure of gyroscopes and radio instruments, irrational behaviour in normally sane crew members, and, of course, the sighting of numerous UFOs. It's also true that Canada's one of the greatest aeronautical powers in the world.'

'Yeah,' Scaduto said, sounding richly satisfied. 'I never thought of Canada that way until I began my research. But during that research I came across an article, dated 1952 – at the height of the flying saucer scare – describing Canada as the Promised Land of Aviation. Considering that most Americans of the time thought of Canada as a kind of No-Man's Land, I was suitably impressed to learn that in fact it was the home, even back in 1952, of a remarkable number of the most prestigious aircraft development companies in the world.'

'It also had, and still has, vast areas of heavily wooded and uninhabited land – ideal for hiding secret aeronautical research establishments.'

'Just what struck me,' Scaduto said, clearly thrilled that he and Dwight were on the

same wavelength. ‘So having learned these interesting facts, I decided to find out, once and for all, whether or not the Canadian flying saucer project had really been passed on to the US Air Force and, more important, if the Air Force had then really dropped the project, as widely reported.’

‘So what did you learn?’

‘A lot.’

Dwight liked Scaduto and was, in a sense, envious of his relative youthfulness, naive optimism, and Brooklyn-based ‘street’ wisdom; but sometimes, as he was forced to admit to himself, the young man’s flair for self-dramatisation could be aggravating. For this very reason, he wanted to devastate Scaduto with a cutting remark, but all he could come up with was: ‘Stop teasing me!’

‘Okay,’ Scaduto responded, satisfied with the belief that he had managed to get one up on the older man, whom he admired and wished to emulate. ‘My research revealed that on...’ He pulled a notebook from his hip pocket and glanced at it... ‘On February 11, 1953, the Toronto *Star* announced that a *new* flying saucer was being developed at the A.V.Roe plant – now Avro-Canada – in Malton, Ontario.’

‘This suggests that it wasn’t the first one.’

‘Shit, no,’ Scaduto said, then continued to talk, picking up precise dates and details from his notebook. ‘Following that February 11 press release, on February 16, the Canadian Minister of Defence Production, C.D.Howe, informed the House of Commons that Avro-Canada was in fact working on a mock-up model of a flying saucer capable of flying at fifteen hundred miles per hour and climbing straight up in the air.’

‘Really?’

‘It’s all there in the morgues of the Canadian and other newspapers.’

‘Wonderful,’ Dwight said, becoming excited. ‘Please continue.’

‘By February 27, Crawford Gordon Jr., then the president of Avro-Canada, was writing in the house journal, *Avro News*, that the prototype being constructed was so revolutionary it would make all other forms of supersonic aircraft obsolescent. Next, the Toronto *Star* was claiming that Britain’s Field Marshal Montgomery had become one of the few people to view Avro’s mock-up of the flying saucer. Shortly after that report, Air Vice Marshal D.M.Smith was reported to have said that what Field Marshal Montgomery had seen was the preliminary construction plans for a gyroscopic fighter whose gas turbine would revolve around the pilot, who would be positioned in the centre of the disc.’

‘Oh, my God!’ Dwight softly exclaimed, while glancing left and right at the many other people moving in both directions along the path winding through the park. ‘The *Omega*!’

‘Shit, man, you remembered! Yeah! The press dubbed that legendary machine “the *Omega*” and in 1953 the British *RAF Review* – the *Royal Air Force Review* – gave it a semi-official respectability by reprinting most of the unclassified Canadian research and including censored drawings of the actual prototype.’

'The research and those drawings were actually *published*?'

'Yeah... but only in Britain.'

'Man, oh man!' Temporarily forgetting his personal fears, Dwight felt like an excited schoolkid. 'So what was the *Omega* like?'

'According to the sketches,' Scaduto said, again glancing at his notebook, 'it was a relatively small flying wing, shaped like a horseshoe, with a lot of air-intake slots along its edge, ten deflector vanes for direction control, a single-pilot cabin topped by a cupola of transparent Perspex, and a large turbine engine that revolved around the vertical axis of the main body.'

'Then it disappeared,' Dwight said, trying to anticipate.

'Not quite,' Scaduto replied, still enjoying Dwight's shock and excitement at his revelations. 'In early November, 1953, Canadian newspapers were reporting that a mock-up of the *Omega* had been shown on October 31 to a group of twenty-five military officers and scientists. Then in March of the following year, the American press was claiming that the US Air Force, concerned at Soviet progress in aeronautics, had allocated an unspecified sum of money to the Canadian government for the building of a prototype of their flying saucer. Reportedly, that machine had been designed by the English aeronautical engineer, John Frost – who'd worked for Avro-Canada in Malton, Ontario – and it would be capable of either hovering in mid-air or flying at a speed of nearly two thousand miles an hour.'

Dwight gave a low whistle of appreciation.

'This hot piece of news,' Scaduto continued, 'was followed by Canadian press assertions that their government was planning to form entire squadrons of flying saucers for the defence of Alaska and the far regions of the north. This, they claimed, was because the machines required no runways, were capable of ascending vertically, and were ideal weapons for sub-arctic and Polar regions.'

'Sub-arctic and Polar regions,' Dwight repeated, practically in a daze.

'Right,' Scaduto said, glancing sideways and grinning when he saw the growing awareness in Dwight's eyes. 'So, do you want to hear the rest?'

'Damned right I do,' Dwight said.

'On December 3, 1954, the Canadian Minister of Defence announced that the *Canadian* flying saucer project had been dropped, since it would have cost too much for something that was, in the end, highly speculative.'

Dwight stopped walking, glanced at the many people criss-crossing the park, walking their dogs, flying kites, roller-skating or embracing on the sunlit fields, and then found himself glancing more intently at them, wondering if they were as innocent as they seemed. He saw no men in black.

'So what makes you believe the saucer project wasn't dropped completely?' he asked Scaduto, who responded by turning to a new page in his notebook and glancing repeatedly at it as he spoke.

'Because on October 22 the following year, US Air Force Secretary Donald Quarles released an extraordinary statement through the press office of the

Department of Defence. Among other things, he said that an aircraft of – I quote – *unusual configuration and flight characteristics* – would soon be appearing; that the US government had initiated negotiations with the Canadian government and Avro-Canada for the preparation of an experimental model of the Frost flying disc; and that the saucers would be mass-produced and used for the common defence of the sub-arctic area of the continent.'

'The sub-arctic area,' Dwight murmured distractedly. 'We're back with the sub-arctic.'

'Right,' Scaduto said. 'Ice and snow... But it didn't end there.'

Now Dwight stopped walking to stare hard at his young friend. He no longer gave a damn who overheard him. Paranoid or not, he was convinced that everything he said and did was being monitored somehow. Given that conviction, whether sane or mad, he could only follow his nose.

'Okay,' he said, following his nose. 'Tell me the rest of it.'

Grinning wickedly, Scaduto took a deep breath, held it in for some time, then let it all out as he started talking again.

'By February last year, the press was receiving ambiguous Air Force statements about a revolutionary new aircraft that had been jointly undertaken by the US Air Force, the US Army, and the Canadian government. Then, on April 14, during a press conference in Washington DC, General Frank Britten implied that the first test flight of the aircraft was imminent and that it was destined to revolutionise traditional aeronautical concepts.'

'So when's that test flight going to be?' Dwight asked, now realising that Scaduto's whole spiel had been leading up to this single, crucial point.

Scaduto brushed his ink-black sideburns with self-worshipping fingers and, taking a deep breath of the kind that all born actors employ, said, 'The test flight's already been completed. The results haven't been announced yet. But - get this! – the press has actually been invited to look at the saucer on August 25 – next month – at the Army Transport Museum at Fort Eustus, Virginia.'

'And we're both going, of course.'

'You bet.'

'What's the bet we don't see much?' Dwight said.

'I don't bet,' Scaduto said.

Amused despite himself, being otherwise deeply troubled, Dwight left the park with Scaduto, bit him goodbye, then hurried home to take comfort from Beth's embrace, taste her full lips, suck the juices from her mouth, then lose himself in the tangle of her arms and legs, in her centre, her very being, in that bed they had bought many years ago, when, in fear and trembling and mutual need, they became man and wife.

Dwight's dark cave was love.

Chapter Thirty-Two

Dwight's dark cave of love was a help, but not a cure, during the nightmarish month that followed his meeting with Tony Scaduto and the press conference arranged for the unveiling of the first officially acknowledged man-made flying saucer. Already haunted by her frightening experience at Frank Bancroft's garage, Beth had then started experiencing terrifying nightmares about UFOs and faceless men dressed in black. Soon she was also being tormented by the feeling that she was somehow being followed and kept under almost daily observation. She felt this even when in her car.

'It's hard to explain,' she told Dwight, 'because there's nothing I can put my finger on – nothing seen or heard or actually felt. But when I'm driving, particularly when on the roads outside town – empty roads – I have the feeling that something is pressing down on the car, exerting some kind of pressure, and that pressure is also pressing down upon and around me.'

She and Dwight were sitting in deck chairs out on the back yard of the tract house they had leased just a week ago, having decided that they needed something bigger than the previous apartment near Carillon Park. Nichola, presently playing in the small, pumped-up pool in front of them with a neighbour's daughter, Tanya Harper, was all of twelve years old and would soon be a teenager in need of her own space, so that had been their major consideration when deciding to move. As the sun was now blazing out of a clear blue sky, Beth and Dwight, both in swim suits and relishing the privacy of their own back yard, were trying for a suntan.

'Any effect on the car itself?' Dwight asked. 'Any malfunctioning?'

'No – yes! It doesn't malfunction, but it definitely drags. In fact, I often find myself checking the handbrake, thinking I forgot to release it when starting off. Then I find myself looking out of the car, trying to see what's around me, what's slowing me down.'

'Ever stop and actually get out of the car to look directly above it?'

'Yep. That shows you how bad it is. I sometimes get out and look up, but I've never seen anything. Strangely, that worries me even more. And I become almost sick with anxiety when Nichola's with me. I even feel that odd... *presence*... call it what you will... when I'm taking her to school.'

'Does Nichola feel it as well?'

'She's never mentioned it and I've never asked. No, she seems happy enough, belted in there.'

During the last two weeks of that sweltering July, 1960, Beth's nightmares had become more frequent and the feeling that she was never entirely alone increased dramatically. She began experiencing it while waiting outside Nichola's school, at the supermarket, sometimes even when sunning herself out in the back yard or tending to her lawn.

'I'll be feeling perfectly fine,' she explained to Dwight, 'engrossed in what I'm

doing, and suddenly, right out of the blue, I'll find myself glancing around me, expecting to see someone or... *something*.' She shrugged forlornly. 'It's a feeling so strong, you're convinced someone is staring right at you and they're close – you know? Like about the other side of the yard fence, just across the street, or only a short distance behind you in the mall. A very *strong* feeling. Shivery. I'm thinking of the shopping, or about what Nichola's doing at school, or maybe where we should go on our next vacation – then, whammo! My head jerks around before I even know it and I find myself staring to the side, behind me, wherever, expecting to see... yeah, a man, or men, in black. I always expect to see *them*. And of course there's never anyone there and, as I said, in some way that's even worse. 'Cause sure as hell it makes you think you're losing your mind or having a breakdown.'

By early August, Beth's conviction that she was being followed was confirmed when a black limousine did indeed start following her, just about every time she ventured out. At first she thought she was imagining this, but at the end of the first day with that vehicle on her tail - – particularly busy day that had her driving here, there and everywhere, including school in the morning, the supermarket, the houses of a couple of friends, then school again in the afternoon to collect Nichola – she realised that the limo was real enough and definitely following her when it stopped everywhere she stopped, then started up again and followed her when she moved off. By the end of the first day of this, she was truly frightened.

The process continued throughout a second day, then a third and a fourth. When Beth stopped, the limo stopped as well, always parking within sight of her, though never close enough for her to see anything other than the figures of men in... black suits. As they were always too far away for their features to be discerned, Beth was reminded of her nightmares, in which the men in black one-piece suits always seemed somehow faceless.

Finally, during the fifth day, when she was waiting for Nichola to come out of school and suffering the dreadful fear that the men in black might abduct her, she got out of her car and hurried along the sidewalk towards the limo parked a good distance away. The limo didn't move until she was approaching it – until she could clearly see the two men in the front – black suits, black roll-necked pullovers, dark glasses – but could still not make out their features. Just as she was coming close enough to see what they looked like, the limo pulled away from the sidewalk, did a U-turn and raced away from her.

At once relieved and frustrated, Beth returned to her car and waited for Nichola to emerge from the school. When she had collected her and was driving her back to the house, the black limo came out of a side street and sat on her tail again. When she entered the house, clutching Nichola's hand, the limo parked a good way along the street, but close enough for her to see it from the living room window. Just as she was picking up the phone to call the police station, the limo moved off.

'Just like that,' Beth explained to Dwight, snapping her fingers. 'As if they could see exactly what I was doing, even when I was inside the house. The second I picked

up the phone, those bastards drove off.'

That, however, was the last time she was tailed by the men in the limo. Unfortunately, during the second week in August, she began to have serious lapses of memory and what appeared to be brief blackouts, which, like her experience at the garage, left her feeling bewildered and disorientated. The blackouts were not dramatic and at no point harmful – she never collapsed or lost control when driving her car – but they were of a nature that was just as wrenching emotionally.

Preparing dinner in the kitchen, some time later, she would abruptly find herself lying on the bed or the sofa in front of the TV with no memory of having made the move, but with vague recollections of the usual nightmares about UFOs and men in black. Packing her shopping into the trunk of her car outside the supermarket, she would suddenly find herself emerging from the by now customary nightmares, this time slumped over the steering wheel, with the trunk still open and the rest of the shopping still in the trolley. Sitting in her car outside the school, waiting for Nichola to emerge, she would suddenly see Nichola standing forlornly on the sidewalk as the last of the other kids either walked off or were driven home by their parents. Though unable to recall the children emerging from the school, she would rush guiltily to collect Nichola, her head still filled with a vision of herself being surrounded by the men in black in a circular, brilliantly lit, white-walled room. Such lapses of consciousness, and the nightmares contained within them, gradually made her a nervous wreck.

Beth went to see her doctor and told him she felt tense and couldn't sleep, though she didn't mention the real cause of her problem. When Valium was prescribed, some of her tension slipped away, but even the sedatives didn't help when, watching Nichola playing with Tanya in the park, she lost consciousness again and awakened to see three men in black suits talking to both children. When Beth rushed towards them, the men, too distant to be made out clearly, glanced in her direction, then hurried away to melt into the trees around the edge of the playing field. When Beth, her heart pounding furiously, asked Nichola what the men had wanted, her daughter replied: 'They asked if my mom was Beth Randall. I said, "Yes," and they just looked at each other without saying anything else. Then you came along.'

'If those men ever come near you again,' Beth warned Nichola, 'you run away and come straight to me. Understood?'

'Yes, Mom.'

Beth's nightmares then became more vivid and frightening. She dreamed that the men in black had abducted Nichola. She had another dream about Dwight disappearing and never being seen again. Mostly, however, her dreams were composed of hallucinatory, fragmented recollections of that great circle of black ash around the garage once run by Dwight; the look of stark terror on the dead Frank Bancroft's face; herself stretched out on what she felt was a surgical bed of cold metal, staring up at a ring of faces, some human, others part-metallic and dreadful: small creatures with alien faces and steel claws for hands; then curving, steel-grey

corridors, a room filled with severed human heads and other bodily parts; and then herself strapped to a chair with a metal cap on her head; and, finally, white-painted steel panels sliding apart to reveal panoramic windows and, beyond them, a vast, desolate terrain of ice and snow.

The dreams, though fragmented, were relentless in the terror that they created for her, making her jerk awake, screaming, bathed in sweat, to be held and rocked by a concerned, helpless Dwight.

'It's real!' she once sobbed. 'I know it's real!'

'No, it's not,' Dwight replied. 'You're just having bad dreams, Beth.'

But even he didn't sound convinced.

In fact, Dwight was, at that point, being torn between his real concern for Beth and his rage against those who were doing this to her. It was a deeply personal kind of rage, focused on the men in black, because he now believed absolutely that they existed and were responsible for what was happening to her. Yet even as his anger grew and he determined to fight back, he was frustrated because the men in black made no more appearances.

Instead, worse things happened.

The first manifestation was similar to Dwight's experience in the motel outside Albuquerque, only this time it happened right outside his own home.

Beth had taken some Valium and was still having trouble sleeping, with Dwight holding her in his arms, when the latter felt a distinct rise in temperature, heard a bass humming sound from outside, as if directly above the house, then was startled by the violent shaking of the bed as striations of brilliant light beamed in through the window. The bass humming sound grew louder, then turned into a vibrating presence, a faint pressure, as the room shook even more violently, with framed pictures swinging crazily on the walls and ornaments falling off chests-of-drawers and cupboards. Nichola cried out in her bedroom. 'Mom! Dad!' Though sedated with the Valium, Beth tore herself from Dwight's embrace and ran into Nichola's bedroom as Dwight rushed to the window and looked out.

He stared into a dazzling radiance. It was beaming down from above the house – so bright he couldn't keep his eyes open. Cursing, he fumbled blindly at the window catches, to unlock them and open the window. As he was doing so, the bass humming sound cut out, the room stopped shaking, and then, when he opened his eyes, he was able to see clearly again.

Moonlight was shining on the untouched back yard. Nothing else. He opened the window as Beth returned to the bedroom, one arm around the sobbing Nichola's shoulder, patting her head reassuringly with her free hand. Dwight stuck his head out of the open window and looked up as high as he could, trying to see directly above the house. He saw a shrinking light, what might have been a shooting star, then it blinked out abruptly, leaving only the starry sky.

'It's all right, it's all right,' Beth was repeating consolingly to the sobbing Nichola,

where they now lay together on the bed. 'It's all right, sweetheart.'

But it wasn't all right. In fact, it was just beginning. During the final week before the press viewing of the Avrocar, as if as a warning to Dwight, the visitations occurred every night for five nights in a row, with the house shaking more each time, the noise growing louder, the inexplicable pressure becoming stronger, the contents of the house flung about and smashed, as if by a poltergeist. As Nichola howled in Beth's arms and the latter shrieked for the manifestations to stop – not knowing who or what she was shouting at, but staring fearfully at the closed window – the striations beaming in from outside would start flickering like strobe lights, the rate increasing every second, until Dwight, Beth and Nichola saw each other as bizarre, jerkily moving figures in a disorientating, constantly changing, chiaroscuro filled with hellish noise and applying an indefinable pressure upon them, making them feel that their heads and hearts were going to burst.

Sometimes the burners on the cooker would come on of their own accord; other times water would pour out of the taps, flooding over the rim of the sink and onto the floor; then the electric lights, radio or TV would come on inexplicably, adding to the general bedlam and visual chaos.

Each night was worse than the one before, with the lights brighter and flickering faster, the bass humming sound deeper and increasingly *physical* – an infrasound – and the pressure around their heads tighter and giving them headaches. Each night, when the phenomenon had ended, Dwight would either jerk the window open and stick his head out or run on to the front lawn to see what had caused it – and each time he only saw that he thought, or imagined, was a tiny light shrinking until it disappeared directly above the house, leaving only the stars in the night sky.

By the fourth day of the final week before the press viewing of the Avrocar, while the outside of the house remained normal, the grass on the front lawn and back yard was singed black. Remarkably, there was no damage to any of the neighbours' houses and tentative enquiries produced no sign that the neighbours – their houses all spaced well apart – had heard or seen anything unusual.

'If this happens once more,' Dwight told Beth when they were tidying up the latest mess of broken glass, picture frames and ornaments caused by the violent shaking of the house the night before, 'I'm going to send you and Nichola to stay with your folks.'

'Every night,' Beth said, practically whispering, as if talking to herself, not really there. 'Why every night?'

'I don't know, honey.'

'They don't attempt to get near us. We never see them. What do they want?'

We don't even know who 'they' are, Dwight thought, but I better not say that.

'One more time,' he said instead, 'and you're out of here. You and Nichola both. I don't know what it is, how it's happening, but I'm getting you out of here.'

'I'm not going if you don't,' Beth said.

'Yes, you are,' Dwight insisted.

The fifth night was the worst of all. The visitation came so late that they thought it wasn't coming, and Beth was actually slipping gratefully into sleep. It was just before four in the morning and she was lying between Dwight and Nichola, who was now too frightened to sleep in her own bed. Dwight was still awake, looking sideways at the two most important people in his life – his wife and daughter – choked up to see them sleeping together, when he suddenly turned cold, then hot, and heard that familiar bass humming sound. At first shocked, then plunging into a cauldron of rage and despair, he reached out to Beth as her eyes opened wide, changing instantly from drowsiness to terror. Even as Beth let out a moan and turned to embrace the awakened, frightened Nichola, the bass humming sound became louder, an almost physical vibration, and the whole room began to shake, with the framed pictures again swinging crazily on the walls while ornaments and other bricabrac rattled and fell to the floor. As Nichola cried out, 'Mom! Dad!' and Beth held her close, pulling the sheets over both of them, light suddenly beamed in through the window, illuminating the bedroom, and then turned into a chiaroscuro flickering on and off with a rapidity that was totally disorientating.

'Bastards!' Dwight bawled.

As if in response, the bottom end of the bed leapt up in the air and banged back down on the floor. The lamp on the bedside cabinet became a fountain of crimson sparks and then exploded with the wires spitting blue and yellow flames. Instinctively, Dwight rolled off the wildly rocking bed, jerked the plug of the lamp from its socket, then smothered the flames with the shirt he had draped over a nearby chair. Nichola was wailing in terror under the bedsheet, being comforted by Beth, as Dwight crawled on hands and knees across the floor, showered in debris from the plaster exploding out of the ceiling and raining down upon him.

More cracks spread across the ceiling. The bed jumped up and down liked a crazed beast. The floorboards creaked, screeched and then snapped apart under the magically heaving carpet. Though dazzled by the flickering patterns created by what seemed like strobe lights, Dwight still managed to reach the door of the bedroom. Glancing back, he saw that the bed had stopped rocking and the ceiling was no longer raining broken plaster. Knowing that Beth and Nichola, no matter how upset, would be all right, Dwight, in a fury that obliterated his terror, jumped to his feet and ran across the living room, heading for the front door.

As he crossed the living room, more cracks zigzagged along the ceiling directly above him, as if tracking his movements, showering him once more in falling plaster and clouds of powder. Even here, the furniture was jumping, lightbulbs were exploding, and the mysterious light was pouring in through the windows, still flickering rapidly. Disorientated by this, Dwight repeatedly bumped into furniture and once turned in the wrong direction, but eventually, by groping his way along a wall, he reached the front door. Without hesitation, not caring if he lived or died, he tugged the front door open and rushed outside.

What he saw there stopped him in his tracks.

The lights beaming in through the windows of the house and flickering on and off rapidly were coming from disc-shaped metallic objects no more than three or four feet in diameter and hovering in mid-air by the windows. The instant that Dwight, still in his pyjamas, rushed out of the house and stopped, frozen by shock, on the lawn path, the lights blinked out and the disc-shaped objects started spinning. The speed of their spin increased until they became no more than silvery-white blurs. Then they suddenly ascended vertically, as if shot from a cannon.

Looking up, Dwight nearly fell backwards with shock when he saw the small, spinning discs vanishing into what appeared to be an enormous black hole inside an even bigger circle formed by multicoloured lights that winked on and off rapidly, to form a dazzling kaleidoscope. Approximately 150 feet wide, that circle was exerting a downward-thrusting pressure that seemed to press heavily upon Dwight.

Glancing about him, he saw that the stars were visible outside that great circle of flashing lights and that directly below the lights, on the ground – at least what he could see of the ground where it wasn't broken up by fences and sections of the other house – grass and dust was being sucked up to quiver frantically or billow in a curved line that obviously formed another circle matching the one above.

No sooner had Dwight noticed this than the flashing lights blinked out, leaving only a black hole about 150 feet wide and definable only by the stars surrounding it. Then, with a speed that confused Dwight's visual senses, the black hole shrank, letting the stars rush back in, followed by an abrupt flaring of lights hundreds of feet up. The flaring light than shrank and vanished altogether, leaving only the darkness. Now, where that great hole had been, there was only the normal, star-drenched sky.

The grass and dust that had been sucked up in a matching circle had settled down again and the downward-thrusting pressure inside the circle could no longer be felt.

Realising that he had just witnessed the ascent of some kind of enormous, circular UFO and that the small discs had flown back into it before it ascended, Dwight hurried back into the house, through the living room and into the bedroom. He found Beth and Nichola embracing under the bedsheets, both frightened, though unharmed.

Convinced that the visitations were not only a means of warning him off his UFO investigations, but were also related to the forthcoming press viewing of the A.V.Roe man-made flying saucer, the Avrocar, Dwight believed that the night before the viewing, tomorrow night, would be the worst of all.

'I want you to take Nichola and go spend the night with your folks,' he told Beth the following morning, as they sat side by side on the sofa in the wrecked living room. 'I think you could both be in real danger. The effects of that... whatever it is... have been worse with each successive night, and I'm afraid that tonight the damage will be even greater – so I don't want you and Nichola here.'

'I don't want *you* here,' Beth said, rubbing her bloodshot eyes and looking haggard. 'I'm convinced that sooner or later they're going to enter the house and take you away. I'm sure that's what it's all about.'

‘If they do, I want to be here, Beth. I want to know who they are. I can’t run away now.’

‘If they take you, you’ll never be seen again.’

‘That’s a chance I’ve got to take, Beth.’

She clung to him, sobbing, begging him not to stay, but after comforting her, he made her call her folks, Joe and Glenda McGinnis, and arrange to spend the night with them, in their home at the far side of Carillon Park. She was still sobbing as she packed an overnight bag for herself and Nichola, but she managed to gain control of herself when Dwight led her and Nichola out to the car and kissed them goodbye.

Dwight watched the car move off along the road and then disappear around the corner at the far end. It was six in the evening.

Returning to the house, which Beth had spent all afternoon carefully tidying, Dwight poured himself bourbon and then took an armchair in the living room, waiting for nightfall. The telephone rang. When he picked it up, Beth told him that she was in her parents’ home, that the short drive had passed without incident, and that he was to call her, no matter the time, when the visitation had ended. Dwight promised to do so, then he put the phone back on its hook and finished his bourbon. Two more were poured and a few more hours passed before the sun sank and darkness prevailed. Dwight kept the lights out. He waited patiently for the visitation. He sat in that empty room until dawn broke, but there was no visitation.

‘Nothing,’ he said on the phone to Beth at nine the next morning. ‘Not a damned thing. How about you?’

‘The best sleep I’ve had in weeks,’ Beth replied. ‘I feel like a new woman.’

‘It’s as if they knew...’

‘They knew. They know everything, Dwight. I’m convinced I was followed as I drove here, but they didn’t do anything. I think they’ve been warning you off – maybe because of today.’

‘The Avrocar.’

‘Yes. They were letting you know that they know what you’re doing and don’t approve of it.’

‘But they didn’t come last night.’

‘The warning’s over. I don’t think they’ll come back. At least not tonight or in the immediate future. They’ll do what they want, when they want, but it won’t be tonight.

If they’d wanted to stop you going to that press conference, they’d have done it last night. We’re coming home, honey.’

‘You do that,’ Dwight said.

He put the phone back on its hook, leaned against the wall, covered his face with his hands and sobbed tears of relief.

Later that day, Dwight flew to Washington DC, where he was collected by Tony Scaduto and Bob Jackson, then driven to the Army Transport Museum at Fort Eustus, Virginia. There, in a large, gloomy hangar-sized room that contained no other

exhibits, with a whole pack of journalists and photographers, the latter including Jack Judges, who had first photographed the sole exhibit on display by flying illegally over the base, he was shown the formerly secret, now unclassified, man-made flying saucer prototype, the Avrocar.

What he, and the others assembled, were shown was an experimental, piloted aircraft, forty feet in diameter and weighing 3,600lbs, that combined the characteristics of air-cushion machines: a crude flying saucer based on the principles of the jet ring and, according to the Army press officer, barely able to rise above the runway during its recent test flight.

It couldn't possibly be mistaken for what had come down over Dwight's house the previous evening.

'This is bullshit!' Dwight whispered to Scaduto and Bob Jackson. 'Just another red herring.'

'Apart from the disc-shaped platform of this aircraft,' the Army press officer informed them, standing beneath the Avrocar where it was dangling at an angle from the ceiling, 'the most revolutionary feature of the prototype is the use made of the gyroscopic effect of a revolving power plant to acquire stability. As you can see...' he pointed to the dome-shaped Perspex cabin in the middle of the disc-shaped body... 'the pilot is seated in a central Perspex capsule that can be ejected should the aircraft find itself in difficulties. A gas-turbine power plant of unconventional design revolves around this capsule at several hundred revolutions per minute. A stationary wing containing a series of slots in the leading edge, which feed air to the turbine, surrounds the rotating power-plant housing and forms the rim of the aircraft. Part of the intake of air is compressed, fed to combustion chambers in the wing, and ejected through a series of exhaust orifices lining the outer rim of the disc. The remainder of the airflow is fed over a series of vertical deflector vanes in the flattened trailing edge of the aircraft for control purposes. A tripod-type launching gear was planned to enable the saucer to take off vertically, but with the negative results of the test flight, the work never even went that far.'

'What technical details can you give us?' Bob Jackson asked.

'I'm afraid most of those are still classified,' the Army press officer replied blandly, 'but I *can* tell you that the powerhouse of this particular prototype housed three one-thousand-horse-power Continental J69-T-9 turbojets. It was designed to have a maximum forward speed of three hundred mph and a range of one thousand miles; but when test flown last month, it never did more than hover within ground effect.'

'Is this the only such prototype being developed?' Tony Scaduto asked.

'It's not the first,' the press officer confessed, 'but almost certainly it's going to be the last.'

'Why?' Bob Jackson asked.

'The truth of the matter is that although quite a number of aircraft featuring circular, disc-shaped or annular wing forms have been built and flown over the past

few years, the aerodynamics of such shapes have been fully established. The design problems facing us are therefore formidable and, in the view of the majority of our engineers, probably insurmountable.'

'So what's happening to this project?' Scaduto asked.

'We'll be dropping it,' the press office said. 'As for this particular prototype, the Avrocar, to prove that all the talk of flying saucers is bullshit – sorry, ladies and gentlemen, I meant *nonsense* – we're going to leave it here on display for the benefit of the general public, along with everything else in the Army Transport Museum. We *have* been interested in the potential of air-cushion machines capable of vertical take-off and landing – also known as VTOL – to avoid the necessity of lengthy airways. In the event, the most we could come up with was this relatively primitive, so-called flying saucer. As for *real* flying saucers... well, if you want those, you'll have to go and buy yourselves tickets to some science-fiction movies, which I'm told are very popular these days. So please rest assured,' he continued when the laughter of the assembled journalists had died down, 'that the Department of Defence will soon be formally withdrawing from participation in this interesting, failed project and that no other disc-or-spherical-shaped prototypes are on the agenda. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you.'

'Withdrawing from participation with whom?' Scaduto whispered when the press conference was over and they were making their final, careful inspection of the Avrocar.

'Good question,' Dwight said.

PART THREE

Chapter Thirty-Three

Approximately three years after the public unveiling of the Avrocar, which had killed off most public speculation about the possibility of man-made UFOs, Jack Fuller, who had engineered the whole scam, was having a bad morning in his office in CIA Headquarters, Langley Field, Virginia. This was due mainly to the fact that he was in the middle of an acrimonious divorce from his second wife, Lorraine Sandison, and she was trying to drive him mad on the telephone.

After his disastrous, eighteen-month marriage to Belinda Wolfe, the ravishing brunette daughter of Georgetown aristocrats, Fuller had vowed never to marry again. He didn't want kids, he didn't believe in fidelity, and he had a low boredom threshold when it came to sex or romantic adventure. Unfortunately, he also had an eye for sophisticated beauties and an inability to take 'No' for an answer. His second wife, Lorraine, another child of wealthy parents, though from Alexandria, Virginia, had resolutely refused to surrender completely to him until he had agreed to tie the knot. As she was stunningly beautiful and an adroit sexual tease, he had finally caved in and convinced himself that this time the marriage would work out.

Once he had bedded Lorraine, however, his desperate need to possess her waned rapidly. Subsequently, he had refused to give her children, returned almost immediately to the pursuit of other women, and beaten her up once or twice when she refused to submit to his more outrageous sexual demands, which included what he thought was only a *modest* brand of sado-masochistic frolics. Within three months, Lorraine, a notably cool and, in many ways, calculating beauty, was a sobbing wreck who spent more nights sleeping in her parents' mansion in McLean, Virginia, than she did in Fuller's fancy apartment off Dupont Circle in Washington DC. Two months ago, encouraged by her outraged parents, she had applied for divorce on the grounds of adultery and repeated sexual abuse – this after only seven months of marriage. In fact, Fuller had been relieved, wanting out of the marriage, until Lorraine started picking up the telephone to fill his ear with scorn and various legal threats. When Fuller wasn't listening to her, he was listening to his lawyer, which in no way made him feel any better.

Fuller was therefore in a bad mood when his secretary called through to say she had a former USAF Captain, Bob Jackson, on the line, wishing to speak to him on behalf of the Aerial Phenomenon Investigations Institute.

Aware that APII was headed by that troublemaker, Dr Frederick Epstein, that it was now using the meddlesome Dwight Randall as a freelance stringer in Dayton, Ohio, and that it had recently been kicking up a stink about CIA involvement in the suppression of information about UFOs, Fuller was about to tell his secretary to give

Jackson the brush-off. But realising that he needed some distraction from Lorraine and her scavenging lawyer, and, also, that he could not resisting finding out what Bob Jackson, Dwight Randall's best friend, wanted with him, Fuller told his secretary to put the call through.

'Mr Fuller?'

'Yeah, this is special agent Jack Fuller. Is this a personal call, Mr Jackson, or are you ringing up on behalf of APII?'

'On behalf of APII.'

'APII isn't popular with this office at the moment,' Fuller sardonically informed him. 'All that talk about CIA suppression of UFO information.'

'That's the impression we get, Mr Fuller.'

'Impressions can be misleading.'

'Actually more than impressions, Mr Fuller. We have a fairly substantial bundle of evidence here to support our contention that the CIA is involved in the suppression of UFO material and the harassment of witnesses.'

'Well, you guys tend to see what you want to see,' Fuller said blandly, 'and what you're reading isn't always what it seems. Your organisation has us all wrong, but this being a democratic society, I guess that's your privilege. So what did you call me for?'

'Because we're not at all sure that this is a democratic society.'

'Oh? Why's that?'

'We've come across some old records indicating that you were the CIA officer in charge of the intelligence team that checked the Socorro UFO crash site with local farmer Marlon Clarke, way back in 1947.'

'No secret in that.'

'According to local newspaper records, Clarke disappeared soon after being interrogated by you and Air Force intelligence about the sighting.'

'If you're implying that the CIA had something to do with his disappearance, I can only say that's paranoid nonsense.'

'I wasn't about to say that, Mr Fuller. I was only going to ask if, since 1947, there's been any new information on the fate of Mr Clarke?'

'The short answer is "No." Marlon Clarke disappeared without trace and hasn't been seen or heard from since. We, the CIA, know no more about his fate than you do. But I'm sure that's not what you really phoned me about.'

'No, it wasn't.'

'Get straight to the point, Mr Roberts. I'm here to oblige.'

'Are you willing to tell me, either on or off the record, exactly what you found at the Socorro UFO crash site?'

'I've told this to the ATIC and I've told it to the NICAP and I've also told it to your APII investigators a thousand times: what I and the others found at the crash site was the remains of a Rawin weather balloon – no more and no less. As for Marlon Clarke, he was drunk when he saw the so-called UFO flying overhead, drunk when

he drove out there to see it close up, and still drunk when we arrived at his ranch to interrogate him. As for his subsequent disappearance, he probably drank himself to death in the desert and then got dragged away by a wild animal. Those things happen to his kind out there. Anything else?'

'Yes,' Jackson said. 'I don't suppose it'll come as any surprise to you that the two biggest civilian UFO organisations in the United States are feeling an unexpected financial squeeze due to a dramatic decrease in press publicity about UFOs and a corresponding wane in public interest.'

'So the membership of your UFO organisations is dwindling,' Fuller said, not attempting to hide his satisfaction.

'Yes,' Jackson admitted. 'And it's our belief that this came about because of a deliberate policy of suppression on the part of the government, through the CIA, which was bothered by our joint call for, and support of, Congressional hearings about the UFO problem.'

'That's some mouthful,' Fuller said, 'so I'm not sure what you mean.'

But of course he *was* sure... In July 1960, under pressure from the general public and, in particular, APII and the ATIC, the Senate Preparedness Committee had demanded briefings and résumés from the Air Force on some of the major UFO flaps, including the famous Washington DC and Levelland sightings. At the main briefing on July 15, the congressmen present did not go easy on the Air Force, practically siding with the civilian UFO organisations and insisting that in future the Air Force had to keep the committee informed of all pertinent sightings. Nevertheless, against the protests of Dr J. Allen Hynek, then a consultant to the ATIC's Project Blue Book, but with the firm support of Fuller, on behalf of the CIA and Major General Luehman, director of intelligence, the call for public hearings was again resisted.

'We weren't in the least bit bothered by the thought of Congressional hearings,' Fuller lied, 'and certainly did nothing to head them off.'

'Well *someone* did,' Jackson insisted. 'Within a few weeks of the committee's request to be kept updated on all sightings and its recommendation that Project Blue Book be given more funds, it became perfectly clear that information on sightings was not being supplied and that the request for more money had been ignored. It had also become clear that the Air Force, despite the disapproval of the congressmen on the committee, was still insisting that it was doing all that was required regarding UFOs, when in truth it was doing nothing at all.'

'Money recommended by Congressional committees often ends up being side-tracked – usually to other benefactors recommended by those very same committees. It may not be correct, but it's hardly cause for conspiracy theories. As for the committee not being sent the sighting reports they requested, you'll have to take that up with Major Friend, the head of Project Blue Book, not with me.'

'There's a rumour that Friend is in your pocket.'

'Unfortunately, the Capitol thrives on rumours and that's what most of these stories are. Friend is *not* in my pocket.'

'Is it true that you and General Luehman, director of intelligence, were responsible for subverting the committee's proposals?'

'If it was, I certainly wouldn't admit it, so why bother asking?'

Jackson actually chuckled at the other end of the phone, before saying, 'May I continue?'

'Sure,' Fuller said.

'Why were the Congressional hearings slated for 1962 dropped?'

'Because the Chairman decided that there was no justification for continuing them.'

'But the House Speaker, John McCormack, believed that the UFOs were real. That makes the abrupt turn-around seem pretty odd.'

Jackson was referring to the fact that House Speaker John McCormack, with the encouragement of the troublesome head of the NICAP, Donald E. Keyhoe, had started talking – too often, too loudly, about holding another Congressional investigation, and finally, in 1961, directed Congressman Overton Brookes of the House Science and Astronautics Committee to look into the matter. Brooks did so by appointing Joseph Karth, then head of the Subcommittee on Space Problems and Life Sciences, to hold hearings on UFOs. When news of the proposed hearings was released, Keyhoe promised that NICAP would offer proof of the Air Force's incompetence in dealing with UFO reports. He would also, he threatened, prove conclusively that the Air Force had embarked on a course of 'contradictory, misleading and untrue statements' in order to suppress information about, and kill public interest in, UFO reports.

Neither Fuller nor Major General Luehman, director of intelligence, was thrilled at this prospect.

'McCormack may have believed that UFOs were real objects,' Fuller said, 'but the other members of the committee weren't so impressed when the man sent to gather evidence to be used *against* the Air Force came back to say he now supported it.'

'You mean Richard P. Hines.'

'Yes.'

'We believe the CIA encouraged those statements.'

'Simply not true,' Fuller lied again.

In fact, though the hearings were not scheduled until 1962, in the middle of 1961, while the Office of Legislative Liaison was directing its attention to heading off the hearings, House Science and Astronautics Committee staff member Richard P. Hines visited the ATIC, was 'thoroughly briefed' by the Project Blue Book head, Major Friend, and returned to inform his fellow committee members that he was 'favourably impressed' with the Air Force's efforts. Given this response, it was not surprising that a week after Hines' return to Washington DC, committee chairman Overton Brooks announced that the Congressional hearings were to be dropped and not likely to be an issue in the near future. The following week, Congressman Joseph Karth, slated to head the aborted hearings, publicly attacked Donald Keyhoe and, by implication, the

other major UFO groups, including Dr Frederick Epstein's APII, for trying to 'belittle, defame and ridicule' the Air Force. He also accused Keyhoe of being guilty of 'malicious intent towards a great branch of the military.'

While the verbal slaughter of Keyhoe was still continuing, Chairman Overton Brooks died and the new Chairman, Congressman George P. Miller of California, confirmed that there would be no hearings on the UFO phenomenon.

'Listen,' Fuller said. 'Neither I personally, nor the CIA generally, can be held responsible for the fact that a Congressman with an open mind goes to collect evidence that could be used against the Air Force and instead comes back convinced that the Air Force is in the right. That just proved how wrong you and the other conspiracy theorists were.'

'Maybe,' Jackson responded quietly. 'But we now have strong reason to believe that Hines also informed his fellow committee members that Congressional interest in the UFO programme could be blamed on pressure from – I quote – "undisclosed sources on House Speaker John McCormack".'

'Where did you get that statement?'

'Wouldn't *you* like to know!'

Now it was Fuller's turn to chuckle, even knowing that Jackson's story was entirely accurate. 'If you don't reveal your source I can't verify the statement. What other surprises do you have up your sleeve?'

'We also have reason to believe that Hines, as well as dropping McCormack in the shit, dropped Donald Keyhoe in it by suggesting that he was the one who placed the so-called *undisclosed pressure* on McCormack. Since Hines and people like yourself viewed Keyhoe as the most vocal of the advocates for Congressional hearings – therefore the man most likely to break the wall of silence regarding UFOs – this would have been a good way of dirtying him with the committee, getting the hearings dropped, and discrediting his civilian UFO group and others like it.'

'More paranoid nonsense.'

Yet as Fuller knew, since he had been the one to plan it, that's exactly what happened. Once the Congressional hearings were dropped and Keyhoe ridiculed, press interest in UFOs shrank dramatically and public awareness followed suit. Within a year of Brook's death and the final cancelling of the Congressional hearings, all the major civilian UFO organisations, including APII and NICAP, were suffering from a severe lack of funds and, even more damaging, from a lack of credibility. To add insult to injury, it was happening during a year, 1962, when sightings were three times higher than they had been in the former 'peak' years of 1947-1951. From the point of view of APII and NICAP, it couldn't have been worse. From Fuller's point of view, on the other hand, it couldn't have been better.

'I don't think it's nonsense,' Jackson said, running up his big phone bill. 'I think that you and your friends were behind Hines all the way, engineered the cancellation of the Congressional hearings, went out to get Donald Keyhoe and thus discredit the civilian UFO organisations; and even now, after seriously diminishing public interest

in UFOs, are trying to get rid of Project Blue Book altogether.'

'Excuse the language, my friend, but that's bullshit. The CIA has no interest in UFOs, one way or the other. Though speaking personally at this moment, I think I can speak for the CIA when I say that very few folk here at Langley Field believe that UFOs exist.'

Which was another blatant lie. The truth was that right now, under pressure from the ICA, the ATIC was trying to transfer its UFO programme elsewhere and, hopefully, out of the Air Force altogether, to somewhere less visible. Unfortunately, neither NASA nor the National Science Foundation would touch it, which was giving Fuller a headache. Luckily, it had at least been made a part of the Foreign Technology Division (FTD) of the Air Force Systems Command, where it was languishing without the resources once insisted upon by the Congressional committee.

'All I can say,' Jackson continued doggedly, 'is that between the harassment of individuals and the suppression of civilian UFO organisations, the US government has managed to practically bury the UFO question.'

'The UFO question has cost the US government a lot of money, so that may be an understandable reaction. And for that matter, particularly regarding your conspiracy theories, if the US government is concerned with the UFO problem, why would it want to bury those searching for answers?'

'Because certain members of the US government already *know* the answers,' Jackson said. 'The UFOs are their own.'

Up to this point, Fuller had been mildly amused by Jackson's quiet belligerence, but hearing that last remark, he turned deadly serious, though without actually showing it.

'The man-made UFO theory is bullshit,' he told Jackson. 'The unveiling of the Avrocar proved that conclusively.'

'A red herring,' Jackson said.

'Oh, yeah?'

'Yeah. We have a researcher – I won't give you his name – who came up with some interesting info' about the construction of US-Canadian flying saucers.'

'The Flying Flapjack, the *Omega* and the Avrocar,' Fuller said without hesitation. 'They've all been declassified and shown to the press and, therefore, the public. No mystery there, pal.'

'No? We have reason to believe that the flying saucers you showed publicly are red herrings; that the real saucers are a lot more advanced and kept in various secret hangars on US Army, Air Force or Navy bases. Certainly we know for a fact that one of them is housed in a top-secret hangar in Holloman AFB, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Indeed, I personally saw it.'

'*You* personally saw it?'

'Yeah.'

'When?'

'May, 1954.'

'Eight years ago. Are you sure you remember that far back? Maybe, like Marlon Clarke, you were drunk that night.'

'No, I remember it well. And I was stone cold sober, believe me. I was driving to a motel on the road that runs right past the base and I saw a hangar at the far end of it, rising above the barbed-wire fence of a top-security area. That UFO, which was no piss-take Avrocar, descended and landed as I braked to a halt to study it more carefully. Then it was wheeled into the hangar. What I saw – clearly and at length - was a highly advanced, saucer-shaped aircraft.'

'That sure is some story,' Fuller said, deliberately sounding sceptical, though he was shocked by what he was hearing. May 1954, as he knew, was the night that the present APII stringer, Dwight Randall, then a USAF captain, had paid a visit to Cannon AFB in the company of fellow USAF captain, Andrew Boyle. Unfortunately, the latter had been observed on camera a few nights before, watching the descent of a US version of Wilson's *Kugelblitz II* as it did, indeed, descend onto its landing pad in the base, before being wheeled into the hangar that Jackson was clearly talking about. As it was believed that no-one would have believed Boyle's story anyway, he was left alone for a few days; but when he put a call through to Project Blue Book's Dwight Randall, inviting him to Albuquerque, a close watch was placed on him. Then, when he drove Randall straight from Albuquerque airport to Cannon AFB, followed all the way, and stopped on the road that ran right past the top-secret hangar at the far end of the base, well away from the main gate, it was decided to follow Randall, also.

When Boyle handed over the photo of the US *Kugelblitz II* to Randall, both men were observed by the Air Force intelligence men following them. It was those same Air Force intelligence men, all dressed entirely in black to propagate the myth started with Wilson's original men in black, who burst into Randall's room, scared the hell out of him, and stole the flying saucer photo from him. A few months later, when Randall was falling apart from fear, confusion and drink, Boyle, who had been transferred post haste to Alaska, was terminated in an airplane 'crash' over Mt McKinley.

Now Randall's other friend, this Bob Jackson, was claiming that he was the one who had seen that flying saucer descending on Cannon AFB. Fuller didn't believe so. He believed that Jackson had heard the story from Dwight Randall and was using it to try and screw information out of him while protecting his good friend. Well, that was his mistake.

'You have anything to add?' Fuller asked, 'before I drop this phone?'

'Yes,' Jackson said. His breathing sounded more nervous now, too harsh, stop-and-start. 'We have reason to believe that that the flying saucers are being used mainly for work in sub-arctic areas. Since I personally specialise in the analysis of flight patterns and have worked out that most of the saucers appear to be flying on northern-southerly routes, I believe the saucers are mainly flying between here and Antarctica.'

'Why?'

'I don't know.'

Thank God for that, Fuller thought. He was silent for a moment, then said, quite deliberately: 'This sounds like Jules Verne to me.'

'Don't be facetious, Mr Fuller. You know I can't be *too* far out.'

Still sounding slightly mocking, though in truth he was deadly serious, Fuller said: 'So what if this fantastic tale is true? What's it got to do with me?'

'We're going a long way back here, Fuller.'

'So go a long way back.'

'Given all the evidence now at hand,' Jackson said, 'the Socorro crash of 1947 almost certainly involved a man-made flying saucer. And if that's true, you knew just what you were doing when you talked to Marlon Clarke before he disappeared. You're in on it, Fuller.'

There was an uncomfortably long silence while Fuller considered what to do about this man, who was trying to be a hero while protecting his friends.

'So what am I supposed to say?' Fuller finally asked, having decided exactly what he would do.

'Am I right or wrong?'

'Right *and* wrong,' Fuller told him.

'Will you tell me more?'

'Only under certain conditions.'

'What are they?'

'Let's meet and work out an agreement. I need some protection here.'

'When can we meet?'

'The sooner the better, Mr Jackson. What about this evening?'

'When and where?'

'I know this little bar in M Street. It's not very nice, but at least no one from Langley or the Capitol is likely to be there. A bit low-life, don't you know? It's called _ '

'Wait. Let me write it down.'

Fuller waited patiently until Jackson said he was ready, then he gave him the name and location of the bar in M Street, down near the Canal, and told him to meet him outside at nine that evening.

'I'll be there,' Bob Jackson said.

Dropping the phone, Fuller kicked his chair back, placed his feet on the desk, clasped his hands behind his head and whispered, 'I'll bet you will.'

Back at his flashy Dupont Circle apartment, which had contemporary art on the white-painted walls, artificial-antique furniture, concealed lighting, off-white carpets and a total lack of idiosyncrasy or human warmth, Fuller mixed himself a dry Martini, then turned the TV on to the news. He rarely actually *watched* the news; he only listened to it. As he had no ear for music, it was *all* he listened to.

As he was having another sip of his Martini, his cat, a seventy-five percent Russian

blue named Doc Savage, padded into the room, rubbed itself against Fuller's left ankle, then stood on its hind legs to gaze into the dimly lit goldfish bowl. Distractedly stroking the cat's head, Fuller reached into the bowl, pulled out a wriggling goldfish and held it just above the cat's twitching nose. When the cat saw and smelt the goldfish, he leaped up, snatched it out of Fuller's fingers with his teeth, then ran back into the kitchen with the goldfish wriggling frantically in his jaws.

Amused, sipping more of his Martini, Fuller entered the subdued lighting of the bedroom, from where he could still hear the news on TV. Setting his Martini glass on the bedside cabinet, he stripped off his clothing, threw his shirt, tie, underclothes and socks into the laundry basket (his housekeeper came every day) and draped his suit with fastidious care over the coat hanger, which he hung to air on the closet door.

Naked, he glanced at himself in the mirror, noticed that his belly was still flat, given his advancing years (he'd soon be all of forty-two), then made his way into the bathroom. After emptying his bladder, he meticulously washed his hands, filled the sink with hot water, and soaped and shaved himself, using a gleaming strop razor. With the remains of the shaving cream still on parts of his chin, he went to the shower, turned the water on, adjusted it until it was steaming hot, then stepped under it. As his skin turned pink from the heat, he thoroughly soaped and cleaned himself, taking particular care with his anus and private parts, then let the hot water wash the soap away. When he had finished this cleansing process, which had left him with an erection, he turned the water from hot to icy cold, braved it for a minute or so, thus losing his erection, then turned the water off and stepped out of the shower.

He dried himself vigorously with a rough towel that further reddened his skin. Dried, he applied talcum powder to his private parts, anus and feet, then sprayed deodorant under his armpits and patted after-shave lotion onto his chin and throat.

Returning to the bedroom, he sipped more of his dry Martini, then studied his naked body in the full-length mirror. As he did so, his erection rose steadily again and he imagined a woman on her knees, slipping painted lips over it. Proud that he could still manage this at his age, he picked up his glass of Martini, carried it to the artificial-antique table where the telephone rested, and sat down on a soft, high-backed chair. After resting his Martina glass on the table, he telephoned his latest acquisition, a twenty-five year old secretary besotted with men of some authority. He enthusiastically stroked his erection while whispering arousing obscenities to her, but finally arranged to meet her at Clyde's, also located on M Street, at 9.30pm.

When the girl had rung off, Fuller stretched out on the sofa, half propped up on one arm, sipping his Martini, listening to the babble of the TV and letting his erect penis return to normal, prepared for better things. Finishing off his Martini, he stood up again and returned to the bedroom. There, he dressed meticulously in a finely cut Italian grey suit, shirt and tie, with black patent-leather shoes. After transferring his billfold, loose change, keys, notebook, pen and small leather pouch from the jacket of the suit he had worn that day to the pockets of the fresh jacket, he checked himself once more in the mirror and left the apartment.

Lacking patience for the parking difficulties of Georgetown, he caught a cab to the bar located where M Street ran into Canal Road, which was dark at this hour. It was not dark at the front door of the bar, which was brightly illuminated by the street lights, enabling him to see the well-fed, middle-aged Bob Jackson standing uncomfortably beside a group of Georgetown University students, who were having their beer on the sidewalk.

Disembarking from the cab at the far side of the road, Fuller paid the driver, tipping him handsomely, then stood there for a moment, in the relative darkness by the bank of the Canal, watching Bob Jackson and recalling the many other times that he had either personally tailed him and Dwight Randall when they were together or had them tailed, photographed and recorded on tape by other CIA or FBI agents. From his personal observations, as well as from the audio and visual material supplied by his fellow agents, he had learned that Bob Jackson and Dwight Randall were very good friends, deeply fond of each other, with wives who also liked each other as well as their husbands. They were decent, good-hearted people who had shared a lot together and would, Fuller knew, be devastated if anything happened to any other member of their group.

Pity about that, he thought.

Crossing the road, he stepped up on the sidewalk and held his hand out to the portly Bob Jackson.

'Hi,' he said. 'I'm Jack Fuller. Have we met before?'

'No,' Bob said. 'So how did you recognise me?'

Fuller grinned and indicated the young students bunched up all around Jackson. 'You're the only person here over twenty-one,' he said, 'so it didn't need much deducing.'

'Oh.' Jackson looked a bit embarrassed, but was also clearly amused by Fuller's comment. 'Right, I see what you mean.' He glanced again at the students, listened to the rock 'n' roll music pounding inside, and said, 'You really think we can talk in there?'

'Not really,' Fuller said. 'This used to be an adults' place, but it's changed with the changing times. Come on, let's go to this other place I know, just a couple of minutes away. Just up the side of this bar, adjoining the building.'

He walked Jackson around the corner and into the road that climbed steeply up the side wall of the bar. They soon left the lamplight behind and stepped into a short, unlit strip where the darkness was deep.

Maybe Jackson sensed something, because he stopped and turned around to face Fuller, preparing to speak.

He never got the words out.

Fuller brought the hard, cutting edge of his right hand down across Bob Jackson's neck, striking the jugular vein precisely enough to cut off the flow of blood to his head without actually damaging the vein itself. Instantly rendered unconscious, Jackson fell back against the wall and slid down it until he was resting with his back

against it and his knees raised in front of his face. After glancing left and right, to ensure that no-one was coming, Fuller removed the small leather pouch from the inside pocket of his jacket, opened it, withdrew an already loaded hypodermic, and sank the needle into the back of Bob Jackson's hand. Even as Fuller was placing the emptied hypodermic back into the leather pouch, slipping the pouch back into his pocket and walking back to the front of the building, Bob Jackson was suffering the violent spasms of a drug that would induce fatal heart arrhythmia without leaving any traces behind.

As Bob Jackson was going into violent convulsions, Fuller turned the corner of the bar, brushed past the students, and walked along M Street, to enter the noisily pleasant ambience of Clyde's, where he found his latest acquisition waiting for him. A five-foot, four-inch blonde in a skin-tight dress and high heels, she threw her arms around Fuller when he entered and gave him a long, sensual kiss.

'A good meal and a bottle of wine,' Fuller said when he had managed to disengage. 'Then we'll make love all night. Life's for the living, right?'

Chapter Thirty-Four

These days Dwight's mood was one of almost constant depression. For three months after Bob Jackson's sudden death by heart attack outside the student bar in M Street, Georgetown, Dwight had felt himself torn between shock, grief and deep suspicion. The inexplicable death had been bad enough, followed by the usual horrors of seeing the grief of Bob's wife and two kids, not to mention Beth, then the funeral, the wake and the subsequent dreadful days of numbed disbelief. Making matters worse, however, was Thelma's bewildered insistence that Bob wasn't supposed to have been in Georgetown that particular night, that he was supposed to have come home for dinner with friends, but phoned at the last minute to say that something urgent had come up and he would be late home. Added to this, thus to Dwight's deepening depression, was his own fearful conviction that no matter what the coroner said about Bob dying from a heart attack, he had in fact been murdered.

This conviction grew in Dwight over the months as he tried to adjust to life without Bob and spent a lot of time consoling Thelma, who, with her blonde hair now streaked with grey strands, her formerly lush body filling out into middle-aged maturity, remained bewildered as to what her loving husband had been doing up a dark alley outside a student bar when he should have been home. This didn't make sense to Thelma; and nor could she understand what had made Bob so excited that he would leave a group of friends sitting around his dinner table, rather than hurry home to join them.

'That just wasn't in his nature,' she told Dwight, 'so it must have been something pretty important – something big.'

'Well, nothing was found on him, Thelma, so now we'll never know.'

Another cause of Dwight's deepening depression was the knowledge that ever since last year's cancellation of the Congressional hearings on the UFO phenomenon, which should have opened the whole debate up for the first time, Dr Frederick Epstein's APII, along with the other major UFO organisations, had been suffering an unprecedented series of financial and personal catastrophes, including a dramatic loss of subscription-paying members, due to lack of public discussion of the phenomenon, the abrupt withdrawal of funds from long-standing support groups and individuals, repeated investigations by an IRS desperately trying to find discrepancies in the organisation's accounts, and the damaging loss of a large number of staff through inexplicable illnesses, marital problems, and alcoholism brought on by various kinds of UFO 'hauntings', including nocturnal visits from the 'men in black'. Through all of this, Dr Epstein had battled on with admirable fortitude, but the exhaustion was beginning to show on his lined face, in his prematurely greying hair and beard.

Last but by no means least, Dwight's depression was deepening because his increasing work-load for the understaffed APII was keeping him away from home more often and placing the marriage under strain, even as Beth, who'd had a couple

of years of peace after the terrifying weeks leading up to the public showing of the Avrocar at Fort Eustus, Virginia, had started being tormented as before. Once more she was having dreadful nightmares about UFOs and men in black, actually seeing men dressed in black following her, either in a black limousine or on foot, though always at a safe distance. Also, this time, to add to her deepening fear, she was receiving numerous crank calls, some from people sounding mentally unstable and whispered insults down the line, others from 'deep breathers' who refused to say anything or simply chuckled before hanging up. Eventually, though no poltergeist manifestations were evident in the house, as they had been the week before the Avrocar viewing, Beth had become convinced that her car was being tracked by a UFO that often came down practically on top of her, yet somehow managed to always stay out of sight.

Dwight could not forget that the previous 'hauntings' had finished the day before the press showing of the Avrocar and had started up again the day after Bob Jackson's death. These facts convinced him that the hauntings, in both cases, were being organised by the same people, human or otherwise.

Interestingly enough, Beth had no more blackouts, though the lack of proper sleep due to the nightmares was turning her otherwise lovely face gaunt and weary. Nothing this with concern, Dwight was startled to realise that Beth was now forty years old and that they had been married for seventeen of those years, with Nichola already turning sixteen. He and Beth, then, while clambering over that always-difficult bridge into middle age, were gradually being aged even more by the trials they were forced to endure at the hands of a malign, unseen enemy. Dwight wanted to give it up, turn his back and run away, but Beth, even in her own dire condition, refused to let him.

'To do that,' she said, 'would probably add feelings of failure to your already chronic mixture of anger, fear and frustration. In short, it would do you no good, Dwight, and might even do you a lot of damage. So never mind what's happening to us; just hang in there and fight this thing.'

'I can't help worrying about you,' Dwight replied. 'You're suffering even more than I am – they're getting at me through you – and I can't help worrying about that. Why don't you go away for a while? Take a vacation. Visit your parents. Help them fix up their new place. They'd probably like that.'

Beth's father, Joe McGinnis, had recently sold his car-sales business and retired with his wife Glenda to Westerville, a pleasant small town located in rolling countryside about twelve miles north of Columbus, about a hundred miles from Dayton. They had only moved out a week ago and phoned the day before to say they loved the new house but needed some visitors to give it that lived-in look.

'Why not come down?' Joe had asked Beth. 'I know Nichola is still at school, but it's not a long way to travel, so you could come on your own. Besides, there are times when it's good to be alone. Might take years off you, gal.'

'I think Joe's right,' Dwight now told her. 'A change of scenery, away from it all,

could do you good.'

'Do you think I could manage a vacation without...' Beth could hardly utter the words, because the thought of a negative reply was too painful to contemplate. She wanted to know if she could go away for a short break and not be followed by... *them*. Was there anywhere she and Dwight could be private, out of sight, out of mind? If not, then their life together was truly a nightmare from which there was no escape. 'I just thought...'

'It's worth trying,' Dwight assured her. 'What can you lose?'

'Okay, then, I'll try it for a week. When should I go?'

'It's only a two-hour drive, so why not go this afternoon? Leave now and you'll be there in time for dinner – and all mothers love to cook for their daughters, so that'll be a good start.'

'Mom's cooking and a bottle of Dad's beer. Sounds good to me.'

'Can't harm you at all.'

'Right, Dwight, I'll call them and check that it's okay, then I'll pack my valise.'

'You do that,' Dwight said.

After checking with her folks and receiving their approval, Beth packed a valise, had a quick shower, then let Dwight walk her to the car, an old but trustworthy Ford saloon. They kissed and embraced on the sidewalk, not caring who saw them.

'You take care,' Beth said.

'You have a good time for a change.'

'And don't let Nichola get up to any mischief.'

'I'm a pretty stern dad.'

'Okay, I'll see you next week.'

'Can I wait that long?'

Beth wrinkled her nose and smiled. 'What a sweet-talking man I've got,' she said. 'Here, give me a big one.'

They kissed again, then Beth slipped into the car and drove off. Dwight looked on until the vehicle had turned the corner at the end of the road, then he glanced left and right, behind him, at the sky, hardly aware of what he had just done, instinctively, with foreboding, as he returned to the house.

Beth had told Dwight she would ring him when she reached her parents' place. When she hadn't called him by that evening, Dwight called his father-in-law and asked if Beth had turned up yet. Sounding anxious, Joe said she had not.

'But the journey should only take two hours,' Dwight said, 'and she's been gone for four.'

'Might have stopped for a meal,' Joe suggested hopefully.

'No. She was planning to have dinner with you. Six on the dot, remember? Besides, if she knew she was going to be late, she'd have called, sure as hell.'

'Maybe she simply had a breakdown. Let's give her another hour.'

'Okay,' Dwight said.

An hour later, at nine in the evening, when Beth still hadn't called either house, Dwight and Joe simultaneously checked with their local police stations regarding breakdowns or accidents. Neither station was holding a report on anything regarding Beth or her vehicle; they would, however, ask their patrol cars to try tracking her down and call back whenever they found her.

By midnight they still hadn't found her.

Distraught, Dwight did his best to look normal in front of Nichola, who, at sixteen, was a tall, slim young lady with long blonde hair and radiant green eyes, dangerously attractive in figure-hugging denims and sweater, already drawing adolescent boys to the front porch, asking her out. Lying that Beth was with her parents and would be calling the next day, Dwight bid Nichola goodnight and watched her disappearing into her bedroom. Blessing God for his daughter's presence, he cracked a can of beer and drank it while sitting in a chair placed strategically between the table containing the phone and a window overlooking the front yard. He sat there throughout the night, until dawn, but Beth didn't arrive home, and neither the police in Dayton nor those in Columbus had found a trace of her.

Now almost out of his mind with anxiety, Dwight tried to hide it when he drove Nichola to school, dropped her off, and then, without realising he was doing it, glanced left and right, behind him, up at the sky. Seeing nothing unusual, though scarcely aware that he was looking, he quickly drove home again.

Beth's old Ford was parked in the driveway.

Parking his own car too quickly, practically banging into the Ford, he hurried into the house and found Beth sitting on the sofa, sipping from a cup of black coffee. When he entered, she glanced at him, repeatedly blinking her bloodshot eyes, then put her coffee cup down and jumped up to embrace him. Clearly exhausted, she was shivering and seemed on the verge of tears. Seeing the state of her, Dwight made her sit down again, then he put his arms around her and said, 'God, Beth, what happened? We've been anxious as hell.'

'I don't know. I'm not sure. Another one of those blackouts.' She shook her head from side to side, rubbed her eyes, blinked repeatedly and licked her lips. 'I can only remember the journey as far as the other side of Springfield. Somewhere along the road I must have lost consciousness.' She burst into tears, was consoled by Dwight, then tried recollecting the rest of it. 'All I remember is driving out of Springfield, heading for Columbus. It was about five in the evening. I remember this empty stretch of road beyond Springfield, then...' She lit a Camel cigarette, inhaled like someone drowning, trying to gulp in air, then blew a cloud of smoke and relaxed a little. 'Nothing!' She shrugged. 'Next thing I remember, I was still in the car, still behind the steering wheel, but the car was at the other side of Springfield – *this* side of Springfield – and parked facing back where I had come from: in the direction of Dayton.'

'Lord almighty!' Dwight said. 'What time was this?'

Beth checked her wristwatch, looked perplexed, then glanced at the clock in the

wall. ‘Judging by the time now, I must have awakened between eight and nine this morning. I couldn’t tell the time because my wristwatch had stopped at five after five. That was either the time yesterday evening or this morning – I can’t really say – though I’m pretty damned sure it was five after five last night.’ She squeezed Dwight’s waist and laid her head on his shoulder. ‘Oh, God, I’m really scared, Dwight. This is worse than before. I feel like I’ve been to hell and back - and I can’t explain why. I’m shattered. I feel bruised inside and out... God, yes, I’m *scared*!’

She burst into tears again, so Dwight hugged her, stroked her hair, kissed the top of her head, then gently rocked her on the sofa until she had calmed down. Then he cupped her tearful face in his hands and kissed her on the lips.

‘Lie down and have a sleep,’ he advised her. ‘Take some Valium. I don’t want to encourage you to take sedatives, but I think sleep’s more important right now. I’ll be here. I won’t be sleeping. I’ll be looking after you. You’ve nothing to fear.’

‘You won’t leave the house?’

‘I promise. Not until Nichola has to b e picked up – and you’ll be awake by then. Until then, I’m staying right here. So come on, let’s get you into bed.’

When he led her into the bedroom, she just stared silently at the bed, clearly reluctant to lie down.

‘You don’t have to take your clothes off,’ Dwight told her. ‘Just have some Valium and lie down and you’ll go to sleep instantly.’

But Beth shook her head in protest. ‘No, I can’t sleep in these clothes. I can’t wear them ever again. I feel dirty in these clothes... contaminated... God, *I can’t stand these clothes*!’

Distraught, she proceeded to frantically tear the clothes off her, like someone covered in stinging ants, until Dwight managed to soothe her again and sit her down on the edge of the bed. After making her swallow some Valium, he told her to stretch out on the bed and try to relax.

Even with the sedative, however, she insisted that she couldn’t relax until she took off all her clothes and had a hot shower. This she did, becoming raw-red in water so hot that Dwight was compelled to reach in and turn the tap to mix more cold with the hot, lowering the temperature. Beth, naked and pink from the steaming water, still took a long time to thoroughly, compulsively, clean herself, but finally stepped out of the shower and, like a docile child, let Dwight dry her with a towel. Still naked and shaking her head from side to side, silently gesturing 'No!’ when Dwight held out her night-dress, she crawled between the sheets and fell asleep almost instantly.

Boiling himself another coffee, sensing that he would not yet be able to digest food, Dwight sat at the table between the telephone and the front window, gazing out on the street, to where his car was parked practically nose-to-tail with Beth’s Ford. He dwelt repeatedly on Beth’s tale of driving out of Springfield at five in the evening and awakening the next morning on the Dayton side of town, as if somehow her car had been picked up, transported back the way it had come, and deposited again on the road leading to Dayton and home. Eventually, on an impulse, and after checking that

Beth was still soundly asleep, which she was, he left the house and went to check her car.

At first he found nothing... then, upon closer inspection, he found four absolutely similar indentations, two on each side of the car, placed equidistant between the wheels, just below the front and rear doors.

In a trance of disbelief and gradual acceptance, Dwight examined those indentations repeatedly and finally came to the conclusion that his senses were not betraying him... The indentations indicated clearly that four clamps of some kind had been tightened on the bodywork, under the four doors, between the wheels, to raise the car off the ground.

Whatever it was that had raised the car, it was at least physical.

For weeks after Beth's baffling, frightening experience, she suffered from blinding headaches and a repeat of the former nightmares. She also became more convinced that her fears about being followed by men in black had been justified... and she was seeing those men in her nightmares.

Finally, when she showed no signs of improvement, Dwight insisted that she visit a psychiatrist, if only to confirm that she was sane and had not imagined the whole business. He felt guilty doing this, as he was already convinced, by the indentations on the car as well as by Beth's undeniable sincerity, that the vehicle had indeed been picked up by a physical object and transported back to the other side of town while she was unconscious.

Nevertheless, he also felt that the psychiatric evaluation was necessary for Beth's peace of mind and would be a validation for what he had proposed should follow it: a visit to a professional hypnotist for the purpose of ascertaining exactly what had happened along that lonely stretch of road between Springfield and Columbus over a period of eighteen hours.

After a number of consultations with Beth, the psychiatrist, Dr Phillip Dewhurst, an old friend who had served as a medical officer at Wright-Patterson AFB, confirmed that she was not hallucinating and was, instead, suffering from genuine amnesia regarding the 'lost' period in question. It was the opinion of Dr Dewhurst that the amnesia was caused by Beth's deep-seated need to obliterate either a real experience or an exceptionally frightening, possibly repellent, fantasy. Dr Dewhurst therefore recommended, as Dwight had hoped, that instead of a course of sodium amytal or Pentothal to break through Beth's resistance to her buried memory, she undergo regressive hypnotism with his friend, Dr Irma Sagan, B.A., M.A., M.D., formerly of the Society of Medical Hypnotists, London, England, and a highly respected psychiatrist in his own right.

Though initially reluctant to let herself be hypnotised, Beth, after a few more 'hauntings' and nightmares, agreed to let Dwight set up the appointment. Subsequently, a few days later, they were shown into Dr Sagan's office in downtown Dayton and asked to take the two chairs on the other side of his desk, facing him. Dr

Sagan was a slim, attractive brunette with a bright, relaxing smile – certainly not what the nervous Beth had imagined a psychiatrist and hypnotist would be. When Beth released her nervous tension by blurting out what she thought, Dr Sagan just chuckled.

'I know what you mean,' she said. 'It's the curse of my life. Everyone expects me to be old, distinguished, grey-haired and, of course, *male*. They also expect me to be terribly solemn, maybe even intense or half-mad – Rasputin... Svengali. Luckily for you, I don't have to be either. This is a job like any other and I do it well. Are you feeling more relaxed now?'

'More relaxed for having met you,' Beth said, smiling, 'and seeing that you're not Rasputin or Svengali.'

Dr Sagan smiled in return. 'Fine. Now do you have any doubts about hypnotism? By which I mean, do you believe it can be effective in psychological terms?'

'I'm not sure,' Beth said.

'In other words, coming here wasn't your own idea.'

'No.' Beth glanced at Dwight. 'It was my husband's idea, initially. Then your friend, Dr Dewhurst, recommended it.'

'Do you trust your husband?'

'Absolutely.'

'Good. Now this is very important... Do you believe you *can* be hypnotised?'

'No.'

'Why not?'

'Because I think it's self-suggestion. I think that if you *want* to be hypnotised, you can be. Maybe simple-minded or easily led people can be. On the other hand, if you don't believe in hypnotism, or don't want to be hypnotised, then it's not going to work for you.'

'And you neither believe in it nor want it.'

'I'm willing to try it on the chance that it might help me, but I don't hold out too much hope.'

'Those are very precise answers,' Dr Sagan told her. 'You have a strong personality.' She stood up, walked around to the front of the desk, sat on its edge, directly in front of Beth, and stared down at her. 'Let me assure you, Beth, that any intelligent adult and most children over the age of seven can be hypnotised, that only the mentally retarded and the psychotic can *resist* being hypnotised, and that hypnotisabilty is in no way a sign of weak will. Indeed, the more intelligent and imaginative the subject, the better a subject he or she will be. You therefore needn't feel ashamed if I hypnotise you. There's nothing *wrong* in being hypnotised. Just think of it as another branch of medicine and try to accept it.'

'Okay,' Beth said.

Dr Sagan smiled and nodded. 'So how do you imagine I'm going to hypnotise you?'

'You'll make me lie down and use something visual and repetitive – a swinging key

chain, a metronome – to focus my attention. Then you'll talk to me as my eyes follow the movement of the swinging object.'

Dr Sagan smiled again. 'You've obviously been reading up on the subject.'

'Yes.'

'What's the time, Beth?'

Beth checked her wristwatch. 'Thirty after eleven.'

'Thanks you.' Dr Sagan placed the palm of her hand against Beth's forehead. 'What if I told you to raise your right hand?'

'I'd ask why you wanted me to do that.'

'What if I just replied by *telling* you to raise your right hand?'

Beth raised her right hand. 'I'd ask you why you wanted me to do that.'

'And if I refused to answer, would you refuse to raise your right hand?'

'Yes,' Beth said, still holding up her right hand, but clearly not aware that she was doing so.

'Does this kind of conversation exhaust you?'

'It does a bit,' Beth replied, still holding her right hand up in the air.

'Your eyes are heavy, aren't they? Drowsy and heavy. Very heavy. So heavy you feel you want to close them, but you can't close them just yet.'

'That's right,' Beth said.

'Would you like to lie down and close your heavy eyes and rest them for a moment?'

'Yes,' Beth said.

'Would you like to lower your right hand and walk to the sofa and lie down and close your heavy eyes for a moment?'

'I would,' Beth said.

'Lower your right hand, Beth, and walk to the sofa and lie down and close your heavy eyes for a moment.'

Fully conscious and feeling that this was the correct thing to do, Beth lowered her right hand, walked across to the sofa, stretched out on it and closed her weary eyes.

Dr Sagan followed her across the room and took the chair beside the sofa. After switching on the tape-recorder on the cupboard beside the sofa, she leaned over Beth.

'Do you mind talking to me, Beth?'

'No.'

'Would you mind answering my questions?'

'No.'

'Waken up, Beth. Open your eyes.'

Beth opened her eyes. She felt unusually tired, but more relaxed and less burdened than before. Glancing across the room, she saw Dwight sitting at Dr Sagan's desk, looking extremely concerned as Dr Sagan rewound the tape on the tape-recorder and checked her wristwatch. When Beth sat up, yawning, stretching herself, Dr Sagan smiled at her. 'What's the time, Beth?'

Beth checked her wristwatch, expecting to find that only a few minutes had passed

since she lay down. Instead, she found that two hours had gone by. She'd been asleep all that time. 'My God!' she exclaimed in wonder. 'Thirty after one! Where did the time go? What...?'

She glanced up to see Dr Sagan's easy smile. 'Come here, Beth. Sit beside your husband. You've been in a trance condition for two hours and talked through it all. Would you like to hear what you said?'

'I'm not sure,' Beth replied.

'I think you'd better come over here and sit beside your husband and listen to the tape. Your husband understands it better than I do. Please, Beth, come on over here.'

Beth swung her feet down to the floor then walked across the room, to take the chair beside Dwight. She stared with widening, fearful eyes at the tape-recorder and found herself mesmerised by the sight of that revolving spool of tape. Her own voice, when it finally came off the tape, practically hypnotised her all over again.

The Beth on the tape, speaking to those in the room, gave flesh, blood and bone to Beth's nightmares. It was the disembodied voice of a lost soul, speaking from hell.

Chapter Thirty-Five

REPORT OF TAPED HYPNOTHERAPY SESSION

BETWEEN: Dr I. Sagan, B.A., M.A., M.D., of the Sagan Hypnotherapy Clinic, Dayton, Ohio, USA, and:-

PATIENT: Beth McGinnis Randall, also of Dayton, Ohio.

PATIENT'S AGE: 40

STATUS: Private Patient (PP)

DATE: November 12, 1963

SUMMARY: Patient presented herself in the company of her husband, Dwight Randall, at the office of Dr Irma Sagan in the Sagan Hypnotherapy Clinic on November 12, 1963, on the recommendation of Dr Phillip Dewhurst, M.A., M.D., for immediate hypnotic regression and, if required, hypnotherapy.

The patient was suffering from repeated migraines, blackouts, and feelings of paranoia based upon the conviction that she was being 'haunted' by an unknown person or persons.

The recommendation for hypnotherapy was made by Dr Dewhurst after four consultations with the patient and his subsequent assessment that she was suffering from amnesia relating to a blackout that occurred on October 2, 1963, during a drive from Dayton, Ohio, to Columbus, Ohio.

The purpose of the hypnotic session was to regress the patient to the moment of blackout on October 2, induce a recollection of the event that had traumatised her, and decide a means of curing the trauma based on the nature of the traumatising event.

Penetration of the amnesia was achieved by taking the patient through the three prime stages of hypnotism: light, medium, and heavy, the latter being a state of somnambulism.

The trance session lasted a total of two hours and a complete regression was attained.

At the end of the trance session it was decided by Dr Sagan that the patient, when awakened from her trance, should be made to listen to her own description of the experience and then, in the full awareness of what had transpired during her blackout, undergo a further series of trance sessions for the purposes of hypnotherapy aimed at relieving her stress while also ascertaining the reality or non-reality of the trauma-inducing event.

At the completion of a total of twelve further hypnotherapy sessions, it was the opinion of Dr Sagan, albeit offered with reluctance, that the patient's recollections in the trance state were an accurate recall of a real event.

Transcript of interview with patient in hypnotic trance state for inclusion in the confidential archives of the Society of Medical Hypnotists, 4 Victoria Terrace, Kingsway, Hove, Sussex, England.

DOCTOR: You are relaxing, relaxing, very relaxed. You are sleeping, deep sleep, sleeping, deeper, very deep. You are sleeping, very comfortable, relaxed, very relaxed. You are deeper and deeper in sleep, very comfortable, deeper. You are relaxed and comfortable. You are deep, deep in sleep. You are relaxed and you will remember everything and you will answer my questions.

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: All right, Beth, you are very relaxed. You have nothing to fear. You are going back to the evening of October 2, 1963. To the moment when you were driving out of Springville. You are going back now.

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: Do you know where you are?

PATIENT: I'm in the car. I'm driving away from Springville. I'm on the road leading from Springville to Columbus, about fifteen miles out of Springville.

DOCTOR: What do you see, Beth?

PATIENT: Just the road. The empty fields on either side. Not much traffic on the road. No traffic here. Sun going down. Almost dark. A nice, easy drive. It feels good to be...

DOCTOR: Yes Beth?

PATIENT: I don't want to.

DOCTOR: All right, Beth, you are very relaxed. You have nothing to fear. What do you see?

PATIENT: Feels funny... Someone following... No, there's no one there. Nothing out front. Nothing behind me. Fields all empty on both sides of the car. Nothing in the sky... Darkening... The sky's darkening... Strange feeling... Oh, no, not here as well!

Something's following me... Not behind me... Above me... Damn it, where are you? Oh, God, right above me! *No! I don't want to!*

DOCTOR: You are safe, Beth. Relaxed. Very relaxed. There is nothing to fear. You are relaxed. You are safe. What's happening, Beth?

PATIENT: Beside me... Beside the car. Two of them... Flying saucers... Oh, God, Dwight, where are you? Come and see them! What you've always wanted to see. Oh, God, Dwight, where are you?

DOCTOR: Dwight's beside you, Beth. He's right here beside you. He's fine. He's okay. He wants you to describe the flying saucers. What are they like, Beth?

PATIENT: Not big... Not like the ones I've heard about... Small saucers, spinning discs, metallic and silvery-white, glowing oddly in failing light and spinning... Only two or three foot wide. Shaped like two plates placed on top of each other, one upside-down on the other... All metal. Smooth surfaces. Spherical. Seamless. Spinning like spinning-tops as they fly through the air, pacing the car, one on each side, parallel to where I'm sitting, very close to the windows... Now they're... *I don't want to! Don't want to! Don't want to!*

DOCTOR: It's all right, Beth, you're just remembering. It's in the past. You're remembering. It's all in the past. It can't hurt you. You're remembering and it seems to be happening now, but it was all in the past, it just seems like the present. In the present. Right now. It's right now, but you're safe. What's happening, Beth?

PATIENT: Two small flying saucers, one on each side of the car, right by the front windows, pacing the car, keeping up with the car. They seem solid... seamless... I can hear them – no, *feel* them. They're spinning like crazy, sort of glowing, and I'm not sure if I'm hearing them or *feeling* them, but there's some kind of pressure. Something pressing around me, making the car drag, slowing down... *Oh, my God!*

DOCTOR: Relax, Beth. Relax. No need to worry. Just tell me, Beth.

PATIENT: The flying saucers have stopped spinning. They're still flying, but they're not spinning... Oh, God, a slot's opening up in both of them... a glass eye... staring at me... God! What's that? Some kind of light – beams of light! Those things are shooting beams of light into the car... strange light... very bright and flickering on and off repeatedly, pulsating, making a noise... No, a kind of vibration... No! Please, *no more*!

DOCTOR: What is it, Beth?

PATIENT: My head hurts. I can't think. One of the beams of light is aimed at the hood of the car; the other's right in my face... I can't see properly... The car's engine is cutting out... Oh, Christ, my head hurts... The light's blinding me... The car's still cutting out. God, it's stopping!

DOCTOR: It's all right, Beth, there's nothing to fear. What's happening now?

PATIENT: The car's gone dead and stopped and... *No! No! No!*

DOCTOR: Relax. You are relaxed. You are safe. What's happening, Beth?

PATIENT: Oh, God! Straight ahead! It's coming down over the road. Another flying saucer, but bigger.. *enormous*... About the size of an airliner. Lots of lights flashing around it. Descending slowly on the road just ahead. Hovering there – just inches above the road. Now settling down on the road and blocking my way with those flashing lights blinding me.

DOCTOR: Where are the smaller saucers, Beth? Are they still hovering at both sides of your car? Still shining the beams of light in?

PATIENT: Yes – *no!* I mean, yes, they're still there, one hovering at each side of me, but those slits in their sides have closed up and the lights aren't shining any more. I'm...

DOCTOR: Yes?

PATIENT: I'm trying to start the car. It won't start. I'm trying to get out and run away, but the doors seem locked, though I didn't lock them... Oh, God, I'm trapped here and my head is splitting and...

DOCTOR: It's all right, Beth. You needn't be agitated. I'm right here. I'm with you. Just tell me what's happening.

PATIENT: I'm trapped in the car. The doors are locked. I can't get the car to start. That gigantic flying saucer is straddling the road – over a hundred foot wide, as tall as an office building, with lights flashing on and off around its rim... No! The lights are going out. I think part of the body is spinning and slowing down as the lights flicker out... Now the lights are out and the big flying saucer is sitting there in darkness. Nearly dark. And... Now it's making a noise. A kind of bass humming sound. I can *feel* it – almost feel the sound, I mean, and... The flying saucer is opening. *Opening!* A long slit of bright light along the front, along its base... becoming bigger, higher,

like a door or panel lifting up. And... it's a door in the front – a big door, like the door of an aircraft hangar – just like Wright-Patterson, Dwight – and... Oh, God, there are people in there... Just standing there, not moving, in the light of what looks like an aircraft's holding bay... Staring at me, I think... I can't be sure... They're silhouetted. Human figures... some normal... but some... Oh, Christ, some are so small! Small and misshapen about the head and hands... The light... They must be distorted by the light... Oh, my God... *No! No! No!*

DOCTOR: You are calm, Beth. You are not really there. You are here. You are here with us, with Dwight and me, and absolutely safe. You are here and you are absolutely safe. What's happening, Beth?

PATIENT: Lights. Other lights. Two brilliant beams of light emanating from that huge saucer. Beaming right at my car, in my face. Flooding the car with light, flickering on and off repeatedly...

DOCTOR: You're safe, Beth. What's happening?

PATIENT: That noise... I can *feel* the noise! I can't think clearly because of the noise and... The light in that big saucer is expanding... No! A ramp is falling down... slowly... falling down to touch the ground, forming a path up into the saucer. Now... Christ! Something is coming out, emerging from each side of that holding bay... Large steel claws... Clamps of some kind... Now stretching out of the holding bay on hinged arms and hanging over the end of the ramp... They've stopped moving. They're just hanging there on the end of the hinged supports, like big steel claws on steel arms.

DOCTOR: What are the figures in the holding bay doing, Beth?

PATIENT: Nothing. They haven't moved at all. I can only make out the shape of them – not their faces – because they're silhouetted in the brilliant, almost blinding light. Also... My eyes hurt. I'm dazzled by the light filling the car and flickering on and off so fast that it disorientates me... And making that sound... The sound that I can *feel*...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

PATIENT: They're just standing there – watching me, I think... God, those small ones aren't natural... the wrong shape. And... No, I don't believe this! Now the smaller saucers are shooting their beams of light at me again, at the car, front and rear of the car, and... *The car's moving!* It's being pulled forward! Oh, God, I've got the handbrake on but it's not holding the car back, the car is still being drawn forward...

By what? The beams of light! They're drawing the car forward as the smaller saucers advance, taking me – I mean the car – towards the steel ramp of the big saucer and those men in the doorway... I want out! I want out! I can't move! *Oh, please God, let me out!*

DOCTOR: Relax, Beth. Relax. I'll make sure you get out. Just tell me what's happening.

PATIENT: The flickering light is doing something to me... pressure... numbing me... paralysing me... Ah, God, I can't move and the car has reached the ramp and those claws – the big clamps on hinged arms – are moving down on both sides of the car, two on each side...

DOCTOR: You're still here, Beth. You're only remembering. Now tell me what's happening.

PATIENT: The car's rocking. The clamps are taking hold, one under each door, between the front and rear wheels, and... Ah, Christ, I can't breathe! I'm panicking... trying to stop it... take control... Yes, better... Can breathe again.

DOCTOR: You can breathe again, Beth. You have no panic. You're still in control. What's happening, Beth?

PATIENT: The lights of the smaller saucers have blinked out and those saucers have flown into the holding bay and disappeared into the dazzling light. Thank God, they've finally gone... But... *Oh, no!*

DOCTOR: What is it, Beth?

PATIENT: The mechanical clamps... They're lifting the car slightly and drawing it up the ramp and into the holding bay, into the brightening light... And those figures, silhouetted, they're moving at last, parting, stepping aside to leave room for the car... I'm inside the saucer. *Inside!* Let me out! *Let me out!*

DOCTOR: You are relaxed, very relaxed, deeply relaxed. There is nothing to fear. You are deep, deep in sleep, you are relaxed and nothing can harm you. You are okay. You can answer my questions. You are in the holding bay of the flying saucer, but you have nothing to fear. You can answer my questions. What do you see inside?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: Can you hear me, Beth?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: Your car has just been drawn up into the holding bay of the big flying saucer. What do you see?

PATIENT: Light. Dazzling light. The bass humming sound has stopped. The figures are silhouetted by the light but are now on both sides of me, surrounding the car. The clamps on the hinged steel arms have just been released and the arms are now bending, withdrawing the clamps by raising them up above the car. The steel arms are moving back into the holding bay on grooved tracks, like railroad tracks, leaving the car sitting here... Every sound echoes here. The noise of the steel clamps on the hinged arms reverberates as the mechanism moves deeper into the holding bay. Now it's disappearing from view, swallowed up by the bright light. The bass humming sound has stopped and my headache is gone. I can move, but I feel drained of energy and dazed... Oh, God, now they're... I don't want to! *I won't!*

DOCTOR: Tell me. It's all right, Beth, you can tell me. You won't be harmed if you tell me. What's happening now?

PATIENT: The silhouetted figures are surrounding the car. Most of them look like normal men, all wearing black coveralls. Though some of them... *No!*

DOCTOR: Go on, Beth.

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: Tell me what you see, Beth.

PATIENT: Some of them – the ones who looked small and misshapen in silhouette – are alien creatures. They have hands like the metal clamps that pulled the car into this place – metallic claws with hinged joints. There are metal caps on their heads, studded with... I'm a not sure... electric plug. Their eyes appear to be normal – not American – Oriental? But the lower half of the face is made of metal – nose and chin, I think. The metal covering the lower half of the face has no space for the lips – no lips at all. They look just like little men from outer space; they look hideous... frightening.

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: You can talk about it, Beth. It's okay. Dwight and I are beside you, both listening. Please continue describing them.

PATIENT: They're small – about five foot tall, maybe smaller, not much taller. Like the human beings, they're wearing coveralls, but silvery-grey instead of black. Now all of them – the human beings and the small aliens – are surrounding the car... I'm frightened. Yes! But it's all in my head... I'm not doing anything because, though I'm frightened, I also feel physically drained and mentally passive. I'm waiting for them to do something. Or for them to tell me what to do. Now they're standing around the car and looking in. They're looking at *me*.

DOCTOR: Is anyone speaking, Beth?

PATIENT: No. One of the men in black coveralls is opening the car door and dragging me out. Not exactly *dragging* me out, just sort of helping me. I'm frightened, but I don't try to resist. I don't have the will. He has to help me because I feel weak and dazed and dizzy. I think he knows how I feel.

DOCTOR: So the man in black has pulled you out of the car. What's happening now, Beth?

PATIENT: I'm looking around me. The sloping ramp is swinging back up to form part of the wall... Now it's closed. It fits so well, I can't even see the joins... The walls seem made of white-painted metal. Not walls – one wall – curving around on both sides of me. Part of the circular exterior of the big saucer; the roof of the holding bay... I call it a holding bay because I feel that I'm in an aircraft, or maybe an aircraft hangar, like the ones they had at Wright-Patterson AFB... The roof of the holding bay is dome-shaped. It has that hollow ringing sound, like all aircraft hangars have, but it's shaped like a dome – or only part of a dome... Shaped like a slice of orange.

DOCTOR: What else do you see?

PATIENT: Machinery. The big machine that lifted my car and carried it into this holding bay, but with its hinged arms now folded and the clamps – giant versions of the metallic hands of the small aliens – now folded down and tucked against the wall... More machinery. Lots of it. A bit like a garage. I don't know what kind of machinery it is, but I feel like I'm in a garage or an aircraft hangar... I'm seeing all of this in the bright light... It's all bright light and shadow.

DOCTOR: What happened next, Beth? The men have helped you out of the car and the door of the holding bay has been closed, so what happened next?

(Note: When Dr Sagan went into the past tense, so did the patient.)

PATIENT: I became very frightened again. Started shaking badly. I was looking at the small alien creatures, at their hideous, mostly metallic faces, and I guess that got to me. Then one of them, an alien, passed his hand, his metallic claw, over my face – he was holding something in it – and I felt heat going into my head and then I felt a lot calmer.

DOCTOR: You weren't frightened anymore?

PATIENT: I went kind of limp. I felt sort of dreamy, not real, removed from it all. It became like a dream.

DOCTOR: Yet you were still awake?

PATIENT: Yes. Awake. But as if I was dreaming. Dreaming though awake.

DOCTOR: Were there any distinct sounds in the hangar? Any signs of movement?

PATIENT: Yes. Shortly after the door closed – I mean, when the ramp was drawn up again to form part of the circular wall – I felt the floor vibrating – not shaking, just vibrating – and then I heard a sort of background humming.

DOCTOR: Humming? The sound of low-powered engines?

PATIENT: No. A kind of bass humming – I can't really explain it – but not a mechanical sound. More like an electrical sound – very faint, yet distinct.

DOCTOR: Any sensation of movement?

PATIENT: A kind of floating sensation. But I wasn't too sure. I still felt a bit light-headed. Though it *could* have been some kind of movement.

DOCTOR: Such as flight?

PATIENT: Could have been.

DOCTOR: And then?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What happened next, Beth?

PATIENT: I can't remember. I think I blacked out... Yes, I see corridors – curving corridors – with portholes along one wall and steel doors, all closed, in the other wall. Some doors were open – not many, but some. Then I caught a glimpse of what looked like a huge machine shop: jibs and cranes, catwalks, ladders, machinery, lots of men - I assume they were men, but they were a long way away - in grey coveralls. Then... *Oh, please God!*

DOCTOR: I'm still here, Beth, right by your side. You have nothing to fear. What did you see?

PATIENT: Another room. I was in a different room. Circular, dome-shaped ceiling, white-painted metal walls, men and women in white coats working at long tables between glass tanks that were covered in frost and... *Oh, please God, no!*

DOCTOR: It's all right, Beth. You have nothing to fear. What you saw was in the frosted-glass tanks. What did you see?

PATIENT: Bodies. Naked human bodies. Either sleeping or dead. With wires running out of their heads and attached to the inside of the glass tanks.

DOCTOR: Wires?

PATIENT: Cables. Electric cables, I think. They were attached to the inside of the tanks and other wires, or cables, were on the outside and ran from the glass tanks up to machines showing zigzagging lines on what looked like TV screens.

DOCTOR: EEG machines?

PATIENT: Pardon?

DOCTOR: Have you ever seen in hospitals, or perhaps on television, machines that record brain waves or heartbeats, indicating if a patient is alive or dead?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: Were the machines you saw like those?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: So the naked people, either sleeping, unconscious, or dead, were in frosted-glass tanks wired to machines that may have been recording their brain-waves

or heartbeats.

PATIENT: Yes. The machines seemed like that. But the people in white coats, the living people, they're...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What are they doing, Beth?

PATIENT: Joining things together. Welding things. Fitting wires into sockets and soldering metallic joints and operating computer consoles and... joining things together.

DOCTOR: What things?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What things, Beth?

PATIENT: Severed heads. Amputated limbs. Internal organs... Oh, God, a human heart, still beating! Joining them to other human body parts and metal prosthetics... *I can't look!* I *won't* look!

DOCTOR: Don't look, Beth. You don't have to look. Look away. What happened next, Beth?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: It's all right, Beth, you have passed through that room. You no longer have anything to fear. What happened next, Beth?

PATIENT: Can't remember. Darkness. Things gliding through darkness. Silence and darkness and breathing and the sound of my heartbeat. I'm floating. Can't see. I am where nothing is.

DOCTOR: Did you have a blackout, Beth?

PATIENT: Yes, a blackout. I think so. I feel that I had a blackout. Then I awakened in...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: You had a blackout, Beth, and then recovered. What happening now, Beth?

PATIENT: I'm somewhere else. Another room. Curved white walls, but I don't think they're metallic.

DOCTOR: An interior room.

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: And?

PATIENT: I'm looking up at the ceiling. Dome-shaped. It's brightly lit, but I can't see the lights. I think the lights are hidden.

DOCTOR: And?

PATIENT: I'm looking up at the ceiling?

DOCTOR: You're lying down?

PATIENT: Yes. On something pretty hard. Not a mattress. Something cold and hard. I think it might be metallic. When I move, it feels cold and hard.

DOCTOR: You're lying on something cold and hard, which may be metallic, and you're looking up at the dome-shaped ceiling.

PATIENT: Yes. A dome-shaped ceiling. White, like the walls. Curved walls, like all the other walls. All curves. All domes.

DOCTOR: And stretched out on your back on this cold, hard, metallic bed, looking up at the dome-shaped ceiling, you saw...

PATIENT: Faces. A circle of faces, staring down at me. Light beaming down on me. Spotlights, I think, not too bright or big, but beaming down from behind the shoulders of the men staring down at me.

DOCTOR: What kind of men?

PATIENT: Normal men. One handsome and oddly ageless, with very smooth pale skin, but with little movement in his features. Grey hair... No, white hair. Silvery-white hair. I thought the silvery-white hair was strange, because his face seemed so young... though expressionless.

DOCTOR: Young, but... What do you mean by 'little movement in his features'? By 'expressionless'? He looked human and otherwise perfectly normal?

PATIENT: Yes. Kind of handsome... At least given his white hair and the lack of movement, or mobility, in his features. I think he might have had plastic surgery, though I couldn't see scars or lines.

DOCTOR: Were you strapped to the bed?

PATIENT: Not a bed. A kind of table.

DOCTOR: A surgical table?

PATIENT: Yes, maybe that.

DOCTOR: Let's call it a bed. Were you strapped down?

PATIENT: No.

DOCTOR: Did you try to sit up?

PATIENT: No... Yes, I tried once, but I just couldn't move. When I tried to move, I felt that I was paralysed – and that brought back my fear.

DOCTOR: Did any of the men surrounding you, looking down at you, actually speak to you?

PATIENT: Yes, the one with the youthful face, white hair, maybe plastic surgery.

DOCTOR: What did he say?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What did he say, Beth?

PATIENT: Don't worry. You're not paralysed. You're not hurt or damaged in any

way. You will come to no harm.

DOCTOR: He spoke English?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: Accent?

PATIENT: He was American – I'm sure he was American – but he also sounded kind of European, like those guys in the movies.

DOCTOR: When he spoke to you, did you try to reply?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: You could speak?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: What did you say?

PATIENT: I asked him where I was.

DOCTOR: And he said?

PATIENT: Nothing.

DOCTOR: Nothing?

PATIENT: He just smiled and aimed something held in his hand, a remote control, at the opposite wall. He pressed a button and two steel panels slid apart to form a big window, letting me see what was outside.

DOCTOR: What was outside?

PATIENT: Stars!

DOCTOR: Pardon?

PATIENT: Stars! I saw nothing but stars. Then he pressed another button and the light dimmed and the stars disappeared, and then I saw...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What did you see through the window, Beth?

PATIENT: Earth.

DOCTOR: Earth?

PATIENT: Not earth – *the* Earth. Just as I'd seen it in those films sent back by the satellites. The globe of Earth. At least, I think it was the Earth. It looked like the Earth on the films and photos I've seen. I'm convinced it was Earth.

DOCTOR: Did the man showing you this say anything at this point? Did he speak at all?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: What did he say?

(Note: At this point in the hypnotic trance session, the patient, who has no reported interest in, or knowledge of, acting, adapted a surprisingly convincing male voice.)

PATIENT: Beautiful, isn't it? But why look so surprised? The Soviets and Americans have both put men into space – and that's exactly where you are, Mrs Randall... above Earth, in outer space, just like Yuri Gagarin, Alan Shepherd, Major Titov and Lieutenant-Colonel John Glenn. Indeed, next month the Russians will be putting what they assume will be the first woman into space – but you've beaten her to it. Don't you feel proud?

(Note: At this point in the hypnotic trance, even Dr Sagan seems so startled that she can think of nothing to say for quite some time. For this reason there is a large gap on the tape before the question-and-answer session picks up again. When the patient next speaks, her voice has returned to normal.)

DOCTOR: So how did you react when you saw Earth and the stars outside the window?

PATIENT: I was calm. I felt a bit remote. As if I'd been drugged.

DOCTOR: Did the man showing you Earth and the stars say any more?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: What did he say?

PATIENT: He said...

DOCTOR: Yes?

PATIENT: We picked you up by mistake. It wasn't you we wanted. We thought it was your husband in the car and instead we got you.

DOCTOR: Anything else?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: You're safe, Beth. Nothing can harm you. Did he say anything else?

PATIENT: Yes. He told me I shouldn't worry. That they weren't going to harm me. He said they were just going to check that I was okay and then take me home. He said that when I got back home, I wouldn't recall what had happened to me, but that eventually I would be the means of warning Dwight that he was endangering himself, as well as Nichola and me, by investigating UFOs. He said that for some time I wouldn't remember my experience, but that it would all come out eventually, at the appropriate time, which was his way of warning Dwight off.

DOCTOR: And?

PATIENT: Nothing else.

DOCTOR: He said nothing else?

PATIENT: No.

DOCTOR: Not another word?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: Did he say anything else? Anything, Beth? You can tell me. It's all right. What else did he say?

PATIENT: Nothing. He stepped aside. Another man, speaking German, held up a

long, sharply pointed, silvery instrument... Awful! *Terrifying*! The others held my legs apart. The one with the awful instrument leaned over me, looking between my legs, and then... Oh, please, no! Please! Don't! Oh, God, it hurts! Please stop it! Oh, God, please, God help me, please don't, please stop him, I can't... Oh, God, stop! *No! No! No!*

DOCTOR: Relax, Beth. Relax. Relax, you are relaxed, you are safe, I am here, you are all right. Now tell me, Beth. It's all right to tell me. What else did they do?

PATIENT: No! No! No! No! No!

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth, yes, it's all right, I am here, Dwight is here, you're not alone, you can tell us, you can talk to us, Beth. What else did they do?

PATIENT: Oh, God, the pain! I can't bear the pain. Sometimes pain and then a kind of pleasure that goes beyond pain. Things inside me – in there. Deep inside me. Oh, the pain! Then in my ears, up my nostrils, in... I can't accept... I refuse to believe... But they did! They turned me onto my belly and put something in there... *Pain*! Please God, help me! First the back, then the front. Needles under my skin, metallic probes in every orifice, juices sucked out and liquids pumped in, and all the pain and even more pain and sometimes... Oh, God forgive me... pleasure! Yes, that as well. They tormented me with pleasure that went beyond the bearable and brought me... my racing heart... *I can't breathe!*... to the point of... *pain*! Back to pain. Experimenting, trying to find out what was possible, from one extreme to the other, pain and pleasure combined... And all the time looking closely at me, studying me, as if I was nothing, a mere insect, something trapped on a glass slide under a microscope... Oh, God, help me, please let me go! Please don't! No more! *Please*!

DOCTOR: Forget it, Beth. It's in the past. It's been and gone. You are here now. You're safe. You're safe here with Dwight and me and can't be harmed, you are here in the present. Think of the present without fear and tell me what they are doing, Beth. They have finished and the pain has all gone and I want to know how it ended. No more pain. You can tell me. What did they do when they were finished, Beth?

PATIENT: Nothing. When they finished, they stepped aside. They took the samples they had taken out of me and then went away, leaving him – only him!

DOCTOR: The one with the handsome, oddly ageless features, and silvery-white hair and lack of expression. The one who spoke English with a slight European accent. What did he say or do, Beth?

PATIENT: I don't want...

DOCTOR: You are safe, Beth. We are here, you are protected. What did he say or do?

PATIENT: He...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

PATIENT: He started lowering what looked like one of the metal caps worn by aliens onto my head – it was like being in a dentist's chair: the metallic cap was on a hinged arm – and he said he was going to erase my memory of this experience, but leave enough to be revived at a later date by others. Then he placed the metal cap on my head and somehow made it tighten around my skull. I was frightened. *I'm frightened!*

DOCTOR: Stay calm, Beth, be calm. Just answer my question. Did this metal cap have wires running out of it, attached to some kind of equipment?

PATIENT: Yes.

DOCTOR: Have you ever heard of a stereotaxic skullcap?

PATIENT: No.

DOCTOR: All right, Beth. He lowered the wired metal cap onto your head and tightened it around your skull. What happened next?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What happened, Beth?

PATIENT: I'm frightened. Terrified. Don't do it! Please, don't do it! I won't tell anyone! I won't! I promise! Please, don't do it! *Don't*!

DOCTOR: What happened next, Beth?

(The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR: What happened, Beth?

PATIENT: Pain. Stars. Sparkling lights. Darkness. I am where nothing is, in the darkness, and only know that I don't know.

DOCTOR: Don't know what?

PATIENT: My own name. What I am. Where I am. What is. I am where nothing is, in the darkness, and only know that I don't know. I know nothing. All gone.

DOCTOR: You blacked out again?

PATIENT: I awakened.

DOCTOR: Where were you when you awakened, Beth? What did you see?

PATIENT: I was nowhere. I was just awake. I knew I'd awakened.

DOCTOR: Where are you now that you've awakened, Beth? What are you seeing?

PATIENT: I'm still in the car. I feel sleepy... must have slept... I'm on my way to Columbus – just left Springfield – and...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

PATIENT: Where am I? I thought the sun was setting. I was heading for Columbus. Why is the car...?

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

PATIENT: I can't believe...

DOCTOR: Yes, Beth?

PATIENT: That road sign... It says I'm heading for Dayton. I must have been driving home. I fell asleep driving home... No, I didn't. I couldn't have done that. I was driving to Columbus, out of Springfield, and now... Dayton. The car's parked by the side of the road in the direction of Dayton. It's... I can't tell the time. My wristwatch has stopped. It stopped at five after five, though I can't tell if that was yesterday or this morning... No, not this morning. It couldn't have been this morning. I was definitely driving out of Springfield, heading for Columbus, at about five yesterday evening as the sun was sinking. Now the sign says Dayton. The car's parked facing Dayton. It must be *some* time in the early morning... I'd say eight or nine... and I'm heading back to Dayton... Oh, dear God, what's happening to me*? I don't want to! I don't want to! I don't want to!*

DOCTOR: Okay, Beth, that's all we want to know. You have been very good. You

have been extremely helpful. You are in deep, deep sleep, very deep, deep sleep, you are relaxed, you are very relaxed, you are sleeping, deep sleep. In a moment you can waken up. You won't remember what's been said between us. You won't remember until I ask you to do so, you are asleep, deep, deep sleep. All right, Beth, you are waking up now, you are waking, waking slowly, pleasantly, you are pleasantly waking up. You can waken up, Beth.

TRANSCRIPTION ENDS

Chapter Thirty-Six

'There are now a great number of foreign exploration stations in the Antarctic,' Wilson's assistant, Salvatore Fallaci, said as he sat beside Wilson at the panoramic window overlooking the glittering white wilderness. 'Ever since the International Geophysical Year in 1957-58, the twelve nations have, with your co-operation, been spreading out to set up more and more bases. If they continue to do so, our security is likely to be threatened.'

A former Mafioso with his hands steeped in blood, Fallaci had been abducted and brain-implanted to obey Wilson's every whim as a scout and roving executioner; otherwise he seemed perfectly normal. He was reporting to Wilson after having just returned from a tour of Antarctica by flying saucer, checking on the movements and activities of the various nations that now had polar exploration bases here.

'It's been a long time since I studied the situation,' Wilson replied. 'What's it like out there nowadays?'

Fallaci glanced down at his notes. 'The US are based at McMurdo Sound and still have their Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition in the old Service East Base camp at Marquerite Bay. Australia has established stations on Heard and Macquarie islands, as well as their Mawson Station on the mainland coast of Macrobertson Land. France has established permanent bases in the Kerguelen and Crozet islands. The Argentines have established General Belgrano Station on the Filchner Ice Shelf. The Norwegians are at Cape Norvegia. The USSR, long active in East Antarctica, now also has Bellingshausen Station in the Antarctic Peninsula, is constructing at Novolazarevskaya, and plans additional stations in West Antarctica. A profusion of British, Chilean and Argentine bases are now located so close together around McMurdo Sound that we must seriously consider the possibility that they're there for intelligence rather than science.'

'You think they're foolish enough to try that?'

'Yes, boss. The more you give them, the more confident they'll become – not really able to imagine just how much farther you've advanced – and the more confident they become, the more foolish they'll be.'

'That's true enough,' Wilson replied, though he didn't seem concerned. 'Good Sicilian logic. So what else are they up to?'

'Inland stations for the observation of the sun, weather, the aurora, the magnetic field, the ionosphere and cosmic rays include the Byrd Station for the US in West Antarctica, Vostok for the USSR at the south geomagnetic pole and the pole of relative inaccessibility, and Amundsen-Scott Station at the South Pole, also for the US. I should also remind you that a nuclear power plant was set up at McMurdo Station in 1962 and a seawater distillation plant is being installed right now and should be ready by next year. The Antarctic is no longer a safe haven for us. We're not alone, boss.'

Wilson smiled bleakly at that remark. ‘We’re not alone’ was a catch phrase now widely used in the West about flying saucers, still generally believed to be of extraterrestrial origin.

‘So apart from the possibility of intelligence gathering,’ he said, ‘what else excites their interest here?’

‘They believe that western Queen Maud Land, actually Nue Schwabenland, right on our doorstep, could be similar to the gold-producing Witwatersrand beds of South Africa; that the mountain belt of the Antarctic Peninsula could be similar to the copper-rich Andes; that the Antarctic continental shelves near Coats Land and the Adéle and George V coasts could be comparable to the Agulhas Basin off South Africa and the Otway Basin off southern Australia, which are potentially great sources of petroleum. They’re also racing to find the metal minerals for chromium, copper, gold, lead, tin and zinc. Even more ominous, their realisation that Antarctica contains nearly ninety percent of the world’s ice has led them to serious discussion and experimentation regarding the possibility of harnessing it as a limitless supply of non-salt water. Last but by no means least, they’re presently investigating the possibility of using the Antarctic as a long-term deep-freeze storage site for grain and other foods; and, even worse, as a site for radioactive-waste disposal and storage.’

‘I would never permit that,’ Wilson said.

‘I needn’t remind you of the increasing ruthlessness of the hunters of fur seals and the whaling ships operating around our shores and depleting the waters. I *should* remind you, however, that tourism, which commenced way back in 1958 with nine-to-twelve day tours of the Antarctic Peninsula, arranged by the Argentine Naval Transport Command, is now expanding rapidly with hotels proposed for the McMurdo dry valleys and plans already being drawn up for the introduction of various alpine sports, including skiing and mountaineering, as well as commercial tourist helicopter flights over the wilderness. Between the planes of the tourists and those of the various exploration bases, we have a potentially serious security problem.’

‘I’m not too concerned,’ Wilson said. ‘As long as our mutually beneficial, clandestine trade continues with the various nations located here, they’ll keep their aircraft well away from Nue Schwabenland.’

‘That’s only the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and the USSR. The smaller countries aren’t included in the trade and therefore don’t know of our existence; so they’ll continue to fly in this direction, and, so far, have only been prevented from seeing us by the relative inaccessibility of the terrain. But they’re developing better aircraft every year – aircraft designed specifically to fly in polar regions – and some day, I believe, they’ll be able to reach us. Likewise, the forthcoming tourist-flight pilots won’t know about us and could choose this area as one of their flight routes. The mountain is, after all, particular spectacular from the point of view of the average tourist.’

‘I’ve anticipated that possibility,’ Wilson said, ‘and been working on a means of

preventing it. As you just said, the mountain is already an area of inaccessibility. Before the smaller countries or tour operators develop an aircraft that can reach here – and, indeed, before the nations we're trading with grow arrogant and turn against us – we'll have developed an invisible force field that will, like the saucer satellites, which in turn were based on our old *Feuerballs*, cause normal aircraft engines to malfunction and force them either to crash or turn back before entering the area. Should anything manage to slip through the force field, we will have by then, as a last resort, a working pulse-beam weapon. So I think we're safe for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, our saucers will continue to haunt the various Antarctic exploration bases by hovering over them, causing blips on their radar screens, or otherwise harassing their aircraft – as, in fact, we've been doing for some time now, to the consternation of the pilots and intelligence agents.'

'That's why they describe a lot of the areas in Antarctic as inaccessible.'

'Precisely,' Wilson said.

Glancing through the window, down those dizzying depths between the sheer walls of the mountain where it formed a natural well, he saw the latest 250-foot diameter mother ship on its landing pad, surrounded by smaller saucers of various sizes. Viewed from above, especially from this great height, they looked like perfectly formed, silvery plates turned upside-down. With no protruberances of any kind, no identifying marks, not even a visible seam, they had their own bizarre beauty.

'So what's the general UFO situation in America?' Wilson asked his roving scout and assassin.

'No problem,' Fallaci replied. 'I can confirm that the virtual dissolving of Project Blue Book, combined with the ridicule heaped upon UFO witnesses and the suppression of information and news about UFOs – a task undertaken by Air Force intelligence and supervised by CIA agent Jack Fuller – has reduced public interest in the subject almost to zero, removed pressure from the Air Force, and given the civilian UFO organisations severe problems, most of them due to a lack of funds caused by falling memberships.'

'Falling because UFOs have been systematically erased from public consciousness by the choking off of news about the subject.'

'Exactly.'

'This all sounds very good to me,' Wilson said with a thin, almost good-humoured smile.

'It's certainly not bad,' Fallaci said. 'Still, we must continue to keep a watchful eye on the Europeans, Americans and Soviets who have, over the past few years, been co-operating more openly, which isn't good news for us.'

'They're co-operating more openly?' Wilson said. 'That *does* surprise me.'

'Me, too,' Fallaci said, 'but it's true. They've been drawing closer for the past few years, but really got into bed together in December 1962 with the formation of a multilateral NATO nuclear force; the signing in July 1963 of a treaty between Britain, America and the Soviet Union, banning nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere,

outer space and underwater; and, finally, the installing, on August 10, 1963, of a 'hot line' between the Kremlin and the White House, to reduce the risk of accidental war. This unprecedented co-operation between these old enemies suggests that they may be hoping to unite into the one, all-powerful force that can eventually be turned against us.'

'Fear not,' Wilson replied with the supreme confidence of a man to whom emotion is alien. 'I'm giving them someone else to worry about. The assassination of President Kennedy – a good job well done, incidentally – '

'Thanks, boss.'

'As I was saying, the assassination of President Kennedy has already strained the US-Soviet relationship. As we anticipated, many Americans view his death as the result of a Soviet plot. Also, before this year is out, the Chinese will, with our help, successfully test their atomic bomb over Sinkiang, a western province bordering the Soviet Union. That will, I believe, make the Soviets more concerned with the Chinese than with us; while the Americans, still obsessed with the death of their president and his Soviet-loving assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, will be extremely suspicious of the Soviets and much less concerned with us.'

The intercom on the table beside Wilson rang shrilly. Picking it up, he listened intently, then he put the intercom down, swivelled around in his chair, and used his remote-control to turn on the 28"-TV standing across the room. A machine known as a video-recorder was resting on a stand beneath the TV set and it came on automatically to record the programme being shown.

'Intelligence,' Wilson explained to Fallaci. 'They say there's something on CBS-TV that I should see. It's starting right now.'

When the picture on the TV screen came into focus, Wilson instantly recognised the parched terrain of Socorro, New Mexico, where the famous UFO crash had occurred on July 2, 1947. The very same day, Wilson recollected, that farmer Marlon Clarke, who had been unfortunate enough to see the debris of the crash and the corpses of the crew, had been abducted by another flying saucer and brought here. Clarke's severed head, which they had managed to keep alive for years, had recently been attached to a combination of human and mechanical parts. It was therefore still functioning, though programmed by a stereotaxic skullcap, as part of what would soon be a perfect, totally obedient, killing-machine cyborg. Now, thinking he was about to see a documentary of that old crash, Wilson was surprised to find himself viewing a documentary on another UFO crash in Socorro – but one that had taken place just a few days ago.

What he saw enraged him.

On Friday, April 24, 1964, somewhere between 5.50pm and 6.00pm, Opal Grinder, manager of the Whiting Brothers' service station in Socorro, claimed that the driver of a 1955 model Cadillac, which had a Colorado licence plate and also contained the driver's wife and three boys, stopped at Grinder's service station for gas. The agitated

driver told Grinder that ‘something travelling across the highway from east to west’ almost ‘took the roof off’ his car as he was driving just south of town, north of the airport. He suspected that the object had either landed or crashed, as he had also seen ‘a police car head off the road and up a hill in that direction.’ Continuing into town, he had met another police car heading in the same direction. To Grinder’s suggestion that he might have seen a helicopter, the unnamed man said, ‘That sure would be some funny helicopter!’

Subsequent investigations by the police revealed that the object had been observed flying only a few hundred feet to the northeast of the north-bound Cadillac at 5.45pm on April 24; it was ‘egg-shaped, had a smooth aluminium or magnesium-like surface, and seemed to be a little longer than the four-door green 1955 Cadillac in which the family was riding.’ The object dropped to barely ten feet above the ground, flew directly at the Cadillac, and passed silently within ten feet of its top, almost touching the tip of the radio antenna. It streaked onward a few hundred yards to the southwest, where it stopped abruptly, hung in mid-air for about thirty seconds, then descended vertically, silhouetted by the low afternoon sun, to land just beyond a small hill that hid it from the view of those in the Cadillac.

The driver of the Cadillac and his wife then observed a white Pontiac police car as it turned off a north-south road that ran west of US Highway 85, cut across the rough terrain, and headed for the rise beyond which the strange flying object had landed. Thinking that perhaps they had seen some ‘new type of aircraft’ that was being developed in the area, the driver of the Cadillac kept driving towards Socorro, eventually passing another police car. This one, which was from the New Mexico State Police, was moving urgently in the opposite direction, also heading for where the strange aircraft had descended.

Once in Socorro, the driver of the Cadillac stopped at the Whiting Brothers’ service station on the north side of town, where he told the manager, Opal Grinder, that someone was flying ‘a funny looking aircraft’ dangerously low over the highway on Socorro’s south side, had landed, and was probably being checked out by the officer of the pursuing police car. Then the driver of the Cadillac continued his journey with his family.

The man in the white Pontiac was later identified as Lonnie Zamora, a thirty-one-year old Socorro policeman described in a subsequent report by investigating FBI agent J.Arthur Byrnes Jr as a ‘sober, industrious and conscientious officer, and not given to fantasy.’

Zamora’s extraordinary experience had begun at approximately 5.45pm when he set off in pursuit of a speeding black 1964 Chevrolet, following it south, after pulling away from the west side of the courthouse. About a minute later, at approximately the same time as the unknown man from Colorado had sighted his UFO, when Zamora was a half-mile south of Spring Street, he heard a roar and noticed a brilliant blue ‘cone of flame’ low to the south-southwest, at a distance of approximately 2,400 ft. As Zamora was wearing prescription glasses with green sunshades, he was at this

stage unable to distinguish the difference between the flying object's body and the 'blue cone of flame' shooting out of it. As the flame was over the location of a dynamite shack owned by the town mayor, Zamora assumed that the dynamite was blowing up; so instead of continuing his pursuit of the Chevrolet, he turned off the paved road and headed across the rough terrain, toward what now looked like a descending flame and sounded like a 'continuous roaring'.

Because of the position of the speeding Chevrolet, it was assumed by the investigators that its driver would have either seen or heard the descending object.

Zamora drove across the rough terrain, toward, the roaring 'flame', for about twenty seconds. By this time he was able to note that the flame definitely was 'bluish, very brilliant, a little orange around the edges, more so near the bottom' and that it was 'sort of motionless, but appeared to *descend slowly*.' He could not see the bottom of the flame, which had just descended behind a hill; nor did he notice smoke. But some dust seemed to be moving over the area where the object had landed.

The 'flame' disappeared completely behind the hill, but the roaring continued as Zamora tried more than once to make his Pontiac climb the steep, gravel-covered slope. Then, as he finally began to ascend successfully, the roaring of the hidden 'flame' died away.

Turning over the hilltop, Zamora saw a 'shiny type object' down in the ravine, or arroyo, to the southwest, at a distance of about 150 yards. He stopped his car for a few seconds, in order to study the object. At first he thought it was 'an overturned white car' with the far end raised higher than the nearest one. Then he saw two people in white coveralls standing close to the object.

As if having heard Zamora's arrival, one of the individuals turned and looked straight at his car, then jumped slightly, as if startled by seeing him there.

Zamora had only stopped for a few seconds. Now, as he started forward again in his car, he noted that the object was 'like aluminium – it was whitish against the mesa background, but not chrome' and it seemed oval or 'egg-shaped' with support legs extending obliquely from it.

The individuals in white coveralls looked like normal human beings, but 'possibly they were small adults or large kids.'

As he drove on again, Zamora descended into a dip and temporarily lost sight of the object and the two people beside it. Worried that he might have come across a top-secret experimental vehicle from the White Sands Proving Ground, and wanting one reliable witness other than himself in case of trouble with the authorities, he radioed to the sheriff's office that he was checking a possible 10-40, or accident, down in the arroyo, and wanted a New Mexico State Police Sergeant, Samuel Chavez, to come alone to the location.

As his message was being relayed to Chavez by Ned Lopez, the Socorro chief dispatcher, Zamora stopped his car again and started to get out, still talking on the radio. He dropped the microphone accidentally and leaned down to retrieve it. Even as he was straightening up again, he heard 'a heavy slam, metal-like, heavier than a

tank hatch... then another slam, *real loud*.' He was completely out of his car and could see the object in clear view, about fifty feet away from the arroyo, with two of its four support legs extending obliquely down to the ground. He could also see, for the first time, a large, red insignia on one side of the object's otherwise smooth, featureless, egg-shaped body.

The two individuals in white coveralls had disappeared – a fact that, combed with the metallic 'slamming' noises heard by Zamora, made him assume that they had entered the strange craft by some unseen door.

He had only taken two or three steps toward the object when he heard 'a roar... not exactly a blast, very loud roar... not like a jet... started low frequency quickly, then rose in frequency – a higher tone – and in loudness, from loud to very loud.' At the same time he saw 'bright blue flame' shooting out from the underside of the object as it started to rise vertically from the ground.

Thinking that the object was about to explode, Zamora threw himself to the ground. He felt a wave of heat, but when no explosion came, though the roaring continued, he got up again and ran back to his car. Bumping into it while glancing fearfully back over his shoulder, he lost his glasses and sunshades. Determined to keep the car between himself and the ascending object, which he still felt might explode, he ran north across the mesa, glancing back two or three times to observe that in about five or six seconds the object had risen level with his car, about twenty feet above the bottom of the arroyo. It was still roaring and shooting flame from its underside.

About fifty feet from his car, when just over the rim of the hill, Zamora turned back towards the object, but shielded his eyes with his arm in case it exploded.

At that moment, the roaring stopped and was replaced by a 'sharp tone, a whining sound' that went 'from high tone to low tone in maybe a second, then stopped.' And then there was silence.

Zamora saw that the object was no longer rising, though it *was* still moving: heading away quickly, in perfect silence, west-southwest, passing over, or, rather, south of, the dynamite shack as it flew away.

Realising that the object was in flight and not exploding as he had feared, Zamora raced back to his car, picked up his glasses and sunshades from where they had fallen, then once more radioed the Socorro chief dispatcher, Ned Lopez.

Lopez later confirmed that he had received the call from Zamora, breathlessly telling him to look out the window of the sheriff's office to see if the object was in sight. As Lopez was at the north window, not the south, and therefore could not see the object, he asked Zamora what kind of object it was. Zamora said, 'It looks like a balloon.'

Even as he was talking to Lopez, Zamora was watching the UFO disappearing in the distance. It stayed about ten to fifteen feet above the ground, following the terrain, until it was near the perlite mill on the west side of US 60, about a mile away. There, it 'suddenly angled up in a steep climb and got small in the distance, over the canyon

or mountain that way, *very fast*.' He later remembered it as 'a bright, whitish oval getting smaller and smaller as it sped away, upward and over the mountains.'

Approximately one minute and fifty seconds after Zamora had first heard the roar and seen the 'flame' in the sky, the UFO was gone.

Sent urgently to the landing zone by the message relayed through chief dispatcher Ned Lopez, New Mexico State Police Sergeant, Sam Chavez, reached Zamora just after the UFO had disappeared. Even as Chavez was approaching Zamora, the latter was making a sketch of the red insignia he had seen on the object before it took off. Though he had remained calm enough to do this, he was, according to Chavez, as 'white as a sheet' and in a cold sweat.

Examining the landing site with Zamora, Chavez also saw that the brush was smouldering in several places, after being ignited by the flame, and that there was what appeared to be a 'quadrangle' formed by four heavy, wedge-shaped imprints in the soil.

'So there you have it, folks,' the TV reporter said breezily, standing in front of the barren landing site in the wastelands outside Socorro with a microphone in his hand and a view of the dynamite shack over his right shoulder. 'A widely respected Deputy Marshal of Socorro, New Mexico, has stated categorically that he's seen a flying saucer *and* its occupants. Whether it's true or not remains to be seen. Maybe we're *not* alone, folks!'

Wilson used the remote control to switch the TV off. Then, quietly furious, he turned to Fallaci and said: 'The damned fools! That was one of *their* experimental saucers from the White Sands Proving Ground. This will probably resurrect worldwide interest in flying saucers. I have to see Fuller.'

'I'll get him,' Fallaci said.

Chapter Thirty-Seven

Wilson was right. The Socorro Incident of April 24, 1964, soon became the most famous UFO sighting since the original Socorro sighting of 1947, resurrecting widespread public interest in the subject and replenishing the depleted financial resources of the leading civilian UFO organisations by dramatically increasing their membership to what it had been three years earlier, before the dropping of Congressional hearings and the propaganda campaign against NICAP's Donald E.Keyhoe had taken their toll.

A few weeks after the Socorro Incident, Randall flew to Washington DC to have a meeting with Dr Frederick Epstein and Tony Scaduto in the revitalised APII organisation headquarters in 21st Street. As Scaduto had just returned from New Mexico, where he had been sent by Dr Epstein to check out the Socorro Incident, the purpose of the meeting was to hear what he had to say. Since Epstein was at that stage convinced that the UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin, Scaduto and Randall had still not confided their belief that at least some of the flying saucers could be man-made. Scaduto was now looking uncomfortable, because he was close to that subject.

'First thing I learned when I got to Socorro,' he reported, 'is that Deputy Marshal Zamora's radio transmissions had been heard by others, including State Police Senior Patrolman Ted V.Jordan, who arrived at the landing site shortly after Chavez, in the company of Socorro Under-Sheriff James Luckie. A cattle inspector named White, who had also heard Zamora's radio calls, turned up at the landing site; and just after 6.00pm, FBI agent J.Arthur Byrnes arrived to investigate.'

'So what did *you* find?' Dr Epstein asked in his quiet, thoughtful way, while stroking his Vandyke beard, which now had lots of grey strands in it.

'I found the burnt brush, which seemed genuine enough,' Scaduto replied. 'I then interviewed every witness I could find – the ones who'd seen the brush when the burning was still recent – and they all confirmed that the brush had been scorched by flames and that the pad prints, or landing imprints, had been made, in the words of one investigator, "by wedge-shaped units being forced by great weight down into the well-packed soil of the ravine."'

'What size would they have been?' Epstein asked, letting the tip of his ballpoint pen dangle over his notebook.

'The wedges would have had a horizontal length of twelve to sixteen inches, a horizontal width of six to eight inches, and a vertical wedge-depth of four to six inches. I have to say, though, that this latter measurement was impossible to define accurately because of the inward falling of the soil.'

Scaduto withdrew a press cutting from his jacket pocket, unfolded it and smoothed it down on Epstein's desk with the palm of his hand.

'According to the detailed account in the April 28, 1964 edition of the local

biweekly newspaper, *El Defensor Chieftain*,' he continued, reading from the press cutting, 'the landing gear imprints – I quote: "did not appear to have been made by an object striking the earth with great force, but by an object of considerable weight settling to earth at slow speed and not moving after touching the ground."'

He pushed the press cutting towards Dr Epstein, watched the older man pick it up enthusiastically, grinned nervously at Dwight, and then spoke again directly to Epstein.

'Though some of the brush was still smouldering when Chavez, Jordan, Luckie and White were present, they all agreed that there was no odour indicating that combustion of any conventional fuel had caused the burn damage.'

'Very good,' Epstein murmured.

'Jordan was particularly impressed by the fact that the flame described by Zamora had obviously sliced a large greasewood bush located almost centrally in the landing gear quadrilateral, without leaving any signs of turbulence, like the kind that would have been caused by normal rotors or jet exhausts. Jordan also took Polaroid pictures of the landing site and the four imprints within minutes of arriving on the scene.'

'You obtained copies?' Epstein asked, suddenly frowning like a stern schoolteacher.

'Yes, boss, I got copies.'

Epstein smiled and nodded. 'Fine, Tony. Continue.'

Scaduto glanced at Dwight and grinned, this time cockily, with pride, then turned back to Epstein. 'Reasoning that the landing mechanisms of an experimental lunar landing module could have made the depressions in the ground, I contacted informants in NASA and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory to find out if they, or any of the fifteen local industrial firms working for them, had been conducting any experiments with lunar landing modules in the area. In each case, the answer was "No." I then established that no helicopters or aircraft were in the area at the time of the sighting and that the direction of the winds ruled out the possibility that the object was a weather balloon.'

'This sounds too good to be true,' Epstein said, smiling distractedly, as if lost in his own thoughts. 'We certainly appear to be talking about a real, physical object that landed and took off again.'

'Well, then, digest *this* interesting piece of news,' Scaduto said, no longer looking even remotely uncomfortable and instead getting into his stride. 'Just before leaving Socorro I received a call from my set of eyes and ears at the ATIC, and he told me that Project Blue Book, even under the leadership of the sceptical Major Quantinilla, is going to list the case as a genuine unidentified: the only combination of landing, trace and occupant case so far listed in the Blue Book files.'

Epstein gave a soft whistle to express his surprise and pleasure.

'At least they're still doing *something*,' Dwight said sardonically.

'Now, now,' Epstein responded soothingly, knowing how bitter Dwight felt about how he had been treated by the Air Force. 'Go on, Tony. We're listening.'

'Regarding Project Blue Book's involvement,' Scaduto continued, 'I found that the case had been examined by Dr Lincoln La Paz, who'd worked on the old Project Twinkle, and by NICAP's Dr. J.Allen Hynek. The last named was there in his official capacity as consultant to the USAF. I also have it on the best of authority that Hynek has already pronounced it as, I quote, "one of the major UFO sightings in the history of the Air Force's consideration of the subject." That was the final clincher when it came to Major Quantinilla's decision to list it in Project Blue Book's files as the first known combination of UFO landing, trace and occupant case.'

'Wonderful!' Epstein exclaimed softly.

'So what did you find out about the landing site?' Dwight asked more pragmatically.

'Examination of the landing site revealed that the diagonals of the quadrilateral formed by the four landing marks intersected almost exactly at right angles. I therefore asked for, and received, Hynek's report, which contains an especially interesting notation.'

Scaduto opened the notebook he'd been holding in his lap, flipped a few pages over, then read aloud: 'One theorem in geometry states that if the diagonals of a quadrilateral intersect at right angles, the midpoints of the side of the quadrilateral lie on the circumference of a circle...' He glanced up from the notebook. 'Here's the important point,' he said, then went back to his reading. 'It is thus of considerable interest that the centre of the circle so formed on the Socorro landing site virtually coincided with the principal burn mark on the ground. Under certain circumstances the centre of gravity of the craft would have been directly over the centre of the circle, hence making the presence of the burn mark more significant.' He closed the notebook and looked up again. 'In other words, what Hynek is saying is that the indentations and burn marks on the ground clearly indicated a real, physical object of circular shape. It wasn't a mirage or hallucination on the part of Deputy Marshal Zamora. That vehicle was real enough... and it was shaped like an upside-down saucer.'

'And if the vehicle was real,' Dwight said, 'then so were its crewmembers.'

'Exactly!' Scaduto exclaimed with satisfaction.

'This is sounding better every minute,' Epstein said.

'And it gets even better,' Scaduto told him. 'Get this... Checking with a receptionist in the Socorro County Building – a nice lady, incidentally, who saved me a night's hotel bill – I learnt that by 7.20pm on the evening of the sighting CIA agent Jack Fuller and US Army Captain Richard T.Holder, the up-range commander of the White Sands Stallion Site, met in the Socorro County Building, where they proceeded to interrogate Zamora. In the course of that interrogation – according to the tapes heard by my nice lady and others – Byrnes told Zamora that it would be better if he did not – and I quote again: "publicly mention seeing the two small figures in white" – unquote.'

'Two small figures in white,' Epstein repeated dreamily.

'Correct.'

'Not black?' Dwight asked.

'No. White.'

'But they specifically told Zamora not to mention the figures seen standing beside the saucer-shaped object,' Epstein said.

'That's right,' Scaduto replied. 'Which suggests that the figures in white coveralls were certainly there.'

'Anything else?'

'Yes.' Scaduto was now visibly excited. 'Jack Fuller then recommended that in future Zamora refuse to describe the insignia he had seen on the side of the vehicle to anyone other than official investigators.'

'Insignia?' Epstein asked, leaning forward to stare intently at his young researcher.

'Yeah. There was an insignia on that aircraft. According to the report witnessed, notarised and filed in the Socorro County Building, it was red in colour and approximately one-and-a-half feet from top to bottom. Zamora sketched it for his report. According to his sketch, it was an inverted V, or a vertical arrow, with a line under it, vertical lines on each side, and a parabolic arc over the point of the arrow.'

'Any idea what it represented?'

'Some.' Scaduto's grin was now openly triumphant. 'A computer scientist buddy of mine ran it through his data base and came up with the notion that it's similar to a medieval Arabic sign for Venus. However, another friend, an aeronautical engineer, insisted that it's confirmation that the UFO was a man-made vehicle.'

'Man-made?' Epstein echoed him. 'I don't think I can wear this.'

'I think you might, boss.'

'Okay, Tony, continue.'

'In support of his claim, this buddy of mine showed me how, by moving and rotating the lines of the drawing, the acronyms "CIA" and "AD" could be formed, the latter representing the initials of Allen Dulles, present head of the CIA. My buddy also showed me that the parabolic arc above the arrow, or inverted V, could represent a stylised cross-section of the body of the flying saucer – or a pressure wave – while the arrow, or inverted V, with a line under it, could indicate that a vertical thruster is located centrally in the fuselage, or circular wing. Finally, he knocked me sideways by stating that the placing of the symbol on the side of the vehicle – just above the thruster orifice on its underside – could be a warning that the thruster is located there; while the use of red for the symbol could be a danger sign, just as it is with contemporary aircraft symbols.'

Scaduto straightened up in his chair, looking pleased with himself.

'So where is this leading?' Epstein asked in his quiet, patient manner.

'The implication,' Scaduto said, 'is that the Socorro sighting was of a highly sophisticated, piloted, vertical-ascent-and-descent, man-made aircraft that had flown from, and returned to, somewhere in the White Sands Proving Ground.'

For a considerable period of time there was silence in the room, broken only by the

soft drumming of Epstein's fingers on the desk. Eventually he took a deep breath and said, 'Man-made flying saucers?'

'Yes. Constructed in the United States, most likely in the White Sands Proving Ground.'

'But do you believe those flying saucers can account for all the sightings we've had since World War Two?'

'No,' Scaduto said. 'But they sure as hell could account for the many stories of flying saucers being held in top-secret hangars in US Air Force bases.'

'And the other ones? The technologically superior ones? The so-called mother ships?'

Scaduto shrugged. 'I don't know.'

'Well,' Epstein said after some thought, 'although the APII has, up to now, carefully avoided all so-called "occupant" cases, in this instance, given Deputy Marshal Zamora's reliability as a witness, and because Project Blue Book is listing the case as a genuine unidentified, I think we should – how shall I put it? – *liberalise* the organisation by including occupant cases in the future. I myself will avoid the man-made flying saucer hypothesis, but if you gentlemen wish to pursue it, by all means do so. In the meantime, I think we should use the latest Socorro sighting as leverage to press again for Congressional hearings.'

'Good idea,' Dwight said.

Sitting behind his desk, wearing an English tweed jacket and grey pants, with striped shirt and tie, his hair still plentiful even if turning grey, as was his short, pointed beard, Dr Epstein looked older than his age. After massaging his forehead, he sighed and glanced from Scaduto to Dwight.

'Well, gentlemen, I guess that's it for the day. It's a lot for one day.'

'You want to join us for lunch?' Dwight asked him. 'I'm having a light lunch with Tony here, before catching the plane back to Dayton.'

Epstein glanced at the mass of papers on his desk, then raised and lowered his hands in a rabbinical gesture – or simply one of weariness. 'I can't. The Socorro incident has brought the work in and my desk, as you can see, is already overburdened. Besides, when I get tired I can't eat – and I certainly can't take a drink at lunchtime – so I'll take a rain check.'

'You're sure?'

'Yes, I'm sure.'

Dwight and Scaduto pushed their chairs back, then Dwight leaned over the desk to shake Epstein's hand. 'Until the next time.'

'Have a good lunch and a pleasant flight home,' Epstein said.

Scaduto just waved his hand and sauntered out of the office ahead of Dwight. Once on the sidewalk outside the building, they took a cab the short distance to Clyde's garden restaurant in M Street, Georgetown, near to where Bob Jackson had died, possibly murdered. Recalling that dreadful event, Dwight felt a spasm of grief combined with rage and decided that he needed a stiff drink. When they were seated

in Clyde's, packed with the usual lunchtime crowd, a bedlam of genial conversation, Dwight ordered a large bourbon. Scaduto had beer. Throughout the lunch they talked non-stop about UFOs in general and the recent Socorro Incident in particular, growing more excited every minute. This did not help Dwight to forget that his good friend, Bob Jackson, had died, or more likely had been murdered, just a little farther along the street. No way in the world would Dwight ever believe that Bob had died of a heart attack.

Eventually, when they had finished the lunch, settled the check and were preparing to leave, Scaduto said: 'I'm telling you, Dwight, I still believe the UFOs are man-made and probably originate from both Canadian and American top-secret establishments, notably in the White Sands Proving Ground.'

'I'm still not sure of that,' Dwight confessed, as they made their way out of the packed garden restaurant, through the indoors bar, then back into M Street.

'Don't forget,' Scaduto continued, unperturbed, as they stood on the busy sidewalk, observing the passers-by, many of them exuberant students from Georgetown University, 'that the Brits have already demonstrated a vertical- take-off aircraft using swivelling jet nozzles – the *Hawker P1127*. And laser-beam technology – often included in UFO reports, though generally treated as pure science fiction – has been making incredible advances since its discovery four years ago by the Hughes Aircraft company in California. So the capabilities of the flying saucers reported are definitely moving into the area of the possible. The saucers *could* be man-made!'

'But some of the saucers are really so far advanced that I find it difficult to believe they could be man-made.' Dwight glanced automatically along M Street, towards Canal Road, and found himself trying to imagine what had happened to Bob Jackson that fateful night of his death. This in turn led him to another line of thought. 'Take Beth's experience, for instance. The one she recounted under hypnosis. That wasn't a dream – it was a real experience – and the technology suggested by her recollections had to be pretty stupendous. The beams of light from the small saucers somehow immobilised her car, then magically drew it into the mother ship. The beams of light from the mother ship disorientated her and temporarily paralysed her. Then, of course, when she was inside the mother ship, she was shown... *Earth and the stars*.'

'Yeah,' Tony said, softly, in wonder, 'she saw the damned stars!'

'That mother ship was out there in space,' Dwight continued. 'I can't imagine man-made aircraft, or spacecraft – flying saucers or other kinds – being capable of that, if based on the known technology.'

'Why not?' Scaduto responded. 'Our astronauts have been in space. Certain of our conventional aircraft can now reach the stratosphere. And according to Beth, the guy with the oddly expressionless face told her to warn you off the search for, quote, *man-made flying saucers*... And now this flying saucer sighting at Socorro, New Mexico, seems to prove conclusively that whatever Deputy Marshal Zamora saw, it

was certainly real enough and piloted by two small males wearing white coveralls... No planes in the air at the time, no weather balloons... It was *real*, Dwight. It left burn marks and depressions in the soil. It was *physical*... So where the hell did it come from?'

'I don't know,' Dwight confessed. 'I only know this... I'm frightened for Beth and Nichola. I'm even frightened for myself. So if I continue to work for Epstein, I've got to do it off the record and you've got to cover the more public sightings. You've got to cover *for me*.'

'No sweat,' Scaduto said.

The two men shook hands on the crowded sidewalk, then went their separate ways.

Chapter Thirty-Eight

Stopping his car in the middle of the desert between Las Vegas and Nellis Air Force Base in the dead of night, Fuller lit a cigarette, inhaled gratefully, blew a cloud of smoke, and realised that he wasn't looking forward to this particular meeting with Wilson.

For the past year, ever since Wilson had called a meeting to angrily discuss the so-called Socorro Incident, when a USAF flying saucer, based on the *Kugelblitz I*, and its two-man crew had been spotted by Lonnie Zamora, Fuller had been having regular, mostly unpleasant meetings with Wilson, who had expressed his concern about the resurgence of public interest in UFOs generated by the Air Force's carelessness in letting one of their flying saucers from the White Sands Proving Ground be seen by a widely respected Deputy Marshal.

Indeed, the Socorro Incident of 1964 had become in the collective mind of the public the most fascinating UFO sighting since the original Socorro case of 1947. Approximately a year later, on June 12, 1965, one of Wilson's own, smaller flying saucers had crashed near Nellis AFB, right here in Las Vegas, Nevada. The saucer and dead crewmembers had been taken into a top-secret research laboratory on the base for examination. That was two weeks ago.

Demanding the release of the remains through Fuller, Wilson had been refused and, at a later meeting, had coldly told Fuller to inform his superiors at CIA Headquarters, Langley Field, Virginia, and in the White House and Pentagon, that he would be taking 'retaliatory' measures.

Knowing that Wilson was capable of inflicting great damage on the United States, Fuller had conveyed his message to the Pentagon. Unfortunately, because of the speedy advances being made on their own flying saucer projects at Avro-Canada in Malton, Ontario, and at other top-secret research establishments in the White Sands Proving Ground and elsewhere in New Mexico and Arizona, the top brass of the Air Force were growing arrogant, believing that they could outflank Wilson, and so refused to hand over the invaluable debris of Wilson's vastly superior crashed saucer.

Now, as he glanced up and saw what appeared to be a star rapidly growing bigger in a black sky flooded with stars, Fuller was preparing to convey this second refusal to Wilson. He didn't look forward to it.

On the other hand, as he realised when he glanced back over his shoulder and saw the neon spires and minarets of Las Vegas soaring out of the vast desert darkness, this was where Elvis Presley had made his latest movie, *Love in Las Vegas*, also known as *Viva Las Vegas*. Fuller loved Elvis. Elvis was a great American. Fuller also loved Ann-Margret who, when she performed with Elvis in the recently released movie, had almost made Fuller cream his pants.

Amazing, he thought, the things I get to see doing this job. Here I am, metaphorically speaking, walking in the footsteps of Elvis and Ann-Margret. No

wonder I love my country. Where else could you do this?

Turning away from the sparkling, high-rise, neon splendours of distant Las Vegas, he stuck his head out of the open window of the car and looked up again.

The expanding star grew bigger, until it became dime-sized, then like a weather balloon, and finally, with startling speed, a large, saucer-shaped dark mass surrounded by a pulsating whitish glow. Seeming to widen as it descended, until it was immense, almost blotting out his entire view of the night sky, it stopped abruptly and hovered directly above him. Then, as if sensing the presence of his car below it – which in fact, as Fuller knew, it had – it glided slowly sideways, all 250 feet of it, stopped where it could not damage his car, then dropped lower again, its whitish glow dimming more with each second of its stately descent.

Eventually it settled gently on the ground, its nearest edge about fifty yards from Fuller's car. The whitish glow faded away, the lights flashing around its rim then blinked out, one after the other, in rapid sequence, and finally it was just a vast, silvery-grey, dome-shaped mass, eerily beautiful in moonlight.

Fuller was, of course, used to the sight of Wilson's extraordinary flying saucers (he rarely thought of them as UFOs) and, to a certain degree, now took them for granted. He therefore waited patiently for the seamless panel in the outer body to move outward and down, forming a doorway into the holding bay and a ramp that led from there to the ground. He did *not* wait patiently when the unmistakable form of the tall, lean, 70-year old Wilson was framed in that brilliant light, but instead slipped smartly out of the car and advanced to meet him.

The knowledge that he, Jack Fuller, the fearless, could be frightened of Wilson filled him with nausea. Nevertheless, approaching Wilson, meeting him halfway, Fuller was able to maintain his outward appearance of sardonic pragmatism.

'Mr Wilson!' he exclaimed softly, by way of greeting.

Wilson's hair was silvery-white but abundant. His face was lean and handsome, with piercing sky-blue eyes and slightly odd, almost immobile features. That, Fuller knew, was due to plastic surgery, though he wouldn't have dared mention the fact.

Wilson nodded. 'Fuller.' His face was as near to grim as his normally expressionless face would allow. 'Let's waste no time in idle conversation. You know why I'm here. Do I get my crashed saucer back or not?'

Fuller spread his hands in the air, indicating that he had come empty-handed.

'They said "No"?'

''Fraid so.'

'That was foolish of them.'

'The military mind can be foolish at times.'

'I do not require your facetiousness, Fuller.'

'Sorry.'

'What did they find in the wreckage?'

'Crewmembers. Very strange, I'm told. Someone used the word "cyborgs", which was new to me at the time, though I've since been familiarised. All dead, of course.'

Wilson offered a chilling smile. There was a certain aspect to Fuller's bottomless pool of corruptibility, cynicism and blind patriotism that amused him. The crass stupidity of the majority of the human race, but in this case combined with low cunning, was exemplified in Fuller. The CIA agent, Wilson realised, had grandiose ideas about himself. Well, time would teach him...

'You're not too far from being a cyborg yourself,' Wilson said in a rare demonstration of cynicism, which was, after all, a human attribute.

'That sounds facetious, Mr Wilson.'

'You don't like to be put down. You have the need to prove yourself. These are admirable traits in a child, but you should have risen above them. Still, you are what you will be – which is not much at all – and I will therefore, willy nilly, be forced to accept this and deal with it. You're a message boy and I treat you as such by asking one question: Your *superiors* said "No"?'

'Yes, they said "No".'

'You *do* realise, I take it, that I could go into that Air Force base and take what I want without a problem.'

'Without a short-term problem,' Fuller replied, taking as much satisfaction as he could from this conversation, which wasn't, in his view, all that much. 'But in the long term it wouldn't do you much good. By which I mean that the use of force would only draw attention to that secret hangar in the base. And the more – how shall I put it? – the more *unusual* the method of your assault, the more attention it would subsequently receive in the media. Which isn't, if I may say so, exactly the kind of attention you want.'

'What a clever man you are, Mr Fuller.'

'Gee, thanks, Mr Wilson.'

Wilson ignored the nervous sarcasm. 'Why do they want to keep my saucer and its dead crewmembers?'

'Because your saucer is more advanced than their own and the nearest we've come to workable cyborgs are fairly basic Cybernetic Anthropomorphous Machine Systems, or CAMS.'

'I'm surprised you could pronounce that.'

'I have my moments.'

'So they're no longer satisfied with what I've already given them. They think they can *steal* my technology and, perhaps, catch up with me.'

'I'm afraid that's the case, Mr Wilson. It's the nature of the beast to grow arrogant and turn on its master.'

Wilson seemed to sigh, though that was unlikely. 'Well, I'm sorry to hear that, Mr Fuller, because I had hoped to avoid unpleasantness. Now, alas, I'm going to have to teach the White House and the Pentagon a lesson they won't easily forget.'

Not being as stupid as his superiors when it came to an assessment of Wilson's powers, Fuller had feared that this was how he would react – and feared even more what he might do. 'What lesson would that be, Mr Wilson?'

Again, when Wilson smiled, the effect was chilling. 'I'm going to black out most of the East Coast of the United States. A *total* blackout, Mr Fuller. If, by the first week in August, I do not have my crashed saucer back, I will begin the process of turning out all the lights. I will do this gradually, bit by bit, to give you time to change your minds. But if, by November, you're still holding my crashed saucer and dead cyborgs, every light on the east coast will go out.'

'Every single light on the East Coast of America?'

'Yes. Every single light. Now take that message back to your superiors and, if they still refuse my request, keep your eye on events during the first week of August. Goodnight, Mr Fuller.'

Fuller returned to his car and sat in it until the enormous, majestic flying saucer ascended vertically, then abruptly shrank to the size of a star and shot off to the east. Then, feeling chilled by Wilson's warning, he drove straight back to Las Vegas airport and caught the first plane back to Washington DC.

When he had conveyed Wilson's message to the White House and the Pentagon, via CIA Headquarters in Langley Field, Virginia, they refused to believe that Wilson could do what he was threatening. They all thought he was bluffing.

The following week, the first week in August, 1965, Fuller asked the Langley Field press-cutting department to send him reports on any unusual stories regarding power lines or electricity generators. In fact, even before the first cuttings had been received, he knew that Wilson's game was starting when one of his CIA physicists, engaged in an intelligence study of the relationship between UFOs witnessed over power lines and subsequent, inexplicable power failures, submitted an unusual report.

During the first week of August, thousands of citizens in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and neighbouring states witnessed one of the biggest UFO displays ever. Unidentified lights flew across the skies in formation, were tracked on radar, and played tag with civilian and Air Force aircraft. Reading the written reports of hundreds of witnesses, Fuller thought the descriptions of the lights were strikingly similar to those he had received about the Nazis' World War II *Feuerballs*.

As Fuller subsequently found out from his daily perusal of the relevant press cuttings, this unexpected major display of UFOs ended abruptly a week later.

During the evening of the first day in which the UFOs had *not* been seen, when in bed with the most recent of his nubile girlfriends – he liked them young these days – Fuller was shocked to receive a personal phone call from Wilson.

'I didn't know you had my home phone number,' Fuller said, trying to hide his feeling of violation at close to midnight.

'I have everything on you,' Wilson replied, 'including every last detail of the blonde creature lying beside you, just about legal age.'

Now almost sweating, wondering where the hell Wilson was speaking from and wondering just what he had seen of his frolics with the nubile, jailbait blonde, Fuller

said, fighting to keep his voice steady, 'So what do you want at this time of night?'

'I want to know if the ambitious morons above you have seen enough and are willing to return my crashed saucer and its dead cyborgs.'

'I'm really sorry to have to say this,' Fuller replied, feeling even more sorry for himself, 'but the ambitious morons above me are acting like just that – morons. They're insisting that the recent UFO flap was purely accidental.'

'Then they are truly moronic.'

'Well,' Fuller said, trying to recover his equilibrium and act cool for the benefit of the nubile blonde beauty stretched out beside him, looking seriously puzzled, 'as they said, what you threatened didn't actually happen: the lights didn't go out.'

'I told you I would give them a chance to change their minds before I went further.'

'They thought you were bluffing.'

'Then I'll show them otherwise,' Wilson said, 'and I'll do it in the middle of winter, to cause even more chaos.'

'That's three months away,' Fuller reminded him.

'I'm sure you can wait that long. Goodnight, Mr Fuller.'

Fuller carefully put his phone back in its cradle, rolled over to the blonde and slithered onto her naked, sweat-slicked body like a snake in a swamp. Attaining an instant erection, he slipped it into her and whispered, 'How long do you think we can keep this up? Does three months sound good?'

The remark was, he soon realised, a very poor joke designed to quell the unexpected, uncustomary fear that was making his stomach churn. He knew the joke hadn't worked when the fear, crawling through him like a ghostly, malignant presence, made him lose his erection before he could properly use it.

This had never happened to him before, but then he'd never known fear before.

He would have to get used to it.

Three months later, on the night of November 9, 1965, hundreds of UFOs, most in the form of darting lights, were reported from Niagara, Syracuse, and Manhattan. That same night, all the lights went out – in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and a section of Canada. They went out over a total area of 80,000 square miles and a population of twenty-six million people. The biggest power cut in American history, it caused chaos and panic.

Even while this blanket of darkness was falling over the land – and was already being dubbed the Great Northeast Blackout – Fuller was on the phone at CIA headquarters in Langley Field, Virginia, trying to find out what had caused it. He learnt that the huge power grid that controlled all of the blacked-out areas – an interlocking network linking twenty-nine utility companies, with hundreds of automatic controls and locking devices – had always been considered to be invulnerable... yet the system *had* failed and the cause of the black-out couldn't be ascertained.

The only thing known for certain at this point in time was that the failure had occurred *somewhere* in the flow between the Niagara Falls generators and the Clay power sub-station, an automatic control unit through which the electric power flowed from Niagara to New York.

Shortly after Fuller had digested this report, he received a call from a CIA friend, Dick Lamont, at Andrews Air Force Base.

'There's a UFO connection,' Lamont said.

'What kind?'

'The first report of an unidentified,' Lamont told him, 'was made by the Deputy Aviation Commissioner of Syracuse, Robert C.Walsh, and several other witnesses. Just after the power failed at Syracuse, all of them saw what resembled a huge fireball *ascending* from a fairly low altitude near Hancock Airport. Approaching for landing at that time was flight instructor Weldon Ross and his passenger, computer technician James Brooding, both of whom saw the same object. At first they mistook it for a burning building on the ground – something corroborating the fact that the fireball was at low altitude – but then they realised that it was something in the air... a single, round-shaped object about a hundred feet in diameter, later described in their formal report as a "flame-coloured globe". And according to Ross's calculations, that object was directly over the Clay power sub-station...'

No sooner had Fuller put the phone down than it rang again. This time it was Wilson.

'Well?' he asked softly.

'I have to talk to the President,' Wilson replied.

'You do that,' Wilson said.

A few hours later, at 3.30 in the morning, after his 'emergency' telephone conversation with President Lyndon B.Johnson, Fuller was landing by helicopter in the most heavily guarded area of Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nevada. Two crude coffins and a pile of large wooden crates had already been loaded onto a caravan of US Army trucks, which were surrounded by a ring of heavily armed troops. Fuller clambered into the back of a diplomatic limousine and told the driver to go. The limousine, which had tinted, bulletproof windows, led the convoy of trucks away from the floodlit hangar to a restricted airstrip at the northern edge of the base.

Clambering out of the limousine, Fuller glanced about him and noted that the whole area was surrounded by barbed wire and protected by more helmeted, armed troops. Satisfied with the security arrangements, he supervised the unloading of the two coffins and crates. When they were unloaded and forming one large, pyramid-shaped heap in the middle of the airstrip, the armed soldiers were ordered into the trucks and driven back to camp, leaving Fuller alone with a high-ranking Air Force officer.

Not intimidated by high-ranking Air Force officers, Fuller lit a cigarette and smoked while he waited.

Eventually, one of Wilson's mother ships descended silently, majestically, a great

pyramid of steel cocooned in a white haze, its rainbow lights flashing rapidly around its circular rim, to settle just above the field at the far side of the runway. When it had landed, the lights flickered off, one after the other in quick sequence, the white haze disappeared, as if the light had been sucked back in through the porous metal of the saucer's body, and then a large, formerly seamless panel moved outwards and down to form a doorway with a wide ramp leading from the holding bay of the saucer to the ground.

At first seen as no more than a sharp-edged silhouette in the dazzling light of the holding bay, Wilson's assistant, Salvatore Fallaci, became recognisably human as he advanced down the ramp and approached Fuller, now just getting out of his limousine.

As Fuller noted instantly, Wilson was not present. Instead, Fallaci was surrounded by four creatures who could have been easily mistaken for aliens, or extraterrestrials, but were, as Fuller now knew, cyborgs surgically mutated from what had once been normal human beings: the small Ache Indians of Paraguay. Averaging five feet tall, sometimes even smaller, only occasionally taller, they'd had facial surgery to replace the nose, mouth and throat with metal-covered prosthetics. While this alone would have made them look bizarre, they were rendered even more 'alien' by their remote-controlled metal hands, which were actually small CAMS of the kind used for sea-bed exploration.

The children of Frankenstein, Fuller thought. That's who I'm dealing with. That fucker Wilson is Frankenstein.

'Good evening, Mr Fuller,' Fallaci said.

'More like good morning,' Fuller responded.

Fallaci smiled. He had that Italian charm. 'Normal people keep normal hours,' he said, 'and are always boring.' He glanced at the trucks lined up behind Fuller. 'Is everything there, Mr Fuller? By which I mean the crashed saucer and its dead cyborgs. Those and every other single item you took into that hangar.'

'Every single item,' Fuller said. 'You're getting everything back.'

'It's good to know that above and beyond you, there are people with some common sense.'

'Go screw yourself,' Fuller said.

He had finally come to accept (and it hadn't been easy) that he was frightened of Wilson. He had never been frightened of anyone in his life – not until he met Wilson, who had always been icily polite and curiously civilised. Fuller was frightened of Wilson's steady blue gaze, of his absolute pragmatism, of the way he could look directly at you without blinking and reduce you to nothing. Wilson lacked normal feelings. He passed judgement, then acted. What he did was dictated by a logic so pure that it had to be inhuman.

Fuller accepted that. He didn't like it, but he understood it. Pragmatism was his own meat and potatoes - a man did what he had to do. That was Wilson. That was Fuller, also. In truth, he and Wilson were opposite sides of the same coin.

You couldn't believe this shit coming down, but there it was on your plate. You either ate it or you starved to death. That was life in a nutshell. On the other hand, though Fuller patriotically ate this shit, he wasn't about to do so in front of Salvatore Fallaci. The former Mafioso was only Wilson's minion and as such could be used as an antidote to Fuller's fear and frustration. All the things that Fuller wanted to say to Wilson – but did not dare say – he could say to Fallaci.

'You hear me? I said, go screw yourself.'

'I'm not here to be insulted,' Fallaci said, 'so let's just do what we have to do. May I start?'

'What the fuck do you think?' Fuller responded, trying to obliterate his fear of Wilson by shitting on his assistant. 'We didn't come here at this hour to rock and roll. Take what you want and then leave.'

'I will do exactly that,' Fallaci said. 'Thank *you*, Mr Fuller.'

Using what appeared to be a miniature microphone strapped to his throat, Fallaci directed the hideous cyborgs, step by step, as they removed the crates containing the separate parts of the crashed flying saucer and the coffins containing the dead crew from the army trucks, then carried them up the ramp, into the dazzling holding bay of the mother ship. When this task was completed, the cyborgs also entered the mother ship, leaving only Fallaci outside, once more facing Fuller.

'You've shown sound sense,' Fallaci said to Fuller. 'Mr Wilson thanks you.'

'Don't mention it,' Fuller replied, trying to sound sardonic, though his stomach was churning with tension.

Fallaci grinned, turned away and walked up the ramp, into the mother ship. The ramp folded back in and the great saucer-shaped craft, again looking seamless, emitted a bass humming sound, gave off a magically pulsating whitish glowing, lifted gently off the ground, like a soap bubble floating on water, then ascended vertically to the heavens and eventually disappeared.

'Good God,' the high-ranking Air Force officer beside Fuller exclaimed softly, 'I don't believe my own eyes.'

'That's what those bastards are banking on,' Fuller responded. Then, defeated, but trying not to show it, he turned away and walked back across the dark, eerily silent airstrip.

Chapter Thirty-Nine

Dwight had begun to feel that he had no real life – out there, where the real world was. He seemed to have spent the past decade indoors, pouring over reports of UFO sightings and UFO photographs, piecing this and that together, trying to make sense of what seemed senseless, hoping to find logic in his nightmares. The nightmares were, of course, based on what had happened not only to him, but also to Beth, and for that very reason he had been keeping a low profile with regard to his UFO researches. So low, indeed, that even Dr Epstein and Tony Scaduto of the APII had begun sending him letters, asking him what the hell he was doing.

Finally, in November 1966, a year after the Great Northeast Blackout, Dwight pulled himself out of that dark hole he was living in – not his home, but his bruised and frightened soul – to meet Epstein and Scaduto, who'd flown in from Washington DC, in a Chinese restaurant in Dayton, for lunch and a talk. With his hair and Vandyke beard now mostly grey, Epstein looked a lot older, but Scaduto, given the benefits of youth, hadn't changed that much and still wore his black-leather biker's gear. They made an unusual team.

'My feeling,' Epstein said as he turned his Singapore noodles expertly on his chopsticks, 'is that you've practically given up your UFO research. We're getting nothing back, Dwight.'

Dwight shrugged. 'I won't deny it. I *have* practically given up. Ever since that incident with Beth, I've been frightened for her and Nichola, so I decided to keep a low profile and not draw any attention to myself. What the hell! Why lie about it? I was so scared, I decided to drop out altogether, in the hope that those bastards, the men in black, or whoever, would forget us entirely.'

'Perfectly understandable,' Epstein said, nodding sympathetically. 'Had I been in your situation, I'd have been just as scared.'

'You probably *are* in his situation,' Scaduto said. 'You just don't know it yet. I mean, man, if you're running an organisation like the APII, those bastards are bound to be watching you.'

'But they've never bothered me,' Epstein replied.

'They have their own ways and reasons,' Dwight said. 'But living with the constant expectation of a visitation is just as bad as the visitation itself.'

'So nothing new to recount?'

'Only that Nichola's turned nineteen and is planning to marry.'

'Nineteen!' Scaduto exclaimed. 'I can hardly believe it. Makes me feel like an old man.'

'We age overnight,' Epstein said gloomily, clearly thinking of himself, then he brightened up enough to ask: 'So you've been involved in the arrangements for the wedding?'

'Right,' Dwight said.

'And Beth... How has she been coping?'

'You mean the forthcoming nuptials or her CE-Four experience?'

'Both.'

'She's thrilled that Nichola's getting married – she's very romantic that way. I think it's been a healthy distraction for her, regarding the other thing. It's kept her mind off it.'

'And what about the so-called "other thing" – the CE-Four experience?'

'Since having her hypnotic treatments her headaches and nightmares have gone, but she's gradually remembering the details of her abduction and now lives in fear of the men in black and the possibility of being abducted again. That, in a nutshell, is why I've virtually stopped working for you. It's for Beth. I'm frightened for her. I think that what they did to her was a warning – and it's one that I'm heeding.'

Indeed, just thinking about it made Dwight feel that a wall of darkness was closing in around him, even in daylight. You were there, in that dungeon of the mind, and you might never get out. That's what they could do to you. Though who 'they' were, he still didn't know.

'I don't mind admitting that we're desperate to get you back to work,' Epstein said. 'A recent Gallup Poll has shown that approximately nine million Americans now believe they've seen a UFO. Our research supports that figure. To put it mildly, we're being overwhelmed with reports. So we need all the help we can get.'

'*Nine million?*' Dwight asked, finding it hard to believe what he was hearing.

'Yes. An astonishing figure, right? The Gallup Poll was undertaken in the wake of one of the most widely publicised events in the history of the UFO controversy: the furore over the Dexter and Hillsdale, Michigan, sightings that occurred eighteen months ago. Did you read about them?'

'Yeah.' Dwight recalled them only vaguely. 'I remember reading about them and seeing some news items on TV. It was at a time when I couldn't face anything about UFOs, so I guess I gave them a miss. I used to just turn my head away.'

'You must've been in a fucking *bad* way,' Scaduto said.

'I was.'

'May I refresh your memory?' Epstein asked.

'Sure. Go ahead.'

'On March 20 last year, eighty-seven women students and a civil defence director at Hillsdale College, Michigan, saw a glowing, football-shaped object hovering over an empty swamp a few hundred yards from the women's dorm. It repeatedly raced at, then retreated from, the dorm, dodged an airport beacon light, and flew back and forth for hours before disappearing. The next day, in Dexter, sixty-three miles away, five people, including two police officers, reported seeing a large, glowing object rising from a swampy area on a farm, hover for a few minutes at about a thousand feet, and then leave the area.'

'An impressive set of witnesses,' Scaduto said.

'Quite so. And within a few days, nearly every newspaper in the country and all

national TV news programmes were carrying reports on the sightings. This placed intense pressure on the Air Force to investigate the incidents.'

'I remember that much,' Dwight said, growing interested despite himself. 'The head of Project Blue Book, Major Hector Quintanilla, sent Dr J.Allen Hynek to investigate the sightings.'

'Right – and Hynek had to virtually fight his way through the reporters to get at the witnesses. Later, he stated that the entire region was gripped by near-hysteria. He did, however, manage to complete his investigation and afterwards held what was reported as being the largest press conference in the history of the Detroit Press Club.'

'Hynek's widely respected,' Dwight said, 'so where he goes, the press goes.'

'Knows his stuff,' Scaduto murmured.

'He's brought respectability to the subject,' Epstein said, 'and I'm grateful for that. Unfortunately, in this instance, he fell flat on his face.'

'Oh?' Dwight said. 'How?'

'He made the simple mistake of not thinking before he opened his mouth. With the news hounds all baying for an instant explanation for the sightings, he suggested – purely as a hypothesis – that they might have been caused by marsh gas.'

'What the hell's that?' Scaduto, an urban man, asked.

'It's a phenomenon caused by the spontaneous ignition of decaying vegetation and it produces eerie, glowing lights.'

'Thank you, professor.'

'Anyway, the press latched onto the words "swamp gas" and had a field day making fun of them, with the ironic result that coverage of UFOs reached unprecedented levels during March and April – particularly regarding the Dexter-Hillsdale sightings. So much so, in fact, that Weston E.Vivian, Democratic Congressman from Michigan, and Gerald Ford, House Republican minority leader, formally called for Congressional hearings.'

'Oh, Christ, yes,' Dwight said. 'I remember it all now. But that's about as far as I got. That's when I stopped reading about it. And I started switching the TV off when the subject was raised. So what happened next?'

'The House Armed Services Committee,' Epstein said, 'acted on Ford's suggestion and on April 15 – for the first time in the history of the UFO controversy – Congress held an open hearing on the subject. When the hearings were completed, the Secretary of the Air Force, Harold D.Brown, directed the Air Force chief of staff to make arrangements for a special, independent, civilian team to investigate selected UFO sightings. Subsequently, on May 9, the Air Force announced that it was planning to contract with scientists for a full-scale UFO investigation.'

'And last month,' Scaduto interjected excitedly, 'the Air Force announced that the University of Colorado had accepted the UFO study project and that Edward C.Condon would be in charge.'

'Who's Condon?' Dwight asked, more intrigued every minute, feeling that he was

coming back to life after being buried alive.

'An internationally known physicist and former head of the National Bureau of Standards,' Epstein told him.

'Impressive,' Dwight said.

'Which is exactly why they picked that bastard,' Scaduto said with surprising, unexpected bitterness.

'Here's the interesting part,' Epstein said. 'The part not included in the press reports.'

'Go on,' Dwight responded, leaning forward, as if drawn to Epstein by a magnet.

Epstein smiled slightly, knowing that he'd hooked Dwight again. 'Dr James E.McDonald,' he said, 'a senior atmospheric physicist at the University of Arizona's Department of Atmospheric Sciences and one of the nation's leading scientific authorities on UFOs, had accidentally seen the *classified* version of the previous Robertson Panel report at Wright-Patterson AFB. This led him to reveal, when speaking to members of the university's Department of Meteorology, that the CIA had ordered the Air Force to debunk UFOs. He had read this, he said, in the uncensored version of the Robertson Panel report.'

'Fucking A!' Scaduto exclaimed, looking happier.

'The news services picked up this story,' Epstein continued, 'and publicised it widely on the same day that the Air Force announced the establishment of the Condon Committee.'

'Condon was picked,' Scaduto added enthusiastically, 'because he's already shown he doesn't believe in UFOs. He's been tasked with helping the Air Force deny that they deliberately debunked UFO reports and to help them bury this subject once and for all. What say you, Dwight?'

'I say you're right,' Dwight said without thinking. 'And what we have to look into is...'

He stopped talking in mid-sentence, realising that he'd just committed himself again, despite his lingering doubts. When he saw the grins on the faces of Epstein and Scaduto, he couldn't help laughing.

'I don't believe it,' he said, when he had managed to contain himself. 'You pair of bastards came all the way from Washington DC just to seduce me into going back to work.'

'We sure did,' Epstein said.

'So are you in or out?' Scaduto asked.

'Count me in,' Dwight said.

The three of them raised their glasses in the air and tapped them together in a toast.

It was the last of their good days.

Chapter Forty

Sitting on his rocking chair on the veranda, overlooking the fenced-in compound, Ernst Stoll observed the arrival of Wilson's flying saucer with no great deal of pleasure. This time Wilson was coming in a medium-sized saucer, 150 feet wide, and carrying, so Ernst hoped, a 35-foot diameter, two-seater saucer with a cyborg pilot for his personal use. Ernst still had his own thoughts about that and they were making him nervous.

Indeed, as he watched the *Kugelblitz III* descending vertically over the steaming canopy of the rain forest, he was torn between his need to escape this filthy hole and his dread of what might happen if he tried. Over the past few months it had dawned on him that he had now been here for years - nearly twenty years, in fact – and that there had been no indication that Wilson would ever let him leave. Ernst was rotting in this jungle; perhaps even losing his mind. With little stimulation, he could not stretch himself and was, he felt, becoming like a vegetable, blending in with the forest. So depleted was he that he could not even enjoy sex with his Ache comfort girls, let alone still be thrilled with the feeling of power that he had formerly received from running the compound like a merciless god. Now he wanted only to die in the Fatherland, preferably in Mannheim, where he had been born, and rest in the same soil that had taken his wife and children so many years ago.

Naturally he was nervous about telling Wilson this, but was determined to do so. A man could only take so much and he, Ernst Stoll, had had enough. He would plead for release.

As Wilson's saucer descended slowly, majestically, into the clearing, its familiar bass humming sound grew louder and became almost palpable, an odd vibration that shook Ernst's log-and-thatch house. Looking up, he saw the immense, spherical, deceptively seamless craft blocking out the tropical sky as it dropped lower. Still quite high up, the saucer was spinning rapidly on its own axis, except for the gyroscopically stabilised central fuselage. The rapid rotation of the circular outer wings slowed down as the saucer descended, creating violent currents of air that made loose grass, plants, soil and gravel swirl wildly, noisily, in the air, as if caught in the eye of a hurricane. As always, the native workers and captured Ache Indians were staring up in awe as the gigantic saucer descended, cocooned in a familiar whitish glow. This glow darkened to a more normal metallic grey when the saucer hovered just above ground level, bobbing gently like a cork in water, its thick hydraulic legs emerging from four points equidistant around its base, to embed themselves deeply in the muddy ground. The saucer bounced gently on the legs, but eventually settled and was still. Its rotating wings gradually slowed and then stopped altogether, as did the wildly swirling, artificial wind. Silence reigned for a moment.

As a panel in the concave base opened up to form a ramp leading down to the ground, Ernst rose from his rocking chair, stepped off the veranda, and advanced to

meet Wilson. The latter emerged from the holding bay of the saucer, tall, slim, naturally elegant, white-haired, oddly handsome with the aid of plastic surgery, and with a psychic aura as cold as a block of ice. Ernst practically trembled with fear the instant he saw him.

Wilson did not offer his hand. He just nodded and said, '*Guten tag*, Ernst. It is good to see you.' Speaking German, he was inclined to become rather formal.

'And good to see you, sir.'

'You are well?'

'Yes, sir, and you?'

'I'm in excellent condition for my age, given all the medical and surgical aid I've had. You must try it yourself, Ernst.'

Ernst felt himself smiling nervously, without humour. 'I don't think I'm quite ready for that yet. Perhaps a few years from now.'

Even as Ernst was speaking, four of the hideous cyborgs, mutated from unfortunate Ache Indians, came down the ramp behind Wilson, looking even shorter than they were beside the Frankenstein who had created them. Ernst shuddered to see them.

'As promised, I have brought your present,' Wilson said, still speaking in formal German. 'But let us have lunch first.'

'Naturally. Yes, sir.'

Ernst led his lord and master back to the house where, on the veranda, which was pleasantly cool, they had what Wilson considered to be a major meal: fruit-and-nut cereal, with a glass of cold, very dry white wine. While partaking of the lunch, he expressed his concern that the Americans and Soviets were, ironically with his help, progressing technologically much faster than he had anticipated.

'Since Lyndon B.Johnson was sworn in as President,' he explained, 'after the assassination of Kennedy, both the Americans and the Soviets have had men drifting outside their spacecraft; two separate US Gemini spacecraft have met in space and flown side-by-side only six to ten feet apart – an achievement requiring astonishing technical accuracy by their modest standards – the first space docking has been made by a US astronaut; and, finally, an unmanned US *Surveyor* spacecraft has soft-landed on the moon.'

'Well, sir, you *did* help them with that,' Stoll dared to remind him, 'even if indirectly, with your supplies of scientific drawings and a great deal of highly advanced technology.'

Wilson nodded. 'Yes. As part of that agreement I promised the Americans, through CIA agent Jack Fuller, that they would be the first to land a man on the moon. As always, I'd intended keeping that promise. However, the speed with which the Americans are advancing scientifically had made me feel that I must hinder their progress, as well as American and Soviet progress in general. It's clear from my recent conversations with Jack Fuller that they're growing arrogant, believing that they can somehow catch up with my achievements, which is why I arranged last year's Great Northeast Blackout as a warning to them. After that, they cooled down

for a while, but already they're growing arrogant again, so clearly they need another lesson.'

'What have you planned?'

'I've learnt through one of my brain-implanted spies located within NASA that they have a rehearsal for another Apollo launch planned for January 27 next year. The same man – one of NASA's top scientists – will therefore ensure that the spacecraft malfunctions and bursts into flames, killing all three of the astronauts on board. A couple of months later – I believe this will be April – when cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov is due to orbit the Earth in a Soyuz spacecraft, we'll attack it with a laser-beam weapon fired by one of our saucers. We'll make the spacecraft crash, killing Komarov. The combined deaths of the cosmonaut and three astronauts will almost certainly cause consternation and result in delays in the space race between the Americans and the Soviets. I think this will work, yes?'

'I think so,' Ernst said.

When the meal was finished, Ernst made his usual report to Wilson, telling him about the negative or positive aspects of the capturing and holding of the Ache Indians and any difficulties presented by his dealings with Paraguay's officials, most of whom were as corrupt as their master, President Stroessner. Eventually, when he'd completed his report, he glanced across the compound with its mud-and-thatch shacks, goats, chickens, mosquitoes, piles of shit and everything else he detested here, including the native workers, men and women alike, and suddenly blurted out that twenty years here was too much.

'I desperately want to return to Germany,' he said finally.

'Why do you wish to return?' Wilson asked.

'It is the Fatherland...'

'It is not,' Wilson interjected in his remote, unemotional way. 'The Fatherland died with the ending of the war. What you want is no more.'

'Still, my wife and children died there. Everything I had was there. I have been here for twenty years and I'm growing old and I yearn for the past. Please, sir, let me go.'

'I didn't realise you were so sentimental,' Wilson said with a smile that did not reach his eyes and held no warmth at all – a smile as cold as the grave.

'Nor did I,' Ernst replied, 'but I am. It's a sign that I'm growing old.'

'I'm sorry, Ernst,' Wilson said, showing no sign of emotion whatsoever, 'but I'm afraid I cannot say "Yes" to that just yet. We still need you here. You are doing invaluable work here. Rest assured that it will end in a year or two, and then we can consider this matter again. But why Germany? There's nothing left for you there. In a year or two, when your work here is finished, you can return to Antarctica for medical and surgical rejuvenation. When that's completed, we will find you something suitable to do there; or, if you prefer, somewhere else. But not Germany. There you could still be picked up as a war criminal and forced to stand trial. We cannot risk that.'

'That's the problem,' Ernst said, feeling even more desperate, knowing that he was going to lose out again to Wilson. 'It's not just a matter of getting back to Germany. The truth is that I don't think I can stand it here much longer. This place is gradually driving me crazy. I have to get out.'

'You simply need a short break now and then,' Wilson insisted in his cold-blooded, icily pragmatic way. 'You don't need to return to Germany. You just need to get out of here more often, perhaps visit Asuncion.'

'The journey is too difficult,' Ernst said, aware that he sounded pathetic, his heart sinking with the knowledge that Wilson was going to be unbending about letting him leave here for good. 'And besides, it's too dangerous. This compound is in the middle of the rain forest, the jungle, and the only way out is by river. That makes short breaks difficult.'

'Which is precisely why I've brought you a gift, Ernst. A small, two-seater flying saucer with a programmed, totally obedient cyborg pilot. Come and look.'

Even as they stood up and walked down the steps of the veranda, a 35-foot wide flying saucer emerged slowly, gracefully, from the holding bay of its mother ship, barely inches above the floor, but certainly floating in mid-air, and advanced over the clearing, watched silently by the awed, terrified natives and Ache Indians. Made, like all of the flying saucers, from minutely porous magnesium othosilicate and electrically charged, it was surrounded by that familiar whitish glow, caused by the ionisation of the surrounding atmosphere. With its outer rings rotating around its fixed, cupola-shaped central fuselage, it looked like a giant spinning top. Unlike the bigger flying saucers, however, it had a visible Perspex dome not much larger than the cockpit of a small airplane.

Standing beside Wilson in the clearing as the saucer advanced towards him, Ernst could see, in that cramped, two-seater pilot's cabin, the silhouetted figure of what had to be the cyborg pilot. A lump came to his throat as the saucer settled gently on the ground, its four legs extending to embed themselves in the mud. He was recalling how desperately, when an aeronautical student, first at the Institute of Technology in Munich, then in the rocket technology classes of Professor Karl Emil Becker at the University of Berlin, he had wanted to join the VfR, or Spaceship Travel Club, in the company of Werner von Braun, Rudolph Nebel, Willy Ley, and Hermann Oberth, to build rockets that would soar to the heavens. That dream had been crushed when he joined the SS and, eventually, came under the influence of the almost inhuman Wilson, who, for the past twenty years, had kept him imprisoned between helpless reverence and dread. Now, when he studied the small flying saucer, he saw the means of his escape and, formulating it, was filled with terror at the thought of what Wilson might do if he failed and was captured and brought back. Thinking about the possibilities, Ernst had to wipe sweat from his brow and control his body's trembling.

'Beautiful!' he exclaimed softly, referring to the small flying saucer now resting in the middle of the clearing, dwarfed by the immense *Kugelblitz III*.

'Yours,' Wilson responded. 'It's not stratospheric, but its range is virtually

limitless and you can use it for lengthy journeys at an altitude that will keep you well above normal airplanes, out of the range of radar, thus out of sight. Use it to give yourself some short breaks, away from this place. You'll feel better then.'

'It's been so long,' Ernst said hesitantly. 'I don't know how to fly any more. Certainly not...'

'The cyborg pilot will do the flying for you when the saucer isn't on autopilot. One of our first fully functioning cyborgs. Look!' Speaking into the pinhead microphone strapped to his throat, Wilson ordered the pilot out. With the saucer being so small, the pilot emerged rather like the pilot of a normal airplane: by opening the dome-shaped Perspex hood, which split into two parts, then clambering out and simply slithering down the sloping side to the ground. When, in this instance, the pilot had done so, Ernst looked at him in horrified amazement.

He was both horrified and amazed because he actually recognised what was left of the original Marlon Clarke, the farmer abducted in Socorro, New Mexico, in 1947 and flown to the Antarctic after witnessing the crash of a flying saucer. Clarke had been turned into a hideous man/machine hybrid, or cyborg. His head had been severed, kept in cold storage, then transplanted to the body of a small, headless Ache Indian. Ernst was surprised that he still recognised Clarke, because there was so little of his original face to be seen. His skull was covered in the stereotaxic skullcap that kept electrodes implanted in his head at all times; and his lower face – ears, nose, mouth and jaw – had been replaced with an ugly metal prosthetic. The hands of the original Ache Indian had been sliced off and replaced with what would have looked to most people like vicious metal claws, though they were, as Ernst knew, CAMS, capable of highly sophisticated movements. Clarke looked like a monster.

'Plastic artificial heart,' Wilson explained. 'Bionic audio transmitters to replace the mechanism of the inner ear. Plastic arteries. Synthetic bones in both legs and the lower arms attached to the CAMS. The latter, while looking like metal claws from afar, actually have fingertips of polyvinylidene fluoride, which detects alternations in pressure and delivers the appropriate impulses to the nerve ends. Brain-implantations, of course, and programmed for absolute obedience – you speak, he obeys. Here... strap this pinhead microphone to your throat.'

Ernst took the tiny microphone, wrapped the strap around his throat, and clipped it shut with the microphone resting on his Adam's apple.

'Now identify yourself,' Wilson said. 'Tell the cyborg your name,'

'My name is Ernst Stoll.'

'Good,' Wilson said. 'That's all he needs to know. He now knows the sound of your voice and will react automatically to it with total obedience.'

'Amazing,' Ernst said, feeling hope even in his despair, seeing light where only darkness had reigned.

'He's a gift for your years of devotion to duty,' Wilson said. 'Use him well. Now I must be going.'

Nodding at Ernst, since he rarely shook hands these days, Wilson went back up the

ramp of the bigger saucer, followed by his four cyborg guards. Once they were all inside, the ramp closed and the saucer lifted slightly off the ground. Shortly after it had lifted off, and while it was still hovering above the ground, its hydraulic legs were drawn back into the base of the central body and the panels closed so precisely that the joins around them could not be seen. Then the saucer rose vertically, slowly, to just above the canopy of the soaring trees, hovered there for a few seconds, then abruptly shot upward, shrank rapidly, and then disappeared.

The cyborg pilot, Marlon Clarke, was standing silently in front of the small flying saucer, practically brain-dead until activated by instructions from Ernst. Both terrified and exhilarated by what he was contemplating, Ernst hurried back into his log-and-thatch house, to have a strong drink of schnapps, which helped give him the courage he needed to do what he was planning.

Sitting there on the sofa in the middle of the room, he looked around at the photos that showed his own history: a golden-haired child in the courtyard of his parents' imposing neo-Gothic house in Mannheim; a handsome youth sitting with a pretty young blonde-haired lady, Ingrid, later to be his wife, at an outside table of the Kranzler Café on the Kurfurstendamm in Berlin; clambering out of an army car at Stadelheim Prison, Berlin, in his black SS uniform; posing, already cynical, in the same uniform outside Gestapo Headquarters in the Prinz Albrechstrasse with friends Brandt and Ritter, both killed in the war; celebrating with those same two friends and some whores at the Schauspielhaus in 1937, all drunk and holding up steins of beer; wrapped in a greatcoat covered with snow as he hammered swastikas on steel poles into the hardened snow of Nue Schwabenland, Antarctica, in 1938, claiming the territory for the Third Reich; already ageing and embittered when with the flying saucer team – Wilson, Rudolph Schriever, Klaus Habermohl and Otto Miethe – outside the hangar of the research centre at Kummersdorf, located at the other side of the firing range separating it from Werner von Braun's Rocket Research Institute; twice with the Reichfuhrer, Heinrich Himmler – first looking icily controlled in the SS headquarters in Berlin, then, six years later, looking deranged in the sanatorium of Dr Gebhardt at Hohenlychen; finally, with generals Nebe and Kammler in the great underground complex of the Nordhausen Central Works in Kahla in the Harz Mountains. And, of course, the women, his *few* women... That erotic dancer, Brigitte, from the White Mouse in the Franzosischestrasse; the sensual, treacherous Jew bitch, Kryzstina Kosilewsky, from Cracow; and, coming last, but in a framed picture hung on the wall directly facing his desk, his wife, Ingrid, and their two children, Ula and Alfred, taken two weeks before they died in an Allied air-raid...

Ernst almost choked up then, overwhelmed with emotion, recalling that more human aspect of himself before the war, Wilson and this hellish jungle had eaten up the last of his soul. He was going mad here – he had to get out – and now he was going to attempt to do just that while he had the chance.

He was terrified of what would happen if he failed, but he still had to try it.

Hurriedly packing a shoulder bag with his basic necessities, the photos he had just

been studying and, most important, the great deal of cash he had gathered over the years from various transactions with General Stroessner's corrupt officials, he left the house for what he hoped would be the last time. Crossing the muddy compound to the small flying saucer, he glanced with distaste at the log-and-thatch cabins, the bamboo cages packed with imprisoned Ache Indians, the native men and women kneeling around camp fires, the mangy dogs and chickens and goats, all dwarfed by the soaring trees, and was thrilled at the prospect of never seeing them again. Approaching the cyborg pilot, who stared at him with almost dead eyes from between the stereotaxic skullcap and the metal lower-face prosthetic – a truly awful sight – he ordered him, by speaking with the aid of his throat-microphone, to climb up into the saucer. When the cyborg had done so, Ernst followed him, clambering up the gently sloping side and slipping into the pilot's domed cockpit. When both he and the cyborg were strapped into their seats, their shoulders almost touching, which made Ernst feel uneasy, he told the cyborg to take off, ascend as high as possible, then turn towards the sea and set the autopilot for West Germany.

Obeying, the cyborg activated the saucer and soon, after the cockpit covering had closed automatically, its circular wings were rotating and taking on the whitish glow of ionisation. The sauce lifted off gently, swayed just above the ground, then ascended in a stately manner until it was above the canopy of the trees. So excited he could scarcely breathe, Ernst managed to take one last look at the fenced-in compound, now practically lost in the jungle far below, then the saucer suddenly shot off at startling speed, flying smoothly above the vast, river-divided, densely forested landscape of Paraguay.

Ernst never even got to see the sea.

No sooner had the small saucer gone into horizontal flight than Wilson's much bigger saucer, the mother ship, appeared magically out of nowhere to sit on its tail. Horrified to see this, Ernst was also terrified when Wilson's voice came out of amplifier vents in the cyborg's steel facial prosthetic, saying in German, 'I know what you're attempting, Ernst, and I'm disappointed in you. You will now be punished for your betrayal. I'm sorry to have to do this.'

Instantly, the cyborg let out a demented, hideously human wailing that cut right through Ernst. Smoke poured out from behind the featureless lower-face metal prosthetic, followed by showering sparks. Then, as the cyborg continued its ghastly, ear-splitting wailing, the steel prosthetic blew off, revealing the surgically shredded bone and flesh around the removed mouth, jaw and nose, with blood squirting out and splashing over Ernst. Even as Ernst looked on, aghast, too shocked to think clearly, the cyborg's head started smoking beneath the skullcap and he made an odd rattling sound – the sound of Marlon Clarke dying – then slumped sideways in his seat, clearly dead.

As Ernst stared at the cyborg, mesmerised by shock, the saucer flipped over and started spinning rapidly towards the earth. Rendered dizzy and nauseous by the spinning, almost deafened by the hammering of wind against the canopy, not

knowing which way was up and which down, Ernst was further punished by the sight of the dead cyborg rocking wildly in his seat with blood still spewing from the mess of exposed bone and flesh where the metal prosthetic had been. He then saw the spinning jungle rushing up towards him and knew that the saucer was about to crash.

Ernst screamed in terror.

Miraculously, just before the spinning saucer struck the canopy of the trees, Wilson's saucer appeared above it. A pyramid of brilliant light, some kind of force field, beaming out of the base of Wilson's enormous craft, enveloped Ernst's spinning machine and appeared to place it under control again.

Held in that pyramid of light, Ernst's saucer, though now the right way up, raced on a descending trajectory towards the jungle – heading back, as Ernst realised with dread, in the general direction of his compound by the river.

The jungle rushed up towards him. The pyramid of light blinked out, then Wilson's saucer ascended abruptly, vertically, and appeared to dissolve into the blazing sun. Ernst covered his face with his arms as he crashed into the jungle.

He survived... almost certainly because of Wilson. Though the saucer crashed, it levelled out before doing so, smashing through the trees, hitting the ground the right way up, and then sliding through the soft mud until it finally came to a shuddering halt.

Though battered, bruised, badly cut and bleeding, the shocked Ernst still managed to crawl out of the saucer, which was mangled but still in one piece. Standing upright, but almost falling again from dizziness, he wiped blood from his eyes and eventually managed to orientate himself. After taking a final look backwards at the crashed saucer, which already was being covered in falling leaves, he began what he knew would be a long, hellish march back to the compound.

He had been punished and sentenced. Now he knew that he would be imprisoned in the compound for the rest of his days.

His hell was right here on Earth.

Chapter Forty-One

In October, 1967, Dwight paid a visit to Dr Epstein and Scaduto in the APII headquarters in Washington DC, where he was introduced to two new members of the organisation, both physicists: a handsome, sardonic young man named Robert Stanford – whom Epstein always addressed simply as 'Stanford' – and the relatively famous Dr Irving Jacobs. Stanford was pretty flashy, dressed like a Californian in a sky-blue open-necked shirt, denims held up with a fancy leather belt, and a windcheater jacket. Dr Jacobs, older and wiser, was wearing a standard grey suit, shirt and tie, and well polished black shoes.

'Though he looks like he comes from Malibu,' Epstein said, 'Stanford actually hails from right here, in Washington DC.'

'McLean, Virginia, to be precise,' Stanford explained with a shit-ass grin.

'Dr Jacobs, on the other hand, hails from Camelback Hill, Phoenix, Arizona, and has been kind enough to fly here just for this meeting. They've both signed up to work for the APII and I'm pleased they're with us.'

'It's swell to have you aboard,' Dwight said, shaking the hands of both men in turn.

'Still got me to deal with, though,' Scaduto said, looking even cockier than Stanford. 'Bet *that* gives you headaches!'

'Headaches from bastards like you I can enjoy,' Dwight replied. 'At least they keep me awake.'

'Ain't he just the nicest sonofabitch?' Scaduto asked rhetorically. 'Say, hey, let's get cookin'!'

Though he didn't know anything about the flashy, self-confident Stanford, Dwight had read about Dr Irving Jacobs in a wide variety of scientific journals and knew that apart from working for NASA and the American Nuclear Society, he was seriously interested in the UFO phenomenon. That he was joining the APII was therefore good news, since his reputation in so-called 'serious' areas could only enhance the credibility of the organisation.

'Okay, gentlemen,' Epstein said, indicating the chairs around his desk with an airy wave of his right hand, 'now that my good friends Dwight Randall and Tony Scaduto have had their regular little get-together skirmish, please take a seat and let's talk.' When they were all seated, lighting up cigarettes and sipping water or coffee, he said to Dr Jacobs: 'As you still work for NASA, Irving, can I begin by saying how sorry I was to read about the deaths of those three astronauts, Grisson, Chaffee and White, in the flash fire that swept through their Apollo spacecraft last January. It must have been a real blow to you.'

'It's been a bad year for the space programme in general,' Jacobs replied. 'I mean, apart from our three unfortunate astronauts, there was the death of the Soviet cosmonaut, Vladimir Komarov, when his Soyuz spacecraft crashed after coming out

of orbit. In neither case – NASA or the Soviet Union – did anyone have a clue as to exactly what happened. God knows, it was certainly a year of disasters that sat the space programme back a good deal and could threaten its funding.'

'Which won't help the APII,' Stanford said. 'Because when public interest wanes in the space programme – which it always does when funding is cut and there's no media attention fixed on it – it also wanes regarding UFOs. Alas, some people – indeed millions of goddamned people – tend to link the two together. That's one of life's unfortunate facts.'

'The man's a philosopher,' Scaduto said.

'You read me loud and clear,' Stanford replied. 'I have a big mouth.'

'On the other hand,' Scaduto said, 'to get back to the subject of this meeting, it *has* been a wonderful year for UFO sightings.'

'In what way?' Jacobs asked.

'Biggest goddamned UFO flap since the mid-1950s, including the great March concentration from Montana to Maryland.'

'I was out of the country then,' Jacobs said. 'I *did* read a little about it, but can't remember too much. I was in Paris, France, where the government is seriously considering the setting up of a UFO investigations programme, but their newspapers don't write much about this country.'

'No, the Frogs wouldn't,' Stanford said.

'Literally hundreds of witnesses reported seeing UFOs,' Scaduto said. 'And there were more UFOs reported from as far apart as Saigon, Vietnam, and Brixham, England. Most intriguing was a large, saucer-shaped object photographed clearly over Calgary, Alberta. However, the most widely publicised UFO-related incident was the one about a horse called Snippy, found gutted in a surgical manner, with fifteen unexplainable exhaust marks in the soil around the carcass.'

'Fascinating.' That was Epstein. 'The Snippy case has reminded the UFO community that over the past few years there's been an increasing number of similar incidents, when animals, including whole herds of cattle, were killed and robbed of their limbs and internal organs with what appears to be unusually precise, surgical skill.'

'That's one of my specialities,' Stanford said, adjusting his big-buckled belt and looking, with his flashy clothes and matinée-idol handsomeness, not remotely like the very bright physicist that he was. 'I mean, what have we got here? We've got animals being killed, sliced, and gutted where they stand with a precision that can only be surgical – not the handiwork of other, scavenging animals. I say it has to be done by extraterrestrials.'

'Why?' Dr Jacobs asked.

'They want the body parts and internal organs for research purposes,' Stanford replied without hesitation. 'Some kind of medical or surgical research. Find out how we work, right? I mean, find out how our bodies function.'

'But why so many parts?' Dwight asked.

'That's the million-dollar question,' Stanford said.

Dwight was just about to respond when Scaduto indicated with a slight shake of his head that he should say nothing more on the subject. Wondering what Scaduto was up to, Dwight went back to more mundane matters, mainly checking the facts and figures regarding recent UFO sightings in his particular area of Dayton, Ohio.

'And how's Beth?' Epstein asked him when he had finished with his summary.

'She's improving, but never too settled,' Dwight replied, plunging instantly, helplessly, into a well of fearful memories. 'She still has nightmares, but at least, for the time being, there are no visits from men in black, either real or imagined.'

'You have to be brave, Dwight.'

'No,' Dwight replied. '*Beth* has to be brave. I can only offer support.'

'She's a strong woman.'

'Yes, I think so.'

'Well,' Epstein said, obviously uncomfortable with the subject and raising his hands inquiringly in the air, 'anything else to discuss or do we call it a day?'

'No more from me,' Scaduto said.

'You?' Epstein asked of Dwight.

'Not from me,' Dwight replied.

'Anything you two want to ask?' Epstein said to Stanford and Jacobs.

'Not really,' Stanford said. 'It'll take me about a month to check through these APII reports, but once I've done it, I'll get back to you with my assessment and recommendations.'

'Robert and Irving,' Epstein explained, 'have been taken on to do a long-term projection based on the flight patterns of UFOs, assessing frequency, direction of approach and retreat, and any other facts that will give us an indication of where they come from. We now have a pretty broad knowledge of their technical abilities and extraordinary flight characteristics; what we don't know is exactly *what* they are and where they originate. Stanford and Dr Jacobs are going to try to come up with a pattern by analysing every single report in the APII files, going all the way back to 1947. Any help that you two... ' here he nodded at Dwight and Scaduto... 'can give will be greatly appreciated.'

'Just give me a call,' Dwight said.

'Likewise, guys,' Scaduto added.

'Well, that just about wraps it up,' Epstein said. 'Are you two lunching, as usual?'

'Yep,' Dwight replied. 'And as usual, you're going to refuse to join us.'

'I'm afraid so.' Epstein spread his hands in that oddly rabbinical manner. 'I have a desk piled with work and a lot of business still to cover with Dr Jacobs and Stanford here, so if you'll excuse us...'

'We come all the way to Washington DC to be thrown out of his goddamned office,' Scaduto said, grinning. 'On the other hand, a nice lunch and a couple of drinks... Are you ready, Dwight?'

'I'm your man,' Dwight said.

They both stood up, shook hands with Robert Stanford and Dr. Irving Jacobs, then left the office.

Soon after, they were having their traditional lunch in Clyde's in Georgetown, which Dwight had once enjoyed, but which now always reminded him of the mysterious death of his best friend, Bob Jackson. For that reason, if no other, the lunches were not as enjoyable as they had once been, though they were always informative.

'Have you mentioned your man-made UFO theory to Epstein yet?' Dwight asked of Scaduto when the meal was finished and they were having a final beer.

'Nope.'

'Why not?'

'He's a wonderful researcher, but he believes implicitly in the extraterrestrial hypotheses and I think he'd believe that any work I did in that particular direction would be a waste of the organisation's time and money. So, you know, I don't mention it.'

'Maybe you should.'

'Hey, hold on there, friend. I get *paid* by the APII. Don't wanna lose my income, don't you know?'

'But you still believe in it, right?'

'Fucking A. That's why we're here.'

'I was under the impression, possibly mistaken, that this was just our traditional Georgetown lunch, though I *did* catch your warning glance back in Epstein's office. What was that all about?'

'Get this. One of my buddies in the NICAP recently informed me that the members of the board of governors of that organisation – our lively rival – had managed to run down one of the CIA agents who'd been transferred – how shall I put it? – *out of harm's way*, after the so-called "Woman from Maine" affair. The agent, who'd been transferred to London before being eased out of the service, was naturally feeling embittered and so was willing to talk off the record, which eventually he did, during a meeting in the Drake hotel in New York.'

'A meeting with you?'

'Shit, yes.'

'Okay. Sorry. Continue.'

'Well, according to this agent, one of his assignments in the CIA was to undergo specialised training in the Duke University's parapsychology lab, a sensory-deprivation establishment at Princetown, and the psychology department at McGill University in Canada. The purpose of all this was to open his mind, a highly responsive one, to mental telepathy, sightless vision, and psychokinesis.'

'You want me to ask, "Why?" I can tell.'

Scaduto grinned. 'The reason – and I think you've already guessed – is that the Russians were already employing agents with such skills for espionage purposes.'

'That's only a rumour. Unsubstantiated.'

'Bullshit. It's an established fact and you know it. You know damned well that the Parapsychology Lab of the University of Leningrad has been neck-deep in this shit for years.'

Dwight grinned and raised his hands in a pleading manner. 'Lord forgive me for my mendacity. Okay, please get on with it.'

'So this guy,' Scaduto continued, 'after a year of training at both Duke and McGill's parapsychology labs, found that he could, like Ted Serios, cause photographs to appear on a film by merely *concentrating on* the camera. A year after his training, in 1959, he was working successfully with US Naval Intelligence and having successful shore-to-ship telepathic communications with an atomic submarine, the US *Nautilus*. And the same year, when the press exposed the *Nautilus* experiments, he was transferred back to Washington to work with – wait for it...'

'The female psychic from Maine.'

'Right!'

'So he managed to make contact?'

'No. At least, not straight away. During his first session, in the presence of the female psychic, he failed to make contact. At the second session, however, in that CIA office in Washington DC, when the woman wasn't present, he went into a trance and made contact with... *someone*.'

'Stop tormenting me, Tony.'

Scaduto's grin was now like that of a Cheshire cat. 'Well, like the woman from Maine, he was scribbling down automatically what it was he was hearing in his trance state. However, he never found out what he wrote, because before he snapped out of his trance, one of the CIA agents present at the session spirited the message out of the office.'

'So they didn't want him to know who he'd been in communication with.'

'Correct. And when he finally awakened from his trance state, he found everyone at the window, all excitedly scanning the sky over Capitol Hill, where the UFO had been.' Scaduto paused, grinned, and said, 'You want to hear the rest?'

'You're a natural-born actor, Tony. Just get on with it, please.'

'Well, you know, this guy is intrigued, right?'

'Right.'

'But he's also annoyed because his notes have been taken from him. So later he has a clandestine meeting with one of his colleagues, who'd been present at the trance session, and asks him if the UFO had been real. His colleague, being drunk and careless with his Irish lip, confesses that it had been, that it was part of a top-secret government project, and that one of the crew on board had been ESP-trained.'

'So the so-called "Woman from Maine" had picked up his thoughts by accident, like someone tuning into a foreign wavelength.'

'Exactly.'

'Well, I'll be damned.'

'But that wasn't all,' Scaduto continued excitedly. 'According to my drunken

colleague – who couldn't stop talking once he'd started – the UFOs reported to have landed at Cannon AFB, Deerwood Nike Base and, apparently, Holloman AFB, were for real... but they weren't extraterrestrial.'

'Man-made.'

'Right. The products of highly secret activity between the Canadian and United States governments.'

'We're back to the Avrocar, which was bullshit. I need another beer, Tony.'

'To hell with the beer. Just listen. These aircraft or flying saucers – call them what you will – in no way resemble the aborted projects that were leaked to, then shown to, the media, us poor shitheads included. No, they were highly advanced flying saucers of pretty remarkable capability – and there were a total of about twelve in existence.'

'Only twelve?' Dwight asked sceptically, thinking of the extraordinary number of sightings over the years.

'Yeah,' Scaduto confirmed. 'According to my man, his colleague had been seconded to Royal Canadian Air Force Intelligence, where he was tasked with implementing internal security on the flying saucer project. There he discovered that the project had been run jointly by the Canadian government, the US Air Force and Navy, and a few high-ranking Army officers from the Pentagon. Those bastards had managed to maintain secrecy by locating the underground production plants in the deserted regions of southern Canada, between British Columbia and Alberta; by ensuring that the production of the numerous components of the saucers was distributed between hundreds of different, international companies, none of whom could have guessed what the individual components were for; by undertaking the more specialised research in the top-secret military installations of the White Sands Proving Ground at Alamogordo, New Mexico, and similar establishments all over Canada; and, finally, by deliberately confusing the press and public with a continuous stream of ambiguous leaks and misleading statements.'

'In other words...'

'They're real flying saucers, they're being constructed in Canada, and they're being tested and flown from top-secret American military bases.'

'Do you really think this could be true?' Dwight asked.

'It sounds crazy, I know,' Scaduto replied, 'but I'd like to find out. You want to come with me?'

'I want to go back to Beth,' Dwight said.

'Love prevails,' Scaduto said, grinning again. He led Dwight out of the bar and stood beside him on the crowded pavement of M Street. 'You'll come with me,' he said confidently. 'I *know* you will. Because you have to find out. You simply have to. You've gone through so much by now, you won't be able to ignore the one opportunity you have of learning the truth. That's the hook in your throat, my friend. Adios. I'll call you.'

He walked off along the sidewalk as Dwight stood there, almost dazed, recalling what his friend had said and accepting the truth of it. Dwight just had to find out.

Chapter Forty-Two

In the early hours of February 26, 1968, Wilson was set down in a field outside McLean, Virginia, by one of his flying saucers and driven from there in a limousine ordered up by Jack Fuller to the Hay Adams hotel, conveniently overlooking Lafayette Park and the White House. When he checked into the hotel, he did so under the name of Mr Aldridge. The real Mr Aldridge was a US citizen who had been abducted many years before, surgically terminated, and used as spare parts for the ongoing cyborg programme. Wilson therefore had all of the unfortunate Mr Aldridge's papers, with his own picture replacing the original in Aldridge's passport. The purpose of the visit was to discuss the ongoing activities of the widely publicised Condon Committee. This he did with Jack Fuller over a light lunch in the Tudor dining room of the hotel.

'My so-called Great Northeast Blackout appears to have had the desired effect,' Wilson said. 'The Condon Committee being set up, as it were, by you and your friends at Langley Field.'

'Always pleased to oblige,' Fuller replied sardonically, hiding the fear he always felt when in Wilson's presence. 'I have to admit that the blackout certainly convinced everyone that your technology is still vastly superior to ours.'

'So they're now willing to play the game my way.'

'Yes. And the Condon Committee, backed by us, is our way of showing you we mean it.'

This was not strictly true and both of them knew it. The Condon Committee merely represented another defeat for the US in its cat-and-mouse game with Wilson – they had been warned and had taken heed – but sooner or later they would try to foil him again; then, if they failed, he would punish them... and so it went on.

'I notice that Condon, soon after establishing the committee, started making it perfectly clear that he had little patience with the UFO hypothesis. Was that your doing also?'

'Yeah. Condon also deliberately showed a partiality to obvious crank claims and cases that serious UFO investigators had already dismissed as hoaxes. Eventually he made it clear that he was intent on proving the whole idea of UFOs as nonsense. All that for you, Wilson.'

'But there's a thorn in our side,' Wilson said. 'This Dr James E.McDonald.'

Fuller sighed. McDonald was a senior atmospheric physicist at the University of Arizona's Department of Atmospheric Sciences who had been interested in the UFO phenomenon for years. He was now one of the country's leading authorities on the subject and strongly outspoken in his criticism of the Air Force and the CIA.

'I'm afraid so. McDonald isn't afraid of ridicule and he's got a hell of a lot of energy. In fact, his individual research into UFOs has already far outstripped that of all other researchers, save perhaps J.Allen Hynek and Dr Epstein.'

'How did McDonald get into it?'

'About two years ago, in March, 1966, he obtained the National Academy of Science's approval for a discreet, one-man study of UFOs. But when he heard of the Air Force plans to contract a UFO study to a university, he declined to use the support of the NAS and instead used personal finance. That way he was able to investigate scores of sightings and interview hundreds of witnesses. Thrilled by his success, he then launched a crusade to alert the scientific community to the seriousness of the problem. He also took on the Air Force, repeatedly attacking it for its lack of scientific investigation and its pronouncements designed to soothe the public. Finally, he attacked us, the CIA, for our involvement in the Robertson Panel report.'

'A real trouble-maker,' Wilson said.

'Yep. And there's worse to come.'

'I am all ears.'

'In August, 1966, the Condon Committee co-ordinator, Robert Low, chosen especially by me and my colleagues, wrote a memorandum to the University of Colorado's administrators, expressing his lack of belief in UFOs. For this reason, Low suggested, the Condon Committee's real objective should be a public relations exercise in which the trick would be – and I quote – "to describe the project so that, to the public, it would appear to be a totally objective study, but, to the scientific community, would present the image of a group of nonbelievers trying their best to the objective, but having an almost zero expectation of finding a saucer".'

'And how did they recommend that this be accomplished?'

'To place the emphasis on the psychology and sociology of persons and groups who report seeing UFOs, rather than on the non-existent UFOs themselves.'

'In other words, place the persons and groups reporting UFOs in the firing line of humiliation and ridicule.'

'Correct. However, Dr McDonald has recently managed to get his hands on that old report – which shows clearly that the Condon Committee was formed simply to discredit the UFO phenomenon. This has led to a scientific scandal, the firing of a couple of the leading members of the committee, and, even worse, a Congressional hearing to begin this July.'

'Never mind the findings of the Congressional hearing,' Wilson said. 'No matter what conclusion they come to, just make sure that the committee recommends the final, complete closure of Project Blue Book. As for McDonald, I think I should clip his wings in the fullness of time.'

'You do that,' Fuller said.

He was trying to be flippant, but when he stared at the icy-blue, penetrating gaze of the silvery-haired Wilson, he knew that he was faced with pitiless intelligence. Wilson had cast off all normal emotions as being superfluous to his requirements; now he lived with a logic so rigorous it had made him inhuman. Fuller thought of Wilson as a mutant. Though born and bred right here in America, he was a true alien

being.

'So what about Dr Epstein and our other friends at the APII? What have they been up to?'

'Epstein has brought in two new men – Robert Stanford and Irving Jacobs, both physicists, who between them have produced a thick, detailed report showing that most of the more advanced flying saucers, and certainly the bigger ones, fly on a north-south course – in other words, towards Antarctica.'

'That's too close for comfort.'

'Right. And the publication of that report has led to a whole spate of articles about holes in the Poles and hidden UFO bases – just like your own, in fact. Luckily, most of them were of the more fanciful variety and we've used that as the basis for a continuing programme of disinformation. I mean, the more outrageous the theory, the quicker we'll use it. So the APII report, while fairly accurate, is being buried in a whole heap of ridiculous stories.'

'Nevertheless, if they picked up on that, we better watch them closely.'

'They've picked up on something even more dangerous: the possibility that the flying saucers are man-made.'

Even Wilson, who rarely registered emotion, looked a little surprised. 'Epstein?'

'No. Epstein still supports the extraterrestrial hypothesis. It's the other two: Dwight Randall and, especially, that troublesome kid, Tony Scaduto. He's obsessed with the notion. Indeed, he's taken himself up to Canada and is living there temporarily, in Malton, Ontario, to check out the Avro-Canada plant. He has a good nose, that one, and tenacity, so he might have to go.'

'You're keeping him under observation?'

'Of course.'

'Good. Keep me informed of what he and Dwight Randall are up to. Is there anything else?'

'No, that just about wraps it up.'

'Then good day, Mr Fuller.'

Fuller pushed his chair back and walked out of the restaurant, slightly cheered by the thought that Wilson would at least be picking up the tab. This was all he could hope for.

Chapter Forty-Three

Scaduto dropped in on Dwight in November, 1968, two days after Richard Nixon had been elected as the 37th President of the United States. Having spent almost a year working as a barman in Malton, Ontario, which had enabled him to make a living while he sounded out the clients about the jobs they were doing in the local Avro-Canada Aircraft company, he was keen to pass on what he had learnt to Dwight.

'I can't believe I'm back in God's country,' he began when he and Dwight had settled in the living room, in front of an open fire, with a couple of beers. 'I feel like I've been in the fucking wilderness. Nice to be back in the real world at last.'

'Hardly God's country any more,' Dwight said. 'At least, not this year. Think of it... One of our spy planes seized by North Koreans, one of our nuclear bombers crashing in Greenland, the most shameful war in our history going on in Vietnam, Martin Luther King assassinated, black riots in most major cities, Bobby Kennedy assassinated, the police indulging in an orgy of Nazi-style violence at the Chicago convention, and now we've got a President that no-one would buy a used car from. God's country no more, I fear.'

'Stop being so pessimistic,' Scaduto said cheerfully, wiping beer from his lips with the back of his hand. 'Next month, I guarantee it, we'll have three American astronauts orbiting the moon in the Apollo 8 spacecraft. They might even find a few UFOs up there. I can't wait to find out.'

'So did you see any UFOs in Ontario?'

'Not quite, but I got close. See, I got me a job as a barman in Malton, near the Avro-Canada plant, and plying the guys from the factory with drinks I picked up enough idle talk to convince me that Avro had continued to work on saucer-shaped jet aircraft long after the public unveiling of that useless piece of shit, the Avrocar. At the same time, in my spare time, I drove around a lot of southern Canada, between British Columbia and Alberta, and found a lot of top-security research plants and aircraft factories. And those places, man, they're hidden in the forested hills and couldn't be seen from the air even if you had a giant telescope. Real dense forest up there in Alberta.'

'Well, we *did* know that before, Tony.'

'Nice to be reminded, though.'

'True enough. So what else did you find out?'

'When I was moving around the area, socialising wherever I could, I became bosom pals with a test pilot, Frank Lomax, who'd once worked for a Canadian-US company involved in the design and construction of highly advanced saucer-shaped aircraft; some piloted and as large as regular aircraft, others only two or three feet in diameter, remote-controlled, and being mass-produced. Both prototypes reportedly based on capture World War Two German designs.'

'What makes you think he was telling the truth?'

‘The production plant for the saucers was located in a densely forested, mountainous region that protected it from the eyes of the commercial airline pilots. But Frank, who now runs a private flight-training school just outside Alberta, knows the tricky flight path that takes you over the test grounds for the saucers, and he agreed to fly me over them, in the hope of seeing a parked saucer. Unfortunately, he agreed to do this just after I’d booked my return flight to Washington DC, but I’m going back eventually to take him up on his offer. I want you to come with me.’

Though instantly excited by the thought, Dwight found himself saying automatically, ‘I’m frightened of drawing attention to Beth or myself. Particularly as Beth’s been plagued again by nightmares about the men in black. I wouldn’t want anyone to know I was doing that – spying on those aircraft companies in Canada.’

‘I guarantee that Frank won’t mention your name to anyone and that all references to the flight booking will be in my name. I don’t have a wife and kids, so I’ll take my chances.’

‘I don’t think I can refuse this offer, Tony, but I’ll have to ask Beth. She’s in a pretty bad way at the moment and has begged me to stay out of the UFO controversy.’

‘But you’ll ask her?’

‘Yeah.’

‘When?’

‘I can tell you’re keen. I might as well get it over and done with, so I’ll ask her this evening over dinner. Did you want to stay, by the way?’

‘Nope. Not if you’re gonna have your little talk with Beth. Don’t think I wanna see or hear that.’

‘You’re pretty damned cynical about marriage, aren’t you?’

‘That’s ‘cause I’m not married.’ Scaduto handed Dwight an address card. ‘Here’s the hotel I’m staying at in Dayton. Give me a call when you know either way.’

‘I’ll do that,’ Dwight promised.

Scaduto stood up, finished off his beer, then went into the kitchen-diner to call out a slightly nervous goodbye to Beth. Though she had nothing personal against him – and, indeed, had once found him amusing – she now disliked seeing him here, because she knew he was bringing news about UFOs and, almost certainly, trying to persuade Dwight to return to UFO work, which she no longer wanted him to do.

In the event, Dwight didn’t have to wait until dinnertime to broach the subject, as Beth, the instant Scaduto had departed, came out of the kitchen, drying her hands on a towel and looking grim. She was still an attractive woman, but she looked worn down by nervous tension. ‘So what did he want?’

Not knowing how to state it gently, Dwight went for the blunt approach, though he tried to make it sound more casual than it was. ‘He just wants me to make a trip with him to Alberta, Canada, then fly over some forested area where we think there may be man-made flying saucer construction plants.’

The casual sound didn’t work. Beth’s face turned pale with barely suppressed fury.

'You promised, Dwight. You said...'

Dwight cut her short by holding up his hand. 'I won't go if I don't have your permission, but Tony *did* insist that my name won't be mentioned with regard to the flight and the aircraft will be rented in his name. Besides which, I can't see how we would attract much attention by simply flying a chartered plane over the mountains. Lots of tourists do it.'

'You're looking for UFO bases!' Beth snapped vehemently.

'From an airplane, Beth. Not on the ground.'

'I don't give a damn. If they see the plane, they're liable to come up and blow you out of the sky. Who knows? And I don't want to be left alone here. You *know* that. *I'm scared!*'

'You can surely spend a mere couple of days with Nichola. She...'

'Never mind Nichola! I don't want you to go. I'll be worried for you and for myself and even for Nichola. Honestly, Dwight,' she continued, then made an accusation that she had often made during the early years of their marriage. 'I sometimes think you're more concerned with UFOs than you are with me. Well, damn it, go if you want to, but don't expect me to sanction it.'

With that she turned away and stomped back into the kitchen. Dwight followed her in and placed his arms around her. 'It's okay,' he said, hoping to hide his acute disappointment. 'I won't go. I guess I just didn't think.'

When she turned into his arms, smiling, he was reminded of how lovely she had been when they first married and how, despite the still barely perceptible lines of middle age, she had retained that beauty. Touched, he kissed her lightly on the lips and patted her rump.

'Still pleasantly firm,' he said.

She had started to cry and now wiped tears from her eyes. 'You'd have found that out sooner if you'd touched it more often,' she said. 'A woman gets to miss certain things.'

'Well, I guess I'm not as young as I used to be.'

'Young enough. If you can't manage everything, a little touch here and there can work wonders.'

'I'll bear that in mind.'

'At least you still know how to kiss.'

'It's like learning to swim: once learnt, it's never forgotten.'

'Then plant another one on me, then get out of here and let me get on with the dinner. Nichola's coming to join us.'

'Terrific,' Dwight said.

After kissing her again, then patting her rump once more, he returned to the living room. He realised instantly, however, that he was extremely depressed at losing the possibility of actually seeing a man-made flying saucer on the ground. More than that: he felt crushed. Though he hadn't been drinking seriously since the days when he was separated from Beth and on an alcoholic binge, he now poured himself a tall,

consoling bourbon, hoping to drink it before Beth came back into the living room. Unfortunately, at that moment, Nichola, now twenty-one years old, married, and four months pregnant, opened the front door and walked in, coming for dinner.

She saw the glass of bourbon in Dwight's hand before he could set it down. Still blonde and as pretty as a picture, she frowned disapprovingly.

'What's that, Dad?'

'Only an aperitif.'

'You only have the odd beer these days, Dad, and even then only with meals or when with friends.' She took her coat off and threw it carelessly over the back of the sofa. 'So what's the occasion?'

'No occasion. I just felt like it. Your husband has one of these every evening before dinner, so why do I need a special occasion?'

Nichola's husband, Larry Fisher, was eight years her senior and working as a civilian engineer with the military aviation development branch of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. A decent, good-humoured man, he had a fondness for cigars and his glass of bourbon every evening before dinner. Apart from that, he had no drinking problem, so Nichola didn't mind. She clearly did, however, feel troubled to see her father drinking bourbon again – and, worse, before dinner. 'Larry's never had a drinking problem in his life,' Dwight's stern daughter said, 'but you did.'

'Only once, sweetheart.'

'Once was enough to make you a wreck and force Mom to leave you for a few years. Here, give me that.' She took the bourbon from Dwight, then sat on the sofa, where she crossed her shapely legs, deliberately had a sip of the bourbon, and said, 'So what's happened to make you reach for a drink?'

'I just wanted to give you an excuse for having one,' Dwight replied, unable to resist the gentle sarcasm.

Nichola smiled. 'I have one every evening with Larry. It slips down real easy.'

'My boozing daughter.'

'So why did I have to stop you from boozing like your loving daughter?'

'He wants to go chasing after UFOs,' Beth told her, entering the room from the kitchen at that moment, 'and I won't let him.'

'How do you mean, chasing UFOs? Dad's been doing that for years.'

When Dwight told her, preferring to do it himself, Nichola said, 'You mean there's a real chance you could solve this mystery once and for all? I mean, resolve this business that's been tormenting you for years?'

'Yes,' Dwight said. 'If we can find those saucers on the ground, the game's up.'

'And you can stop feeling that you're being driven crazy by things you don't understand?'

'Yeah, Nichola, right.'

Nichola turned to her mother. 'Then I think you should let him do it, Mom.'

'*What*?' Beth was shocked.

'I think you should let him do it,' Nichola insisted. 'If a simple flight over the

mountains of Alberta is going to end years of confusion and fear, then obviously you should let Dad take it and pray that he returns with what he needs to let him feel at peace with himself. Otherwise, if you tell him he can't go...' She held up the glass of bourbon and tapped it deliberately with her fingertips... 'He'll be back on this. So let the man go.'

'You don't understand, Nichola. It could be dangerous. It could draw attention to him, and then all that dreadful... *business* will start again. I don't think I could bear that.'

'You'll be able to bear it if you know that the pain could end pretty soon... End for all time.'

'It's dangerous.'

'But worth the risk. He goes to Canada with Scaduto, he charters an airplane, and a couple of days later, if things turn out okay – and that's the chance we've got to take – he's back here and we're all home and dry, with the whole damn business exposed for good. No more mysteries. No hauntings. No visits from men in black. For God's sake, Mom, he's been trying to solve this mystery since 1947, so you can't possibly make him stop now. He'd certainly go back on the bottle and might even go crazy. So let him take this chance, Mom. Let him leap this final hurdle. Besides, the odds on something happening to him – like being blown out of the sky by a flying saucer – are pretty damned slim.'

'At the very least, he could end up in prison,' Beth said, now clutching at straws.

'You're imprisoning him with your fear,' Nichola told her, 'and that isn't right.'

Taken aback by her daughter's maturity and bluntness, but also proud of her, Beth said, 'All right, okay, you win. I just can't bear the thought of being...'

'Alone here.' Nichola finished the sentence for her. 'But you don't have to be. You can come and stay with Larry and me in Springfield until Dad returns. You can even have a bourbon every evening, which is more than *he'll* get. So are we agreed, folks?'

'Yes,' Beth said.

'Thanks,' Dwight said.

Deeply moved and certainly proud, like Beth, of his daughter, he kissed both of his women on the cheek, then he picked up the phone and spoke to Scaduto in his hotel in Dayton.

'When do we leave?' he asked.

Chapter Forty-Four

On the commercial airline flight to Calgary, Alberta, Scaduto drank a hell of a lot and became pretty drunk. When Dwight commented on this, Scaduto said, 'You know this is gonna sound crazy – particularly with what you and Beth have been through – but now I've begun to feel – definitely, absolutely – that I'm being watched, though I can't put my finger on exactly how. No men in black or black limousines, yet I'm being observed some way, I'm sure. I don't know if it's real or just goddamned paranoia, but that's what I feel. And so I find myself drinking, trying to deaden it, trying to say, "Go away!".'

Glancing through the window of the airplane, Dwight saw a sea of deeply shadowed white clouds and, below, great swathes of forested hills. It looked desolate down there.

'I've got to confess,' he said, 'that while out of deference to Beth's fear that I'd bring attention to myself I was reducing my UFO activities, I was intrigued by the revelation that the US-Canadian saucers had been based on World War Two designs. Ever since you told me that I've been spending most of my time holed up in libraries – even wrote to England's Imperial War Museum and corresponded with German and American UFOlogists about the subject. So naturally I was pretty astonished to learn that it was true.'

'You proved it?'

'Yeah.'

Scaduto sipped more bourbon, looking excited. 'So what did you find?'

Though he now knew most of it off by heart, Dwight automatically glanced at his notes to ensure that he made no mistakes.

'According to official reports, Allied aircraft during World War Two were harassed by UFOs – mostly in the shape of balls of fire – from as far back as 1944. Shortly after the war, in the summer of 1946, the more familiar types of UFOs, most cigar-shaped, swarmed across Scandinavia, seemingly coming from the general direction of the Soviet Union. The conclusion at the Pentagon was that German scientists, seized by the Russians at Peenemunde, where the V-2 rocket had been developed, were constructing advanced weapons for the Soviets and that the unidentified, so-called *missiles* were being launched from the rocket test site of Peenemunde, which was then in the Russian-occupied zone of Germany. This suspicion became stronger when the British, who'd also seized and taken back to Britain a wealth of Germany's top-secret scientific and weapons-research material, announced that the Germans had been working since 1941 on extraordinary aeronautical projects and on processes to release atomic energy. Included in the former was a – this is a straight quote from the documents – "remotely controlled, pilotless aircraft and a device that could be controlled at a considerable distance by another aircraft" – unquote.'

'Which would account for the balls of fire,' Scaduto said.

'Right. Anyway, faced with this, and thinking of the Soviet so-called *missiles*, possibly more balls of fire, that had been seen over Scandinavia, there was a sudden British-Canadian-US alliance to beat the Soviets in the race to follow through the German designs and complete their extraordinary aeronautical projects.'

'Which gets us to the man-made flying saucers,' Scaduto interjected with growing excitement.

'Yes. It's true that what they were attempting to build in the underground plants in Canada right after the war – with British and US back-up – was a machine with the remarkable capabilities of the ones suggested in the incomplete German material. They wouldn't achieve that goal for another twenty years, but the first, fairly crude versions of their saucers were successfully tested over the Canadian border on June 21, 1947: a total of five disc-shaped aircraft, two of them piloted and approximately fifty feet in diameter, the remaining three remote-controlled by the pilots flying nearby, these three a mere three to six feet in diameter. Those particular flying saucers could reach an altitude of approximately seven thousand feet, could hover uncertainly in the air, and had a horizontal flight speed of about six hundred miles an hour.'

'That test flight,' Scaduto said, 'could account for the Harold Dahl sighting of the same day.'

'Right,' Dwight said. 'But it was what happened *after* that test flight that really got the ball rolling. On June 24, three days after the first successful test flights of the five Canadian-US saucers, a total of nine highly sophisticated, *unknown* saucers flew down over the Canadian underground plants, hovered there for about twenty minutes, shot off toward the Cascades, where reportedly they circled the test area; returned, circled the plant for another twenty minutes, then shot off at incredible speed. From that day on – the day, incidentally, of the famous Kenneth Arnold sighting – those flying saucers, and others, returned again and again... and eventually spread out across the whole world.'

'Holy shit!' Scaduto whispered melodramatically, as if frightened of being overheard, then he finished his drink as the airplane came in to land at Calgary. 'So where the hell do the *others* come from?'

'That's the million-dollar question,' Dwight said, 'and it keeps me awake at night.'

A few minutes later, the airplane landed. Once they had disembarked and passed through Customs and baggage inspection, Scaduto's friend, the pilot Hank Lomax, met them in the arrival's lounge. Lomax was a short, feisty character with fiery red hair and a good-humoured face mottled by a combination of sunshine and booze. He was wearing a logger's red-and-black checkered shirt, oil-smeared blue denims, and buckled black-leather boots. After being introduced to Dwight, he led both of them from the airport terminal to his old Ford car parked outside.

'We're going straight to my flight-training school on the outskirts of town,' he

explained when they were being driven by him out of the airport. ‘From there we’ll fly out in my Piper *Tri-Pacer* to the region you want. You being an old buddy, Tony, you don’t even have to charter it. You just pay for the gas used and we’re quits. I’m doing this for my own amusement. Which means, of course, that you don’t have to charter the airplane and there’ll be no record of either of you having passed through my flight-school. Now do you love me or not?’

‘I love you,’ Scaduto said. ‘Never mind that you’re an ugly bastard - I just love the hell out of you.’

‘Don’t make me blush,’ Lomax said.

As they were driven up ever deeper into the spectacular, forest-covered hills, Scaduto glanced around him and said, ‘Just look at those goddamned hills and peaks. Easy to hide *lots* of things up here! Hell, man, you could hide a whole fucking town.’

‘Just wait till we get in my Piper,’ Lomax told him. ‘Then you’ll really see something. We’ll be heading for British Columbia and that’s one wild place.’

During the drive he told them about some of the people he had worked with at the Avro-Canada plant in Malton, Ontario. ‘A surprising number were Germans,’ he said. ‘I remember that much. And one of them in particular, Otto Miethe, claimed to have worked on a programme called “Projekt Saucer” in Nazi Germany. Jesus, man, I could hardly believe it: there we were, working for the sons of bitches we’d fought in France and Germany. Anyway, that’s exactly what we were working on: saucer-shaped jet aircraft with circular, rotating wings and the pilot’s cabin fixed in the middle, based on those old Nazi designs. They weren’t as advanced as some of the flying saucers you read about, but they were definitely based on the German designs and more advanced than the original German prototypes. The smallest ones, about three feet wide, were really remote-controlled probing devices that could also be used to block radar and cause other malfunctions in any aircraft they flew near. You could control ‘em from the ground or from another aircraft in flight; and they certainly resembled balls of fire when in the air. The larger ones came in different sizes and were all piloted. When I left, the largest was about seventy-five feet in diameter, but I know they had plans for an even larger one.’

‘Who ran this company?’

‘It was part of the A.V.Roe company, later called Avro-Canada, but it was backed by the British, Canadian and US governments, and guarded like a military camp. You had to sign a top-secret clause to work there, with imprisonment as just one of the many punishments listed if you broke the secrecy, even after leaving the company. I’m taking one hell of a chance with you guys, I can tell you, but what the hell!’

‘And other companies like it were, or are, scattered all over British Columbia and Alberta.’

‘Right. See, what they’d do to really keep their projects secret and help them with disinformation, was, they’d use a company like A.V.Roe – the main plant in Malton, Ontario – as a front. When something leaked out about what they were doing, or when there was a public outcry, they’d call a press conference and show the reporters

and politicians a piece of shit like the Avrocar. Meanwhile, they'd have another plant, run by A.V. Roe or some other big company, but listed as a legitimate experimental aircraft company. That one would do the real flying saucer construction work in a location hidden well away from view – like the one I'm going to show you today. Every couple of years, they'd formally close the factory down, listing it as bankrupt, when in actual fact they were simply moving the programme to a new, hidden location. That way, though they couldn't hide the plants *completely* from prying eyes, they were all over the place, opening and closing down again, and that made them almost impossible to trace. For instance, this plant I'm taking you to, you can bet your balls it'll be gone if you come back in a year's time. That's how they operate.'

'Neat,' Dwight said, forced to admire the diabolical cleverness of the faceless men who had made his life a torment.

A few minutes later they reached Lomax's flight-training school located just north of Calgary. There, they squeezed into his four-seated Piper *Tri-Pacer* and then took off immediately, heading across Alberta, flying above the spectacular plateau that fell down from the Rocky Mountains to eventually form the southern part of the boundary with British Columbia. Though not personally flying the airplane, Dwight almost had a lump in his throat, being reminded of his early days, when he had been a bombardier and radar operator, flying to India, China, and the Pacific with the original B-29 wing; then as a navigator with an Air Force Reserve Troop Carrier Wing. Those days were long gone now.

'Hey, what did you think of the results of last July's Congressional hearings on the Condon Committee?' Lomax asked Dwight, having to shout against the noise of the wind and the airplane's engine. 'I read that they'd resulted in a resolve to form a proper, official UFO enquiry.'

Lomax was referring to the end result of the notorious Low Memorandum, which brought heavy criticism down on the head of Edward U.Condon and his committee, most of it stating baldly that the committee's work had been inept or, more likely, a snow job for the Air Force or the CIA, designed specifically to kill off the UFO controversy. So loud was the furore that Congressman J.Edward Roush delivered a speech on the House floor, saying that the Low Memorandum and a subsequent *Look* article by journalist John Fuller had 'raised grave doubts as to the scientific profundity and objectivity of the project.' Roush therefore called for a new Congressional investigation under the auspices of the House Science and Astronautics Committee. Scheduled for July 29, it was set up more ambitiously as a symposium and included an impressive array of participants, including J.Allen Hynek, astronomer Carl Sagan, the engineer James A.Harder, an astronautics engineer, Robert M.Barker, and even the widely respected, trouble-shooting atmospheric physicist, Dr James E.McDonald. Concerning the reality or non-reality of UFOs, some of those men were sceptics, but the deliberations of the hearing-symposium resulted in a general, implied criticism of the Condon Committee and a strong recommendation for the continued study of UFOs. Ironically, the hearings

came to an end during a peak period of sightings that resurrected nation-wide public and press interest in the subject.

'Well, the hearing-symposium might have made that recommendation,' Dwight said, also shouting against the noise, 'but personally I'm sceptical that it'll happen. The Condon Report has just been delivered to the National Academy of Sciences for review and it's my belief that no matter what its conclusions are, the recommendations of the Congressional hearing-symposium will be overridden and we'll be back where we started – with no official support for UFO investigations.'

'You're just a cynic,' Scaduto said.

'You're like that about marriage,' Dwight replied, 'so I can feel free to swing that way about official UFO studies.'

'So it goes!' Scaduto said.

Glancing down, Dwight saw just how dense and seemingly impenetrable the forested hills and mountain ranges were. Noticing the direction of his gaze, Lomax said, 'You're wondering how they could even transport an aircraft plant into these regions, right?'

'Right.'

'Well, it may look impenetrable from here, but inventive men can do anything, and down there, spread right across the region from Alberta to British Columbia, there are not only hidden aircraft factories, but also coal mines, the odd oil field, plants for the utilisation of natural gas, and even cleared areas for the cultivation of wheat, oats and barley. So though they're all hidden from each other, as well as from us, that place is a hive of activity. And we've just started to fly over the region you've come here to find.'

Glancing down again, Dwight saw that they were now flying over snow-covered mountain peaks edged sharply against the azure sky, casting their shadows along the slopes of the dense, tree-covered plateau. Lomax flew them east and west, north and south, in a criss-crossing pattern, sometimes at high altitude, thus giving them excellent, panoramic visual coverage; other times at an altitude so low, Dwight thought they were going to crash, though they always made it up again, missing the canopy of the trees by what seemed like a hair's breadth, flying through the starkly-shadowed gorges where the wind howled dementedly.

They flew for a couple of hours, until early afternoon, yet saw nothing except the forests and mountain peaks. Eventually, when the three of them were in agreement that they had done enough for one day, they decided to turn back.

The Piper was already at high altitude, heading back across Alberta, when Dwight saw something glinting in the falling sun. At first he thought it was nothing special – sunlight flashing off the ice – but then, as the airplane advanced and he saw more of that glinting object, he realised that it was solid and… metallic.

'Down there!' he bawled.

Glancing down, Scaduto and Lomax both agreed that the object was indeed solid and metallic. Lomax immediately took the airplane down to a low altitude that

enabled him to fly along a steep-sided gorge that wound dangerously through the mountain range until it came to an open area where the forest had been cleared to make way for a compact collection of stone-block workshops, pine-board administration huts and living accommodations, and what were certainly aircraft hangars.

It was an aeronautical construction plant surrounded by high barbed-wire fences and soaring cliffs... and there, on the ground, some barely perceptible in the shadowy interior of the aircraft hangars, a few exposed on landing pads on the frost-covered ground, were half-a-dozen solid, metallic, flying saucers.

They were all about 120 feet in diameter and had their pilot cabins located at the centre of gravity. None had any markings of any kind.

Dwight and Scaduto whooped and hollered with exultation as Lomax flew the Piper directly over the flying saucers and then ascended again until the aeronautical establishment had disappeared from view.

While Scaduto was frantically marking the location on his map, Lomax turned the airplane around to make another run over the flying-saucer construction plant.

'I don't think you should,' Dwight warned him. 'They might stop us the next time.'

'We've got to get some photos,' Scaduto reminded him while removing a 35mm camera with a long-distance lens from his satchel. 'We can't miss this one, Dwight.'

'Damned right!' Dwight said, now just as excited as his friend. 'It's too late to stop now.'

'You're sure you want me to go back?' Lomax asked.

'Yep,' Scaduto said, withdrawing the camera from its case and screwing on its high-power, long-distance lens. 'And fly as low as you possibly can.'

'You want it, you've got it.'

Lomax turned the airplane in a wide arc until it was facing the gorge again, then he descended until he was flying below the soaring cliffs, which whipped past in a blur as he flew on, following the gorge's dangerously winding course until the flying-saucer construction plant came into view again. This time, as the airplane streaked above the saucers parked outside the hangars, he banked sharply to enable Scaduto to aim the camera down and snap as many pictures as the brief time allowed. Scaduto managed to click the lens-trigger five or six times before, within seconds, the Piper was nosing back up, making its swift ascent out of the gorge.

Looking backwards and downwards for his final glimpse of the construction plant, Dwight saw one of the parked saucers swaying from side to side, then lifting a few feet off the ground. Even as the snow-covered mountain peaks falling away from the ascending airplane cut off the view, he saw the saucer shooting up vertically at tremendous speed. Before he could say a word to the others, the saucer had vanished above the clouds.

'I just saw one take off!' he bawled, to make himself heard above the wind's demented howling and the roaring of the airplane's engine. 'It went straight up there!'

Suddenly, with a speed that defied credibility, the clouds directly above were

blown apart and a dark pinprick descended in the blinking of an eye to become an immense, circular, swirling, light-flecked blackness that roared directly above them.

'Oh, shit!' Lomax exclaimed, instinctively covering his head with one crooked arm, assuming that the... *thing* up there was going to crash down upon the Piper.

'It's going to hit us!' Scaduto bawled, as if reading Lomax's mind.

But it didn't. Instead, with magical precision, it stopped abruptly, mere inches above the Piper's cockpit, and hovered there, now so enormous that it looked like an inverted whirlpool or cosmic funnel, swirling rapidly and giving off a bass humming sound.

Even though the airplane was still flying horizontally, that great mass remained directly above it.

A swirling, circular, light-flecked blackness with a glowing edge.

As the airplane continued on its horizontal course, beneath that immense, swirling, humming dark mass, Scaduto, regaining his scattered senses, raised his camera to take a photo of the UFO's underside. Instantly, a pyramid of brilliant light shot out of the centre of the swirling blackness, temporarily blinding the three men in the cockpit. Though his eyes were closed, Scaduto was still holding his camera upwards, clicking off as many shots as he could... until the airplane started shuddering and then rocking wildly.

'Jesus Christ!' Lomax bawled. 'We're going out of control!'

Then the Piper's engine cut out.

Miraculously, the airplane did not plummet downwards; instead, with no sound whatsoever from its engine, with only the UFO's bass humming sound to be heard, it continued to fly on an even course, though shuddering and rocking wildly, as if held up by the pyramid of light. It flew on like this for a few seconds, but then, as abruptly as the pyramid of light had exploded over the airplane, it blinked out and, simultaneously, with a speed that defied all sense, that swirling hole of light-flecked blackness shrank to a mere dot and then disappeared into the clouds above.

Instantly, the airplane, with its engine still silent, plunged towards Earth.

'We're going down!' Lomax bawled a second time.

Yet at that very moment, the engine suddenly roared back into life, as powerful as it had been before, thus lifting the airplane too quickly and throwing it into a violent, dangerous spin. As Lomax fought to regain control, the spinning airplane plunged towards the forested hills of Alberta; but eventually Lomax managed to pull it back up, control the spin, and then level it out completely, to fly on as normal.

'That light, whatever it was, cut the engine out,' Lomax said. 'The light, or something above it, held us up in the air while the engine was out.'

'Incredible precision,' Dwight said, recalling what he had witnessed and amazed by it. 'That saucer came down on us so fast, you could hardly see it descending; then it stopped mere inches above the cockpit and moved sideways as we were moving forward, remaining in exactly the same position above us. When it left, I hardly saw it going, it ascended so fast. I've never seen anything like it. It was damned

miraculous.'

'But why did the crew of the saucer let us go,' Scaduto asked, 'instead of wiping us out in a crash, as they could easily have done and, indeed, almost did?'

'Because they're assuming that if we report the sighting,' Dwight replied, 'we won't be believed and might even become laughing stocks. If they'd made us crash, on the other hand, that crash would have been investigated and that, in turn, could have led the authorities to that secret flying-saucer construction plant. That's what they were hoping to avoid when they let us go.'

'Hoping?' Lomax asked.

'Yes,' Scaduto said. 'Presumably it never entered their heads that at last we have proof of their existence.' He held the camera up and grinned. 'We photographed the saucers.'

'Hallelujah!' Dwight said.

They were flown back to Calgary with all possible speed, stunned and thrilled by the experience they'd just had, exhilarated at finally having the evidence they had been seeking for years.

When they had returned to Dayton, Ohio, a few days later, they learned, as Dwight had guessed, that the Condon Report, which had just been released, had savaged the UFOlogists, mocked those who had criticised the committee's project before the report was in, vilified the other UFO research programmes, and recommended the closing down of Project Blue Book.

They also learned, when Scaduto processed the photos he had taken of the swirling, light-flecked, black base of the 120-foot flying saucer, that the film had been lightly scorched and the negatives destroyed while still in the camera.

'It was the light,' Dwight said bitterly.

Chapter Forty-Five

In March, 1969, Fuller attended a meeting at Air Force Headquarters in Washington DC with representatives of the Air Defence Command, the Air Force Systems Command, the Office of Aerospace Research, the Office of Scientific Research, and the Office of Information. Not required to be present for the first half of the meeting, which was closed even to him, he arrived just as most of the gold-braids were into their second or third whisky, bourbon or brandy and puffing clouds of smoke from fat Havana cigars, all paid for by the unwitting taxpayer. Looking at the faces of those seated around the long table, some reasonably decent, most the sagging, untrustworthy masks of those who have told a lot of lies and learned to live with them, Fuller was not overly impressed and decided that his own brand of patriotic vice was at least emotionally less stultifying.

'Welcome, Mr Fuller,' an Air Force Systems Command general said when Fuller finally entered the room. 'The meeting's over, so what was it you wanted to ask?'

'I have to report to Wilson, sir, about your recommendations regarding the Condon Report.'

'Christ, I wish we could get ahead of that bastard and blow him away,' the representative of the Air Defence Command said vehemently.

'We might eventually get to do that, sir,' Fuller said, 'but we still have a long way to go.'

'Unfortunately, that's true.'

'So what are your recommendations, sir? I have to pass them on to Wilson.'

'We've chosen to ignore the widespread criticism of the Condon Report and instead implement its recommendations.'

'I welcome that decision, sir. I'm sure Wilson will be pleased. But I have to remind you that since those recommendations have already been widely criticised, we have to be particularly careful about how we handle this matter.'

'The report was viewed thus by the civilian UFO groups and UFOlogists, neither of whom concern us here.'

'The report was also widely attacked by the media.'

'The media is filled with communists, Fuller, so we can safely ignore it. Frankly, we're more concerned with not offending Wilson than we are with inciting squeals of rage from reds under the beds.'

'What about Project Blue Book?'

'It's been officially closed down at this meeting. Project Blue Book is dead and buried.'

'I have to say, sir,' said the representative of the Office of Scientific Research, 'that I strongly disagree with closing Project Blue Book down completely. I agree that interest in UFOlogy must be dampened, but Project Blue Book now has historical roots and should be preserved in some form, no matter how modest, to give the

illusion that we did, at least originally, sincerely believe in it.'

'I agree,' Fuller said, 'and even presented the notion to Wilson. He replied by saying that all roots, even historical ones, die quickly and crumble to dust when torn from the ground – so he insisted that we kill Project Blue Book entirely.'

'Do we have to do *everything* that bastard says?' asked the representative from the Office of Information.

'For the time being, yes,' Fuller said. 'I should perhaps remind you that Wilson has kept his promise by ensuring that the US is in the lead in the space race and that an American, Neil Armstrong, will certainly be walking on the Moon this coming July – the first man in history to do so.'

'I second that motion,' said the gold-braided representative of the Office of Aerospace Research. 'Even though we pay dearly, we *have* been given some invaluable aid from Wilson, so we must keep him happy until we're perfectly sure we can move successfully against him.'

'Exactly,' Fuller said. 'And it's also my belief that the Project Blue Book records should be made as inaccessible as possible, to make life difficult for future researchers. Any suggestions?'

'Yes,' said the representative of the Office of Information. 'I recommend Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama. It's not a place too many people want to visit unless they really have to. Also, those southern officers are notoriously prickly to deal with and even hardened researchers give up more often than not when trying to get something out of them.'

'That's fine by me,' Fuller said. 'Anything else to pass on to Wilson?'

'No,' the chorus came back from that cloud of cigar smoke.

'Fine,' Fuller said. 'Thank you, gentlemen.'

Leaving the meeting, he drove to a dark field in a pastoral, desolate area of Virginia. He sat patiently in his car until a flying saucer, infinitely more advanced than the US-Canadian saucers he was protecting, landed nearby in the same field. It descended silently, with no lights flashing, and was only revealed by the moonlight shining off its silvery, cathedral-like dome. When the front ramp fell down, the interior light beaming out was unusually weak and would have shown little to drivers passing by on the distant road.

Wilson emerged from that light, flanked as usual by armed cyborgs. He wore his customary faint smile of disdain when he walked up to Fuller.

His greeting was: 'So what did they say?'

Fuller told him what had taken place at the meeting in Air Force Headquarters. Wilson was pleased, but wanted to know what President Nixon thought about the UFO situation in general and him in particular.

'Nixon's the supreme pragmatist,' Fuller said. 'and accepts the status quo. He doesn't like it, but he accepts the necessity of dealing with you. No need for anxieties there, Wilson.'

'There's no-one more pragmatic than me,' Wilson replied, 'and I *never* suffer

anxieties.'

Ignoring the remark, Fuller removed a piece of notepaper from his billfold. He checked the details written on it, then returned it to the billfold and put the billfold back into his pocket.

'I thought I should tell you,' he said to Wilson, 'that Tony Scaduto, the UFO researcher I mentioned to you before...'

'He works for NICAP,' Wilson interjected impatiently, 'but also does a lot on the side for Dr Epstein's APII.'

'Yes,' Fuller said, 'that's the one.'

'What about him?'

'He recently flew to Calgary, Canada, with that former ATIC officer and present APII investigator, Dwight Randall. As I'd already had them placed under CIA observation, I can confirm that they were met at Calgary airport by a private flight-trainer, Hank Lomax, and taken by him to his flight-training school, located north of Calgary. From there, the three of them flew in Lomax's personal Piper *Tri-Pacer* to Alberta and then, more dangerously, over a US-Canadian flying saucer production plant in British Columbia. There, after clearly viewing the saucers resting outside the hangars – the advanced, 120-foot saucers recently delivered by you – the airplane was pursued and harassed until it left the area.'

'Do you think they took photos before they left the area?'

'We assume so. But a laser-beam weapon activated from our pursuing saucer would have put paid to their film.'

'Very good.'

'Do you think we should do something about those men?' Fuller asked.

'Just scare them for now,' Wilson replied. 'I don't want to be involved. But if your fright tactics don't make them shut their mouths, let me know and I'll deal with them as I've recently dealt with that increasingly irksome troublemaker, Dr James E.McDonald.'

'McDonald's still around,' Fuller said.

'He's an illusion,' Wilson said.

Instead of explaining what he meant by that cryptic remark, he changed the subject by pointing out that since American astronauts had recently orbited the moon in the Apollo 8 spacecraft and would, indeed, soon be actually taking their first steps upon it, he wanted no reports to leak out regarding the debris of his own previous landings there. He insisted, furthermore, that the UFO reports being submitted with increasing frequency by astronauts were to be treated as the sightings of previously unseen natural cosmic phenomena.

When Fuller agreed, Wilson returned to his flying saucer, leaving the otherwise cynical CIA agent to stare in wonder at its magical ascent until it was lost in the stars.

Time moved on, Fuller realised.

Chapter Forty-Six

A deeply shocked Dwight felt that he was reliving his life. Back in 1952, with his late friend, Bob Jackson, he had passed a newspaper stand in Washington National Airport Terminal Building, seen from the headlines that UFOs had invaded the capital, and felt outrage that he had not been informed. Now, with his old friend long gone, he saw from the headlines, dated December 17, 1969, in the very same airport terminal, that the Secretary of the Air Force, Robert G.Seamans Jr., had just officially announced the termination of Project Blue Book and the Air Force's twenty-two-year study of UFOs.

With his shock rapidly turning into disbelief, reluctant acceptance, anger and despair, Dwight caught a cab and continued on his journey to what could be a crucial meeting with Tony Scaduto. He was dropped off outside a nondescript bar in M Street, not far from where Bob Jackson had died of a 'heart attack' that Dwight then, and now, believed had been murder.

The formerly flamboyant Scaduto was like a different man. Dressed like a Haight-Ashbury hippie, he was smoking a joint of marijuana, drinking too much, and listening, stoned, to a jukebox playing Zager and Evans, Blood, Sweat and Tears, the Rolling Stones, and Jethro Tull, while psychedelic lights flashed on and off the walls. He was also practically gibbering with fear.

'I tell you, man, wow, right,' he babbled, inhaling, exhaling, glancing left and right, avoiding Dwight's accusing gaze and determinedly *not* raising the subject of UFOs or the termination of Project Blue Book. 'What a year, right? I mean, I really dig it that a US astronaut's just become the first motherfucker to land on the moon and that just last month two more astronauts did the same. Superheroes, those guys.'

'There are no superheroes,' Dwight said, already beginning to despair of this conversation; wondering what had happened in the past year to change his young friend so drastically.

'Yeah, well, right,' Scaduto continued, rambling while sucking on Mary Jane, putting his head back, closing his eyes, then exhaling slowly, ecstatically. 'Yeah, but we really beat those goddamned Russkies in the end. That's one hell of a thing, right?'

'Right,' Dwight said. 'But I really wanted to talk about the termination of Project Blue Book.'

'Yeah? Well, you know, I really don't know anything about that, man. I mean, what the fuck, they've been trying to kill it off for years, and it was practically dead on its feet even before it was finally terminated. Not much lost anymore, right?'

'Who do you think was behind it? Jack Fuller's boys?'

'Yeah, probably, but who knows? I mean, I don't wanna know anymore. And neither do you, man. You shouldn't be goin' around askin' questions like that. Things like that can be messy.'

'I haven't heard from you in a long time, Tony. You don't reply to my letters anymore. You never answer the telephone. Have you given up your UFO work?'

'Yeah, right, I gave it up.'

'Why's that?'

'I just got fed up with it, is all. I mean, I just got the urge to do other things.' Scaduto raised his fat joint in the air, waved it, then giggled. 'Yeah, man, other things.'

'You didn't just get interested in other things, Tony. Tell the truth: you got scared.'

'Bullshit!'

'You're scared right this second.'

'Just stoned, man. Bit sweaty. Fuckin' hot in here. And those lights, man, they make your heart race. It's the new generation.'

'You're a bit old for it, Tony.'

'I'm okay. I still pull the chicks.'

'The use of that word "chicks" already dates you.'

'Okay, man, just lay off.'

Flickering constantly, rapidly in the gloom, like the lights seen on so many UFOs, the psychodeleic lights in this crowded bar were creating bizarre patterns on the walls and on the bodies, faces and limbs of the young people packed tightly together, most wearing hippie clothes – baubles, bangles and beads – and having shouted conversations to defeat the pounding rock music. The sweet scent of pot filled the smokey air. In the disorientating, kaleidoscopic lights, Scaduto looked gaunt and haunted.

Determined to get to the bottom of his young friend's fall from grace, Dwight ploughed ahead. 'So why are you frightened? Did they get to you, Tony?'

Scaduto sighed, releasing smoke through his nostrils. 'Okay, man, I confess. I recently received a visit from three bastards wearing black suits. They claimed to be CIA agents, scared the hell out of me, and demanded that I drop my UFO investigations and forget what I saw over British Columbia. They said that if I ever flew over British Columbia again, I wouldn't come back. They also told me that they knew Hank Lomax had flown the plane, then they told me to give you their regards.'

Dwight was shocked almost rigid. Sitting up straight in his chair behind the small, round table, he found himself squinting instinctively into the flashing strobe lights, trying to see if he was being observed. Realising that he had become paranoid again, on the instant, he then understood, also, just why Scaduto was behaving in this manner. Yes, Scaduto was helplessly frightened – just like he, Dwight, was.

Oh, God, he thought, not again.

Trying to get a grip on himself, he said, 'For the flight from Dayton to Calgary, I was listed under another name. I wasn't listed at all for Lomax's flight. So how the hell could they have known I was present?'

Scaduto threw his hands up in the air, pleading ignorance. 'I swear to God, man, I didn't tell them. If they'd asked, I think I would have, 'cause I was so damned scared,

you know? But they didn't ask – they *told* me. Yeah, they told me they knew Lomax was the pilot of the *Tri-Pacer*. Then they said – kinda grinning maliciously – to pass on their regards to you, mentioning you by name. So they knew you were there.'

'Jesus Christ! *How?*'

'I think it was the beam of light. You remember? That pyramid of light that beamed down from the saucer to cut the plane's engine while somehow keeping us up there in the air, still moving forward. That light scorched and destroyed the film in my camera, thus destroying our sole source of proof for the existence of the man-made flying saucers. And I think it also somehow photographed us – or, at least, beamed up an image of us to the flying saucer. They identified us from that.'

'Oh, my God,' Dwight said, briefly covering his face with his hands and now feeling as frightened as Scaduto looked. 'What have I done?' He removed his hands from his face and stared straight at Scaduto who, in the disorientating, kaleidoscopic strobe lights, looked oddly inhuman. 'What about Beth?'

Scaduto leaned across the table, holding his thick joint between the fingers of one hand while using the other to grab hold of Dwight and shake some sense into him.

'Fuck flying saucers,' he said to Dwight. 'I just want to stay alive. And so should you, man. For your own sake. For Beth's sake. This is the last time we meet, Dwight. Don't ever try contacting me again. I don't exist. I'm invisible. Good luck. Adios.'

He gave Dwight a gentle shove. Dwight pushed his chair and stood up to hurry out of the bar. Once outside, on the busy sidewalk, in the afternoon's wintry light, he caught a taxi straight to the airport. There, instead of catching his return flight to Dayton, Ohio, he took the next plane to Phoenix, Arizona. He had a window seat and during the whole flight he couldn't take his eyes off the sky. He kept imagining he was seeing flying saucers moving silently, eerily through the clouds, but nothing materialised.

Arriving in Phoenix late that evening, Dwight hired a car and drove to a residential area near the University of Arizona, where he booked into a motel for the night. He did not sleep well. Rushing back in upon him, as if stirred by his talk with the equally frightened Tony Scaduto, were all the old dreams of flying saucers and mysterious men in black. Mixed in with such dreams were dreadful visions of Beth surrounded by silent creatures, some human, others alien, bathed in a radiant white light and being probed in the most private places with what looked like surgical instruments. He thought he could hear Beth screaming. In fact, it was himself. He awoke more than once in that interminable, sweaty night, either groaning or screaming.

At ten the following morning, after a breakfast of black coffee (since he could not stomach even the idea of food) and after making a quick call to check that Beth was okay, he drove to the University of Arizona and was escorted to his pre-arranged meeting with Dr James E.McDonald.

Over the past few years, McDonald, who was strongly pro-UFO and anti-CIA, had become a thorn in the side of the latter, as well as the Air Force. This had led him into

taking up freelance work for the APII and it was through this work that Dwight had gotten to know him and respect him. Though very much the scientist, living in a cloistered world, McDonald had taken the bit in his teeth and gone out to fight all those in the CIA and the Air Force who were trying to stifle information about UFOs and intimidate or harass witnesses. He had done so with tremendous energy and a surprising knack for gaining publicity, thus placing the APII more vividly on the map, even while making himself a leading target for those he was exposing. Dwight had to admire that.

Now, however, entering McDonald's office, Dwight was shocked to find that McDonald had changed almost as drastically as Scaduto. A kind-faced, academic man with short-cropped hair and spectacles, he had recently lost a lot of weight and looked like someone in state of permanent exhaustion. Behind the spectacles, his eyes seemed slightly glassy and distracted, possibly even fearful.

After welcoming Dwight into his office as warmly as possible, given his condition, he confessed that he no longer wished to discuss UFOs and had, indeed, almost refused Dwight this meeting.

'So why did you change your mind and let me come?' Dwight asked, when he was seated in the chair in front of McDonald's desk.

McDonald shrugged and smiled with what seemed like an air of sadness. 'I guess in deference to all we shared in the past. By which I mean our joint work for the APII.'

'You were doing so well,' Dwight said, 'then you suddenly stopped. Why was that, James?'

McDonald stared steadily at him for a moment, then shrugged again, this time forlornly. 'No reason, Dwight.'

'You look terrible,' Dwight said bluntly. 'You look sleepless. What happened, James?'

McDonald was silent for what seemed like an eternity, his gaze focused on the ceiling, then he sighed with what could only be deemed despair and lowered his gaze to look at Dwight – not directly at him, but as near to that as he could manage in his state of chronic distraction.

'All right,' he said. 'In diference to our friendship, I'll tell you this once, off the record, but on the condition that you never visit me again.'

'Never?'

'Never.'

Though immeasurably shocked, recalling Scaduto's dismissal the previous day, Dwight nodded: 'Okay, I promise.'

There was another lengthy silence from McDonald, as if he was struggling to find the courage to speak, but eventually, with another mournful sigh, he said: 'About the middle of March last year – I can't recall the exact date – I went for a night drive into the desert just outside Phoenix, which is something I've done often in my life, for relaxation. That particular night, however, I blacked out. I awakened fifty miles from

where I had remembered driving... and my car was pointing back in the direction of home.'

'Just like Beth,' Dwight said.

'Exactly.' McDonald clasped his hands together, placed them on his desk, and studied them distractedly for some time, before eventually continuing: 'From that day on, I've been suffering from dreadful headaches, or migraines, and from the conviction that I'm being observed constantly, in some inexplicable manner. This conviction is so strong that often I think I'm going mad. It's given me a lot of sleepless nights – in fact, now I'm almost permanently exhausted – and naturally this, apart from its effect on me and my family, hasn't helped when it comes to dealing with what's presently going down.'

'What's that?' Dwight asked.

When McDonald next sighed, Dwight realised that it wasn't really a sigh: it was the gasping for breath that denotes the fierce repression of panic. McDonald spoke softly, in short bursts, catching breaths in between.

'As you know, since the implementation of the Condon Report recommendations... notably the closing of Project Blue Book and all other... UFO investigations... the forgotten UFO controversy has practically become a... a... forgotten issue in the press.'

'Yes, I know.'

'Behind the scenes, however,' McDonald continued, gradually regaining control of his panicky breathing, 'the ridicule attached to the study of UFOs has actually... increased. For that reason, as I was still insisting that UFOs were physical, metallic objects and their origins possibly known to the Air Force, I was... ridiculed relentlessly at committee hearings and in the institute as...' He shook his head in unutterable despair and humiliation. 'As a man who believes in little green men and other science fiction or comic book inventions. Now most of my serious work is being ignored and my career is in… jeopardy.' He glanced down at his desk again, studying his hands, then managed to redirect his troubled gaze to Dwight. 'If what happened to me in that desert is the same as what happened to Beth, then God knows what they did to me when they got to me. I feel that I'm being… controlled. Not just watched, but… manipulated. And now, like Beth, I'm haunted by dreams of UFOs and men in black – of being inside a flying saucer, surrounded, blacking out. And because of that I'm now exhausted from lack of sleep, my career's crumbling, and my marriage is rapidly breaking down. I'm in trouble in more ways than one, Dwight, and that's why this is finished... So… I've told you. Now don't ever come back here. I'm sorry, Dwight. Goodbye... and good luck.'

Feeling as if he was going mad, Dwight stood up, shook McDonald's hand, then left the building. After driving too quickly, dangerously, to the airport, he commenced the first leg of his journey back to Dayton, Ohio.

As with the flight in, he asked for a window seat and spent the whole of both flights staring through the window at the clouds below. He kept thinking there were

objects down there, but again nothing materialised.

Feeling ever more fearful, Dwight picked up his car where he had left it in the airport in Dayton and headed for home as quickly as possible, growing ever more fearful for Beth's welfare.

It was already dark when he left the airport. Once away from the ugly clutter of the industrial belt, with its gas stations, warehouses, and factories for the production of refrigerators, air-conditioning equipment, cash registers, machine tools and, especially, aircraft instruments, the land became emptier, mostly agricultural land, pretty in the daytime, but flat and featureless in the darkness, though the sky contained a large moon and a spectacular display of stars. There were few clouds – just some candyfloss wisps here and there – but enough to cast shifting shadows on the broad, moonlit fields.

Dwight drove pretty fast, too frightened for Beth to be careful, trying to distract himself with the feeling of power, of magical omnipotence, that came with being isolated from the world while moving through it at great speed. He normally loved the land at night, the play of shadow and light, but tonight, given the couple of days he'd just had, he felt threatened by it.

Then he started feeling odd... no longer alone... aware of some unseen presence.

'What the hell...?'

He spoke aloud to break the silence, suddenly frightened of being alone out here, then he instinctively glanced at his rear-view mirror.

He saw only dark clouds crossing the stars and reaching out to gently stroke the moon.

Nothing else... just the darkness... the stars seeming to move away… the sky unfolding radiantly in his wake as the car barrelled forward. Nothing else in the mirror...

Yet his heart started racing.

He glanced left and right, convinced that something was out there. Seeing nothing, he glanced up, where there was nothing unusual, so once more he concentrated on the road straight ahead, uncomfortably aware that he had started sweating.

'Damn it, Dwight!' he whispered to himself. 'It's just your overwrought imagination – that's a dangerous thing.'

Talking to himself... Speaking aloud to calm his nerves... There was nothing out there but moonlit darkness, starlit sky, shifting shadows...

No, something *was* out there... What was that? Something moving... A flashing light... Growing bigger... Approaching.

Yes, damn it, *approaching*!

He saw the light, then it was gone, though it hadn't flashed on and off. It had flown from east to west at tremendous speed, then maybe shot upwards – so fast it just disappeared.

Where was it now?

Dwight felt his skin crawling with a dreadful, clammy fear. He was aware of something out there. He couldn't see it, but he could *feel* it, and his hands became slippery on the steering wheel as his heart raced in panic.

'Imagination!' he whispered again, trying vainly to convince himself that this was the truth... Then, as his helpless fear deepened, something flashed in his eyes.

He almost swerved off the road, but blinked and straightened out. He squinted into the darkness, trying to see between the headlights. Seeing nothing, he looked to the side.

A pool of light was brightening on the road beside the car, keeping abreast of it, speeding along and growing brighter and wider until it covered the whole road.

Dwight glanced up and was blinded by dazzling light... then he lost control of the car.

'Damn!' he exclaimed, his voice reverberating in his head as he fought with the steering wheel and the car swerved off the road, out of the light beaming down, then back onto the road and into the light again. 'Jesus Christ! What the...?'

The light disappeard abruptly. The car barrelled into the darkness. Its headlights had gone out and Dwight frantically worked the switch... and then a bass humming sound, an infrasound, almost *physical*, filled the car and tightened around his head as the engine cut out.

Dwight slammed on the brakes. He went into a skid, managed to straighten out, and was slowing down when something passed above him, shot into the darkness ahead, then became an enormous, burning globe that froze right in front of him.

The car came to a halt. It just rolled to a stop. Dwight sat there, hardly believing what he was seeing, but too stunned to move.

He was looking at a huge, slightly glowing flying saucer that was hovering in mid-air farther along the road, almost as wide as the road. It had a silvery, metallic appearance, no surface protuberances, and possessed a perfectly seamless surface beneath that eerie white glowing.

Dwight sat in the car, too stunned to move, mesmerized as the flying saucer sank lower and settled on the ground. It didn't appear to have any legs – it just settled down on its base. No, not quite on the ground: a few inches above it; hovering just above the ground. Then the bass humming sound increased, tightening around Dwight's head, as he saw a large panel opening up in the sloping surface of the saucer, emitting a brilliant light, then falling forward to form a ramp that led down to the ground.

Three figures walked down the ramp, the smaller two moving awkwardly, to spread out across the road and make their way to the car.

Dwight was terrified. The middle figure was a tall, slim human being dressed all in black, but the other two, one on each side of him, were creatures little more than four-foot tall, wearing silvery-grey coveralls, but with studded helmets on their heads, lower faces made of moulded metal and devoid of noses or lips, and hands that looked from Dwight's point of view like vicious steel claws.

They looked like creatures from another world.

As they deliberately advanced up Dwight, spreading out as they came closer, emerging from silhouette, he wanted to get out of the car and flee, but he felt paralysed.

Then the infrasound faded away and the tightness left his head. Instantly, he reached out for the ignition key and turned it, but heard only a dead click. Jerking his hand away, imagining that it had been scorched, he tried to still his racing heart as he waited for the two alien creatures and the man in the middle to reach the car.

One of the alien creatures stopped right in front of the car, the other went to the far side, and the tall, silvery-haired man dressed all in black walked around to stop by Dwight's door.

When he bent down to look through the window, Dwight wanted to scream.

'Roll the window down, Dwight.'

The man's voice was almost a whisper. It was also oddly flat. It was the voice of a man with no feelings but a lot of authority. Dwight did as he was told. He didn't seem to have a choice. That voice, though quiet and unemotional, would brook no disobedience. Dwight rolled the window down, his hand shaking, then he stared at the man.

He had silvery-grey hair, unnaturally smooth white skin, curiously immobile, handsome features and icy blue eyes.

'You're Dwight Randall,' he said.

'That's right,' Dwight responded.

'You were with Project Blue Book at the ATIC, then you worked for the APII.'

'That's right as well,' Dwight said.

The man smiled without warmth. 'You also flew over a construction plant in British Columbia and saw some of our saucers.'

'Yes,' Dwight confessed.

'You will stop this, Dwight. From this moment on. You've already done considerable damage to your wife, and could do a lot more. As for your friends, Tony Scaduto and the meddlesome Dr James E.McDonald, you've seen the state they're in – and let me assure you that they're going to get much worse. Is that what you want for yourself, Dwight?'

'No.'

'For your wife?'

'No.'

'Your daighter?'

'Please, no!'

'Well, if you don't want that to happen to your wife and daughter, not to mention yourself, you must stop your involvement with UFOs and never return to it. Do you understand?'

'Yes.'

'Good. However, just as a precaution, Dwight, to ensure that you keep your

promise, I'm going to give you a final warning. Not right now. Not this year. Maybe next year. It will happen when we feel that you've had enough time to consider all this and have to make a decision about whether or not to stay silent about us. This warning will help you make the right decision should you be feeling less fearful.'

'What kind of warning?' Dwight asked.

The man offered his chilling smile. 'Wait for word about your friend Dr James E.McDonald. When it comes, you will know. That will be your final warning. The next in line will be you and your family, should you ever again displease us. Do you understand?'

'Yes.'

'Then return to your home and look after your family. Goodnight, Dwight. Goodbye.'

Dwight felt that he was dreaming. In his dream the fear returned. He kept thinking of Beth and Nichola, of that warning, and then he knew for certain that he would stop here.

'Goodnight,' he replied.

The tall, silvery-haired man with the oddly immobile features offered another chilling smile and a nod before walking away with his two hideous cyborgs, back to the enormous flying saucer. He and the cyborgs walked up the ramp and disappeared back into the saucer's brilliantly lit holding bay while Dwight sat on in the car, still unable to move. The saucer's ramp lifted up and folded back in until it again became part of the seamless body, cutting off the light and leaving the saucer to reflect the moonlight from its metallic surface. Then Dwight heard the bass humming sound, almost *felt* it, an infrasound again, and as his head started tightening, as his skin turned numb, the flying saucer started glowing, its silvery body brightening magically, until it became encased in a cocoon of pulsating white light and lifted off the ground.

Dwight heard the noise, *felt* it, was surrounded by it and became part of it, as the saucer ascended slowly, gracefully – yes, even majestically. Then it abruptly shot upwards, about a hundred feet up, but stopped again, just as abruptly, as if by pure magic, to hover high above and to the side, where he could just about see it.

The infrasound cut out, allowing Dwight to move again, though he didn't dare get out of the car. The saucer looked small up there, about the size of a dime, and it seemed to be spinning on its vertical axis and filling the sky with light. Then it shot up even higher, shrinking rapidly, but still shining, until eventually it merged with the stars and suddenly blinked out.

Dwight saw the moon and stars, the vast web of the cosmos. They made him think of the beauty and terror of life... and of those whom he most loved and who were obviously most threatened: Beth, Nichola, and Nichola's baby, still only eight months old.

Determined to protect them, he turned the ignition key, heaved a sigh of relief when the engine came on, and drove home as quickly as possible, obsessed with the

notion that his family might have been visited by the man who had just left and, even worse, that they might be captives in that flying saucer this very moment.

He was therefore overwhelmed with gratitude and love when he found that Beth, though telling him that she had been visited by men in black and tormented by a UFO that circled over the house the previous evening, was unharmed, as were Nichola, her husband, Larry, and their baby, named after Bob Jackson.

Nevertheless, when he took Beth in his arms to kiss her, he knew that both of them were still in danger and would probably remain so for the rest of their days. Though he suspected tht he could never hide from that nameless man for long, he was determined to try.

'We're selling up and going to Oregon,' he told Beth, 'where you've always wanted to live. It's time we moved on.'

'I understand,' Beth responded. 'It's all ended, hasn't it?'

'Yes,' Dwight said. 'It's ended.'

His kiss told her the rest of it: that love, which could not protect a single soul in the world, could at least heal old wounds and soothe fear. It was a kiss of renewal.

Chapter Forty-Seven

Eighteen months later, in June, 1971, Dwight had settled comfortably into his new life with Beth, Nichola, her husband Larry and baby Bob in a rambling old farmhouse in Vida, Oregon. Out of deference to Nichola's fears for her own child, as well as for Dwight and Beth, Larry had generously agreed to give up his job as a civilian engineer with Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio, and move with them in relative anonymity to Oregon, where he settled for a job as a maintenance engineer with a private airline that combined commercial flights to local towns with crop-dusting. Dwight, on the other hand, was happy to get a job as a truck driver, delivering farm produce to the shops of the various small towns in the area. Nichola looked after baby Bob, while Beth looked after Nichola and the baby, as well as tending the house. All in all, it was a quiet, pleasant life in pastoral, postcard countryside dominated by the spectacular Cascades mountain range where, as Dwight often recalled, some of the earliest and most famous flying saucer sightings had been made.

Dwight knew in his heart of hearts that if that nameless, silvery-haired man or any of his equally mysterious friends wanted to find him, they would doubtless be able to do so – and, indeed, probably knew where he was right now. Nevertheless, the move to Oregon had not only been made to satisfy one of Beth's oldest desires – she had always yearned to live in Oregon – but to let 'them' out there know that Dwight had moved away from all his former associates and was now living in relative obscurity.

In other words, he was telling 'them' that he had well and truly retired from the UFO business.

As if being thanked for keeping his word, Dwight was pleased to note that Beth's nightmares and physical 'hauntings' had ceased within days of their leaving Dayton and had not returned in the eighteen months they had been living in Oregon. As for himself, since leaving Dayton he had not seen or heard anything of a disturbing nature, and he was grateful for that.

During that eighteen months, few days had gone by when Dwight did not think of the many years had had spent in search of UFOs, but he certainly harboured few regrets. Gradually, however, as the more frightening recollections began to dim in his memory – or, at least, to seem less frightening than they had been at the time – he began to think increasingly about finding a way to impart all he had learned about the man-made flying saucers to those who could use the information best, notably Dr Frederick Epstein and Robert Stanford of the APII in Washington DC.

Mere weeks after he had commenced this line of thought, he was reminded of that nameless, silvery-haired man's threat to send him a warning through Dr James E.McDonald.

He started thinking about that warning about a week before the warning actually came. Wondering why, suddenly, he could not get Dr James E.McDonald out of his

head, he endured an emotionally troubled week, then decided to take a day off and go fishing in the local lake. Arising just after dawn, he drove into Vida, picked up the local newspaper, then drove on to the lake. Still sitting in his car, he poured a cup of hot coffee from his thermos flask, then settled back at the steering wheel to read the newspaper.

Instantly shocked, he sat forward again, resting the newspaper on the steering wheel to prevent it from shaking.

The first page contained an article stating that two days ago, Dr James E.McDonald, B.A. in Chemistry, M.S. in Meteorology, Ph.D. in Physics, Professor of the Department of Meteorology, and Senior Physicist at the Institute of Atmospheric Physics of the University of Arizona, after suffering from depression and a broken marriage, had committed suicide by driving out into the desert in the middle of the night and shooting himself in the head with a pistol

Shocked, Dwight let the newspaper slide off the steering wheel, onto his feet, as he stared over the lake, at the Cascades soaring beyond it, thinking about what he had been told through what he had read.

Dwight was absolutely convinced that McDonald, though he may indeed have shot himself, had not committed suicide – he had merely pulled the trigger. Though the evidence would never come in, Dwight sat there in his car, looking at the distant Cascades, where the whole UFO flap had first begun, and tried imagining the most likely scenario, given what McDonald had previously told him.

Dwight's hypothesis, based on his own knowledge of UFO abductions, Beth's personal experience, and McDonald's confession to him, was as follows...

Already in a bad way after a combination of overt Air Force and CIA harassment and inexplicable set-backs in his formerly illustrious career, then suffering additionally from severe depression and a broken marriage, McDonald awakens in the middle of the night, puts on his normal clothes, including suit, shirt and tie, and goes down to his kitchen for a hot drink. Sipping his coffee, he recalls the visit he had from the impassioned Dwight Randall who, like him, had gradually become obsessed with UFOs. McDonald then broods on how a relentless barrage of private and public ridicule is being used against him, to discredit his professional credibility.

Of all the ridicule he has suffered, nothing has been worse than when the House Committee on Appropriations called him to testify about the supersonic transport (SST) plane and how its use would affect the atmosphere. McDonald had discovered (correctly) that the SST would reduce the protective layer of ozone in the atmosphere and that this could cause an additional 10,000 cases of skin cancer each year in the United States, as well as having other dramatic effects on animals, crops and the weather.

During his testimony, however, McDonald was constantly ridiculed as a believer in flying saucers and 'little men flying around the sky' and treated generally as someone deranged.

Sitting at his kitchen table in the middle of the night, brooding about this, as well as the loss of his wife and career, McDonald takes a pistol out of a drawer under the table and thoughtfully studies it. As he does so, an almost palpable bass humming noise, an infrasound, fills the room and an eerie, pulsating light pours in through the window. McDonald clutches his head and moans in pain until the light and sound fade away. He then looks up with tears in his eyes and walks out of the house, still carrying the pistol.

McDonald gets into his car and then drives into the desert beyond Phoenix, taking the same route he had taken a few years ago when he had first blacked out during a night ride.

He parks in the middle of the desert and stares up at the vast, star-filled sky.

An enormous UFO in a pulsating aura that changes repeatedly through the whole spectrum, filling the night with colour and light, descends until it is hovering just above him, blotting out the glorious sky and revealing only a pitch-black, swirling base that appears to have no depth.

As McDonald stares up at the terrible beauty of that sight, he has fragmented recollections of being picked up by the same craft when last he parked here...of being carried up to the stars... and of being deposited back on Earth much later, his head as tight as a drum.

Eventually, as the infrasound increases, deafening him, while making his head tighten even more, creating appalling pain, McDonald obeys an inner voice – the one voice he cannot resist – and helplessly raises the pistol to his head and presses the trigger.

His last memory – if such it can be called – is of an exploding galaxy.

He falls forward and dies.

Dr James E.McDonald was now only an illusion of the mind, a warning to Dwight that he should not change *his* mind and attempt to pass on his secrets to Dr Frederick Epstein, Robert Stanford, or anyone else.

Thus, when Dwight, still in his car, managed to regain control of himself and shake off his shock, he lifted the newspaper off his rubber boots, clambered out of the vehicle, threw the newspaper into a rubbish bin and then walked down to the edge of the lake. Once there, he climbed carefully into his boat, rowed out to the centre of that great bowl of water, then unreeled his line and sat down to fish, surrounded by the Cascades. Thoroughly distracted, he let the boat drift where it would as he gazed at the sky above the distant, snow-capped mountain peaks.

He had the distinct feeling that the flying saucers were still out there, gliding eerily through the clouds, keeping him under surveillance... and he knew that this feeling would haunt him for the rest of his days.

He sat there all day, drifting aimlessly in the boat, patiently waiting for the stars to come out... and even then, he did not move.

He could not feel safe even out here.

It was best to be silent.

WA Harbinson Website
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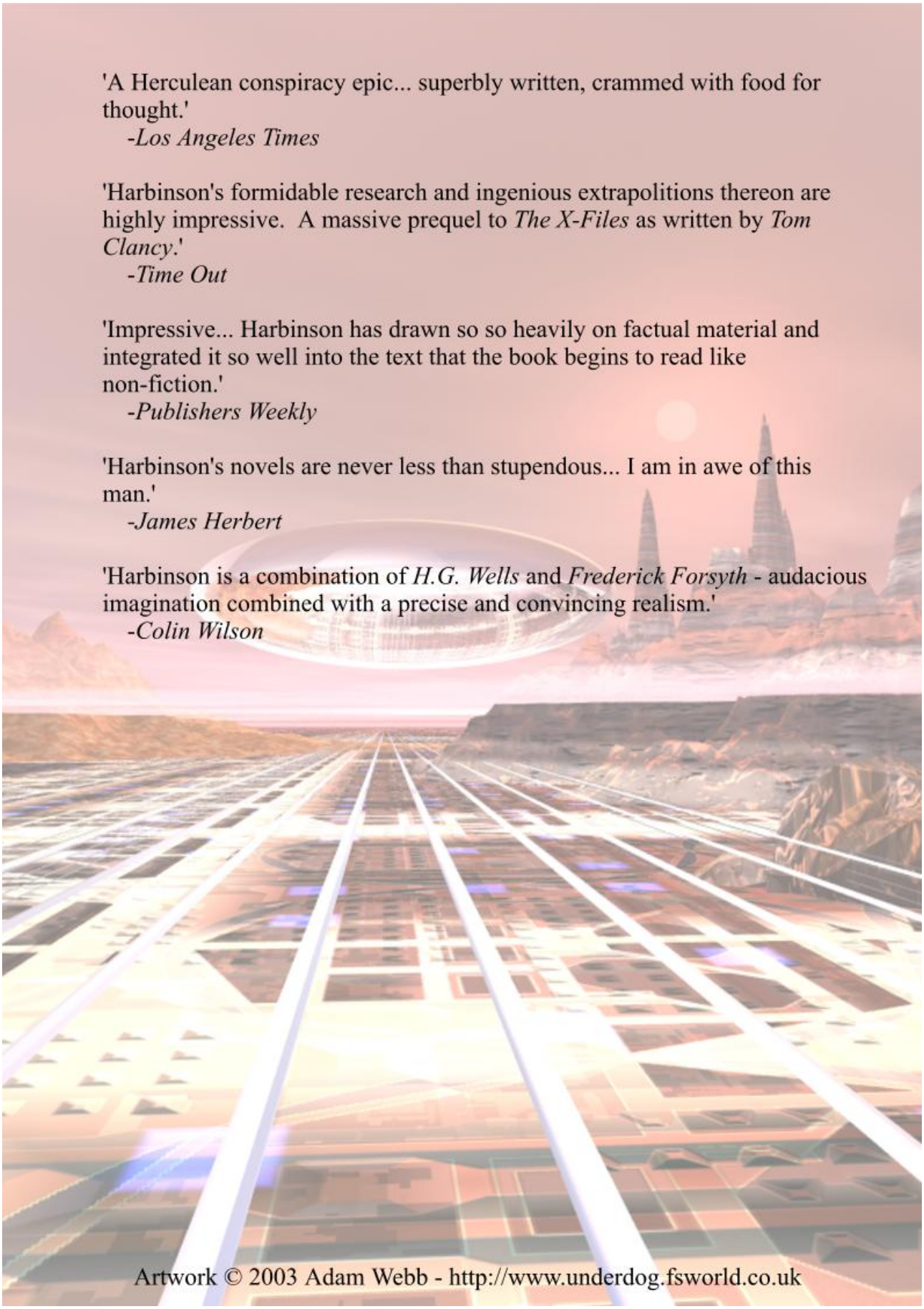
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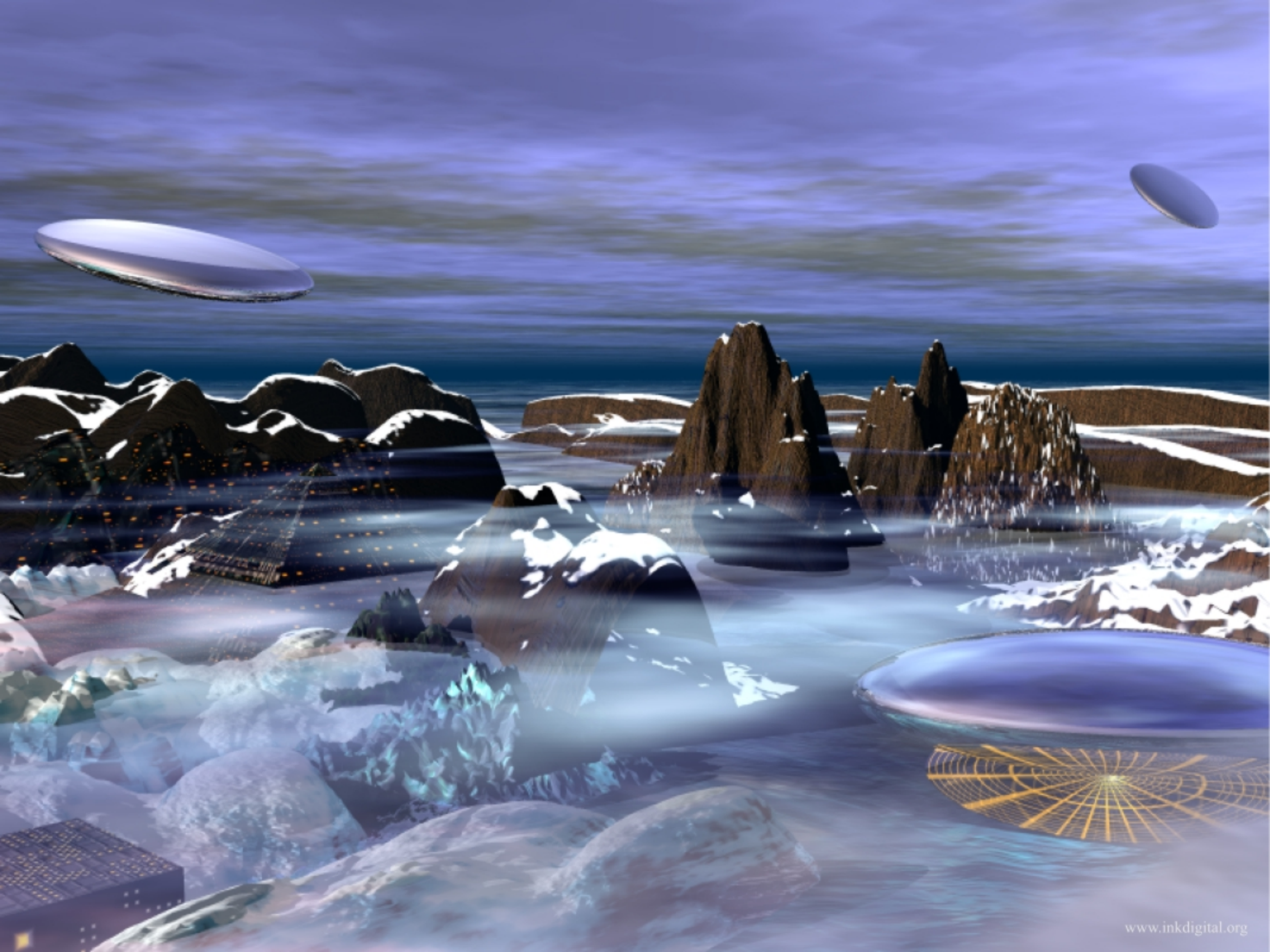
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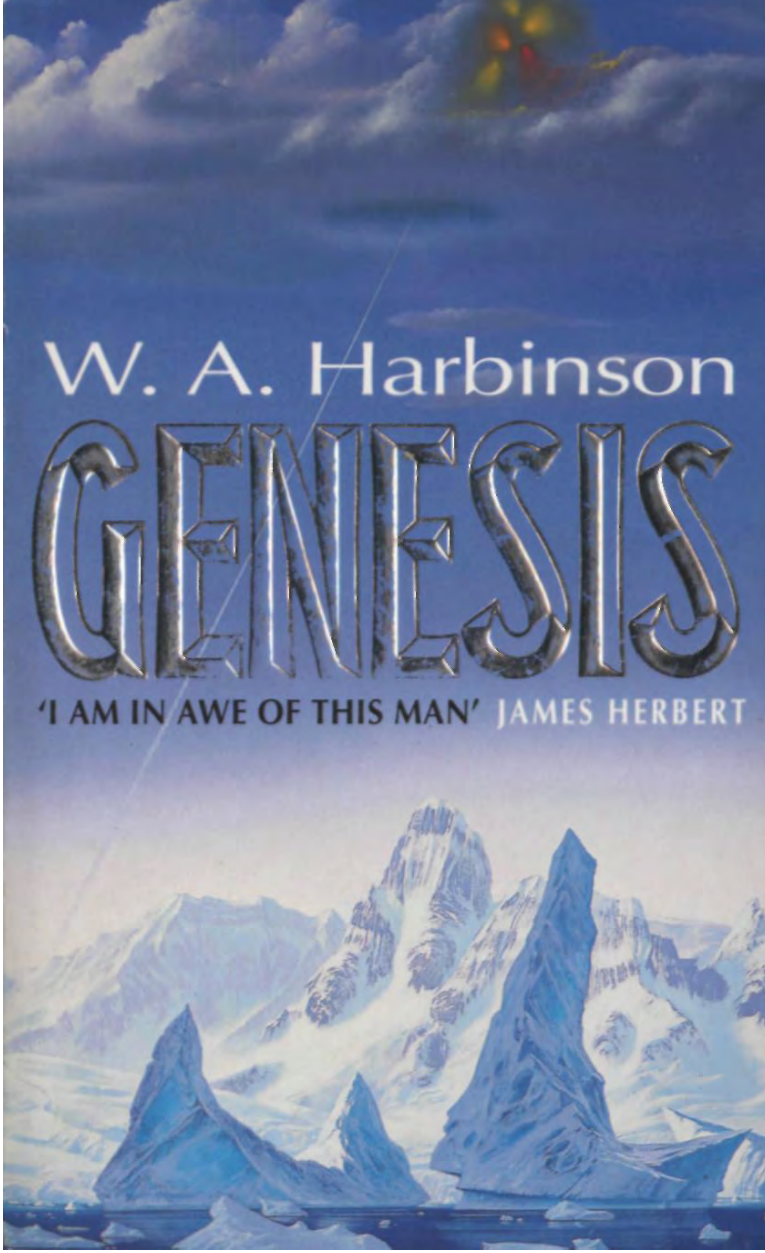
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Publishers Weekly

About the author

W. A. Harbinson has been a journalist, magazine editor and TV scriptwriter. Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1941, he left school at fourteen, studied mechanical engineering, then joined the Royal Australian Air Force. While serving in the RAAF, he drafted his first novel, Instruments of Death. In 1980 he completed Genesis, the epic novel of the world's most fearsome secret that became the inspiration for the Projekt Saucer tetralogy. (Chronologically, Genesis is the third novel in this sequence.) Harbinson lives in Co. Cork, Ireland.

November 23,1944

It began when the B-25 had crossed the Rhine and was starting its bombing run over darkened Germany. The other aircraft had already made their first run when lieutenant Tappman, twenty-one years of age and out of Denver, Colorado, studied the cross hairs of his bombsight, watched the last of the indices join, and prepared to trip away his load of five-hundred-pounders.

The first bombs were already exploding, tiny flames in the black void, the flak drifting far below, the tracer bullets like fireworks, when Tappman blinked and saw the pulsating red lights winking on and then vanishing. 'What the hell—?' the pilot said. 'Jesus Christ!' a gunner added. The intercom crackled, voices rising and falling, then the Plexiglas nose was briefly filled with crimson light as three globes of spinning flame shot up vertically and vanished above.

Tappman blinked and shook his head, heard the coughing of the engines, felt the plane shuddering strangely and leveling out and heading away from the target zone. A spasm of fear lanced through him, an instinctive dread of the unknown, and he promptly pressed the button of his throat mike and said, 'What the hell's happening there?' The intercom crackled. 'What was that?' the copilot said. 'I don't know,' the tailgunner's voice replied, 'I saw lights - three red lights.' Tappman looked into his bombsight, saw the cross hairs over darkness, cursed softly when the engines malfunctioned and

the plane shuddered again. You're going off course!' he shouted. 'What the hell are you up to? I can't see a damned thing from here! Is it enemy aircraft?' The plane shook and dropped down, climbed back up, leveled out, the intercom crackling, metallic voices colliding, 'Red lights! Something burning! No, they're climbing! Jesus Christ!' and then Tappman was dazzled, the night filled with spinning flames, and the burning globes spread out around the plane and then started to pace it.

The plane shuddered and rolled, went into a shrieking dive, barreling down through streams of tracers and black mushrooms of flak, the blazing buildings of Germany far be low, illuminating the darkness. 'Pull her up!' Tappman shouted, his eyes blinded by purple flares. 'What the hell's going on? We're cutting out! We're going down, you dumb bastards? The plane roared and shook violently, leveling out, its wings quivering, and Tappman saw his jack plug dangling loose and jammed it back into the intercom. They're still with us!' the pilot was shouting. 'What are they?' the gunner wailed. The nose shuddered and pointed upwards, heading through the tiers of flak, the plane's engines sounding healthy again as it started to climb.

Tappman looked for the balls of fire, saw nothing, rubbed his eyes, felt isolated in the bombardier's compartment at the end of the crawl-way. 'What are you doing?' he bawled, seeing yellow fires below, the ugly black clouds of flak around him, hearing muffled explosions. 'We cut out!' he shouted. 'We went dead! What's going on out there?

The intercom crackled, the tailgunner's voice wailing, fading in and out, back in again, sounding close to demented. 'What are they?' the gunner wailed. They're right beside me! I can't hit them! I can't make them out! They're not planes! What the hell are those things? Tappman cursed and glanced around him, not believing what he had seen, wishing he could see them again, filled with dread and excitement 'What?' the pilot bawled. 'Spinning balls!' the gunner wailed. 'Balls of fire! I'm not sure! They look like balls of fire and they're spinning!

Oh my God, now there's more of them?
A sudden silence, then the static, then the roaring of the guns, someone screaming and then the plane rolling as if out of control. Tappman cursed and shook his head, flicked his eyes up, saw the sky, the dark clouds and the smaller clouds of flak, the silvery web of the tracers. 'Drop the bastards!' the pilot bawled, wanting the bombs to be released, wanting the plane to be freed of its load and climb out of the chaos. 'I can't? Tappman hissed, working the controls and getting nothing, the fear racing in and smashing his senses when the engines cut out again. 'We're going down? someone screamed.
The plane shuddered and went silent, started rolling, falling fast, Tappman trapped in the Plexiglas nose with the earth far below him. He heard the static, someone wailing - the tailgunner, the copilot - looked below, following the line of the falling plane, and saw the fires of the air raid. 'What are they?' the gunner cried. The engines are dead!' the pilot bawled. They're not planes!' the gunner cried. They're balls of fire! Jesus Christ, now they're climbing!'
The engines roared back into life, as if controlled by the balls of fire, the plane leveling out and heading through the tracer bullets and the black clouds of flak. Tappman groaned and licked his lips, simply forgot to release his bombs, jerked his head around and saw a crimson light that fanned out through the dark sky. 'What's that? Tappman shrieked, his own voice unrecognizable, his heart pounding as he searched for the German fighters and saw only the crimson light. 'I don't know!' the pilot bawled. They're right behind us!' the gunner screamed. They're pacing us!' the copilot joined in, his voice high and distorted. 'They're killing our engines?
Tappman glanced all around him, closed his eyes, looked again, saw the crimson glow spreading through the darkness at the side of the nose cone. Then the engines malfunctioned, started spluttering into silence, coughed into life yet again and made the plane jerk dementedly. Tappman shrieked some mindless plea, hardly aware of his own voice, staring out through the glinting Plexiglas to see a strange ball of fire.

'Jesus Christ!' he hissed at no one, his eyes wide and disbelieving, seeing that spinning ball of fire, then another, then a third, suddenly remembering all the stories he had heard and never dared to believe. 'Foo fighters!' the gunner screamed, his voice distorted by the intercom, reverberating in Tappman's head and fading away as the plane hurtled earthwards.
'We're going down! Pull her up!'
Tappman grabbed hold of himself, closed his eyes, embraced the nightmare, felt his body being pressed back into the chair as the plane kept on falling. The plane fell an endless mile, shuddering violently, spinning wildly, but it reached the ground eventually, plunging into it, exploding, Tappman hearing a crazed voice wailing 'Foo!' which was where it all ended.

CHAPTER ONE

Shortly after noon on March 6, 1974, a battered, two-toned Pontiac passed through the gates of Winslow Air Base, Arizona, and headed directly for the Air Traffic Control Tower. The car moved leisurely but smoothly past the administration blocks and hangars, sunlight flashing off its windows, its wheels churning up red dust, the soft droning of its engine drowned out by the roaring of the aircraft either taking off or landing. There were white clouds in the blue sky, the planes glittered above the mountains, and the clouds were like banks of pure snow in a clear, azure lake.

When the car eventually stopped at the glass and concrete control tower, the driver climbed out slowly, closed the door with some care, locked it, then glanced vaguely around him. This man was short and bulky, insignificant in his dark suit, his white shirt disheveled and his green tie hanging loose, the tanned fingers of his right hand reaching up to stroke a gray, Vandyke beard. He was no longer young, was in fact over sixty, and his face was a webbed, sunburned map of fatigue and reflection.

After glancing briefly at the surrounding mountains, the man reached into his jacket pocket, pulled out a billfold, flipped it open and dangled it before the civilian guard. The guard was tall and impassive, dressed in black shirt and pants, and he studied the identity card, fingered the holster on his hip, gently stroked the peaked cap on his head and then nod-

ded assent. The old man smiled bleakly, returned his billfold to his pocket, winced when a plane roared overhead, passed the guard, went inside.

The stairs were made of concrete, uncovered, painted white, and they led up through silence and a dim half-light to the more pronounced semidarkness of the approach control room. The old man glanced at the elevator, considered it, rejected it, took a deep breath and climbed up the stairs, breathing fitfully, wearily. Finally reaching the top, facing a steel-plated door, he let his racing heart settle, tied the knot in his tie, buttoned his jacket and then pushed the door open and closed it quietly behind him.

The approach control room was dimly lit, the numerous radarscopes flashing, the walls banked with computers and flight maps and schedule charts, the air traffic controllers bunched around the consoles, their hair short, their sleeves rolled up. The old man blinked and coughed, his hazel eyes scanning the gloom, then he raised one hand and gently stroked his beard, the noise and dim light confusing him. The air controllers all talked at once, telephones rang, radios crackled, and the colored lights of radarscopes and computers flashed on and off brilliantly.

The old man coughed again, raised a hand and waved slowly, watched his friend detaching himself from a group and walking over toward him. His friend was young and flashy, his flowered shirt open-necked, the chain belt on his white trousers gleaming as he shook the old man's hand. He did this and then stepped back, glanced around him, smiled and shrugged, then stepped forward again, took the old man by the shoulders and shook him.

'You look fine,' he said.

The old man smiled wearily, smoothed his thinning gray hair, looked around him, eyes squinting, bathed in muted orange light, stroked his beard and then loosened his tie and looked back at his younger friend.

'I don't feel as fine as I look,' he said. 'Now what's this emergency?'

'I'm sorry I had to—'
A weathered hand waved. 'It's all right,' the old man said. His accent was faintly European, his voice soft, almost hesitant 'Just tell me what's happening.'
The young man was slow to answer, his fingers playing with the gleaming belt. He glanced uneasily around him and then reluctantly looked back at the older man.
'We found Irving,' he said.
Something happened to the old man, something almost imperceptible, a spasm of shock, a fleeting fear or despair, before he blinked and rubbed slowly at his beard and then quietly controlled himself.
'You found him?'
'Yes, Frederick. He's dead.'
The old man looked at the floor, rubbed his eyes, glanced around him; he saw the glowing radarscopes, their orange light on men's faces, the men casting long shadows on the floor, on the humming computers. He felt fear at that moment, the dry, familiar fear, a hopeless dread that had enveloped his past and now mapped out his future. He looked back at his young friend, at the blond hair and blue eyes, saw the multicolored darkness all around him, making him unreal.
'Suicide?' the old man said.
'So it seems,' the young man said. They found him an hour ago, on US 66 - in his car, just beyond Valentine, a gun in his hand.'
'US 66?'
That's right. Apparently Mary never even saw him leaving. She's staying in the house on Camelback Hill, and I just rang her and she didn't sound too well.'
'No,' the old man murmured. 'Obviously not.'
'Anyway,' the young man said, 'the usual. Mary says he hadn't been sleeping well lately, that he'd been getting up in the middle of the morning and just wandering about the house, looking out the windows, looking up, obsessed by the whole thing. She thinks he must have done that this morning

- got up when she was asleep - only this time he didn't walk around: he took the car and drove off. The cops found him an hour ago. He'd shot himself in the mouth. I told them to hold off till we got there. We better go now.'

The old man closed his eyes, shook his head from side to side, opened his eyes again and glanced around him, strain and grief on his face.

'Poor Mary,' he murmured.

The young man took his elbow, led him out of the control tower, down the stairs, through the door, past the guard, around the dusty old Pontiac. The noon sun blazed down upon them, upon the airstrip across the road, burned a monstrous white hole in the sky above the hazed, blue-ridged mountains.

'Leave your car here,' the young man said. 'We won't be gone very long. We'll just fly out there and find out what we can and then I'll bring you right back.'

The old man stroked the Pontiac, rubbed the dust from his hand, glanced around him, eyes squinting against the sun, then followed the younger man. The air base was busy, planes taking off and landing, a constant noise and movement above them as they crossed the hot tarmac. The old man was sweating, mopped his forehead, felt the wind - a fierce wind that emanated from a roaring and made his eyes narrow. His young friend was just ahead, ducking low, waving hands, urging him on toward the red and white 47G helicopter that had just burst into life on its landing pad.

The rotor blades whirled, became a blur that whipped the dust up, turned the dust into a localized whirlwind that enveloped the old man. He almost stumbled, righted himself, covered his mouth and cursed softly, then his free hand held his jacket against his chest as he followed his friend.

The helicopter roared and shuddered, its short steel ladder rattling, and the younger man, already inside, reached down with one hand. The old man was pulled up, stumbled in behind the pilot, and quickly strapped himself into his seat as his friend closed the door. Then his friend sat down beside him, the helicopter shook and climbed, and the old man,

visibly relieved, stared out through the Perspex.
He felt grief and outrage, a cold, uncoiling fear, looking down, Winslow shrinking beneath him, remembering other days, other deaths. Suicide, he thought. We all finally commit suicide. There is never a reason nor a motive, but it's always a suicide. Of course he didn't believe it, never had, never would; he looked down on the mountains, on the bare, rockstrewn earth, on the saguaros and ocotilla and barrel cacti, and felt the fear creeping over him.
'How do you feel?' the young man said.
'About what you'd expect' The old man stroked his beard and rubbed his eyes. 'I feel for Mary. How awful.'
The helicopter dipped and climbed, sunlight flashing all around it, and the engine made a fierce, relentless roaring that drummed in their ears.
'We have a flap on,' the young man said. That's why I'm out at the air base. There's been sightings all over the goddamned place, and they're keeping us busy.'
The old man glanced through the Perspex, saw the buttes and wind-carved valleys. There's been a flap for the past fifteen months,' he said, looking up, smiling gently.
'White Sands,' his friend continued. 'Los Alamos and Coolidge Dam. Visual sightings and radar reports, all unidentified returns solid.' The young man shrugged his shoulders, gently ruffled his blond hair. 'I don't know,' he said. 'It just makes me shiver. These things know where they're going.' He looked at the old man. His bearded friend did not reply. 'Weird,' he said. 'So how did your year go? How are things at the institute?'
The old man sighed. 'Very busy,' he said. 'It's been the biggest flap since 1967 and we haven't had breathing space.'
'Anything solid?'
Too much to discuss.' The old man saw mountains far below, the desert stretching around them. 'I just wish we could catch one.'
The young man didn't smile. 'I want to pay you a visit,' he

said. 'But you keep all these things in your head; just tell me a few.'
There were hundreds,' the old man said. 'Every conceivable kind. High-level, low-level, distant, actual contact; electrical and mechanical interference, numerous car-chasing incidents; mental and physical effects on people, animals similarly affected; landings with genuine traces left behind, the materials still unidentified. So, there were plenty.'
'Jesus,' the young man said. 'Jesus Christ'
'Good witnesses,' the old man said. 'All reliable witnesses. We've never had such quality before. Most encouraging. Most heartening.'
'Irving said that,' the young man said.
'Irving's dead,' the old man said. 'Irving told me he had found something important... now Irving is dead.'
'I can't hear you,' the young man said.
'All right I'm sorry.'
Tell me about some sightings,' the young man said. 'Who in hell are your witnesses?'
'Policemen,' the old man said. We're running a survey on police sightings. A policeman isn't prone to hysteria and he's trained to observe.'
The old man scratched his beard, gave a sigh, looked at his hands. The helicopter roared in his ears, making his head throb.
'October 17, 1973,' he said. 'In Waverly, Illinois, in the early hours of the morning, the police chief and three citizens observe an object with green and red flashing lights. They watch the object with binoculars for an hour and a half; it gives out glowing embers that fall to the ground, then disappears as quickly as it arrived ... Los Angeles: police officers are summoned to investigate an object on the east side of the city; on arrival the officers see an oblong, bluish-white, very bright object which, when their car moves toward it rises at a forty-five degree angle to a height of about fifteen hundred feet and then speeds off... Palmyra, Missouri: several high-school students report that a bizarre object with flashing lights has

appeared over the Missouri River, beamed a spotlight on a passing barge, lit up the entire river bottom, circled the river quite a few times, and approached onshore spectators before taking off vertically and disappearing. Four days later, Palmyra citizens and police observe an object with red, white and amber lights on it, plus two very powerful headlights in front; this object silently and slowly circles the whole town at low level, and only when police officers shine a spotlight on it, does it finally move away and disappear...'

'Okay. You've convinced me.' The younger man grinned, shook his head from side to side, glanced sideways at the old man, looked away, saw the silvery-blue sky. 'Any contact? Anything verifiable?'

'Not with the police.'

The old man sighed, a muted hint of defeat, played abstractedly with the collar of his rumpled shirt, his gray eyes on the desert. The helicopter vibrated, roared and rattled around him, lifting up and then dropping down again in a sickening fashion. The old man looked down below, saw the mountains and valleys, the red earth, the scorched, writhing rocks, a world untouched by time... No, that wasn't so: nothing left had remained untouched. He looked down on Two Guns, Winona, Humphreys Peak, thought of all that had lived there and passed away because it no longer mattered. The land below was haunted, the dust settling over history, erasing the Apache and the Mojave, the Papago and the Pima, the Hopi and the Hualapai and the Yavapai, the Maricopa and Paiute. The Spanish ricos had disappeared but lonely missions remained, their walls bleached by the sun and eroded by fierce, swirling winds, the ancient bells red with rust. Arizona was unreal, a dream of legend and myth, its prairies crossed by Kit Carson and Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp, still sheltering the reservations and pueblos, the sad remains of the Indians. The old man glanced down and shivered, felt the clinging, familiar fear, tried to reconcile the past with the present and its possible future. He thought of the White Sands Proving Ground, of Alamogordo, New Mexico, of Los Alamos

and what it represented: the ever-threatening Atomic Age. Yes, the future was here and now - in aeronautics and atomic research. It was also in the lights in the sky that now obsessed the whole world.

There has of course been contact,' the old man said. 'But alas, not with policemen.'

The Air Force?'

'Doubtless. But not announced.'

'No. Those bastards wouldn't'

The old man rubbed his beard, seeming more tired each minute, a slight, almost imperceptible shiver running through his short body.

'Still,' the young man said, 'I think we're becoming more respectable. Did you know that on 21 February this year Monsieur Robert Galley, the French Minister of Defense, gave an interview on France-Inter in which he stated categorically that UFOs exist, that the phenomenon over France was massive, that they were considered of definite interest to national defense, and that since 1970, in collaboration with the Gendarmerie, all information regarding French sightings has been passed over to the Groupment d'Etude des Phenomenes Aeriens for investigation? I also note that this very month the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics has revitalized its UFO committee. So, not to pun, things are looking up.'

The old man seemed lost in thought, fingers scratching his beard, looking slightly impoverished beside the more colorful presence of his younger friend. When he finally spoke, his voice was soft and remote, as if divorced from himself.

'I'm tired,' he said. 'I'm growing old and I'm tired. I've been at this business for twenty-five years and I've seen too many friends kill themselves. I'm not tired. I'm just frightened.'

His young friend did not reply, merely gazed down at the desert, momentarily embarrassed into silence, knowing what the old man meant.

'You've heard of Calvin Parker and Charles Hickson?'

'Yes,' the young man said. The Pascagoula case.'
'Remarkable,' the old man said. The publicity was astonishing. A close encounter of the third kind that even Hynek was inclined to believe. When was that? Was it last year?'
'Yes,' the young man said. 'You've got your year right. The mouth of the Pascagoula River in Mississippi. A hell of a buzz.'
'Some can't be broken down,' the old man said. 'Some are just beyond reasoning.' He closed his fist and coughed into it, shook his head as if disgusted, rubbed at his eyes and glanced down, saw the stark, shadowed mountains. 'Route 114A near Manchester, New Hampshire. November, 1973, four o'clock in the morning. Driving home from work a twenty-five year old woman - checked out, highly intelligent - notices a bright orange light that continually vanishes and reappears in the sky ahead. About seven miles further on, the object is much closer than before, much lower, much larger. Estimated as being about sixteen hundred feet in front of her, it is ball-shaped and honeycombed with various hexagons. The object has a translucent quality about it, with red, green and blue rays emanating from its center; and it is making a steady, high-pitched whining sound which makes her whole body tingle. Briefly as follows: Though frightened, the woman is unable to remove her hands from the steering wheel and feels that the object is actually drawing her car toward it. There is a memory loss during a half-mile stretch. Recovering, the woman finds her car hurtling toward the object, which is now about thirty feet above the ground. Still driving, and about five hundred feet from the hovering object, the woman notices a window and an occupant inside, the occupant framed waist-up by the window. Description: head grayish, round, dark on top; eyes: large and egg-shaped; skin under the eyes loose or wrinkled. The witness didn't notice any ears or nose, though this may not mean anything... The witness seemed to be genuine.'
'Any trace cases?'
Too many to recount.'

'Actual contact?'
'Yes, your Pascagoula case.'
'That,' the young man said, 'was a humdinger.'
'Grayish skin again. Conical appendages for nose and ears. Round feet and hands, crablike claws, lots of wrinkles, no eyes recalled.'
'But five feet tall.'
'Yes.'
'Almost human.'
That's right. Almost human..'
The old man's voice trailed off, was drowned out by the roaring chopper, the chopper turning and dipping toward the earth, sunlight flashing around it. The old man felt ill, his stomach rumbling, heart fluttering, and he looked down on Dinosaur City, a gleaming maze in the desert
'We'll soon be there,' his young friend said.
'Good,' the old man said. 'I want to get it over and done with. I'm not as young as I used to be.'
'Well, you're still working. You've kept the institute going. I'm glad you haven't given up yet You're doing valuable work there.'
T hope so. I'm not sure. We can only do a limited amount. On the other hand, we are more organized - and nowadays they cooperate.'
The Air Force?'
'Yes. To a certain extent. However, what's more important - indeed, as you've just said - is the fact that witnesses from all walks of life are coming forward more willingly. The crank reports are now almost at zero, while reports from flight personnel, astronomers and even astronauts are being received at an astonishing rate. We now have a computer data bank for analysis of reports and storage of information. Areas covered include medical examinations of people and animals affected, psychological studies of witness reliability, theoretical studies of UFO movements and properties, photographic and special graphic analysis of UFOs, and analysis of plants that a UFO may have affected. In short,

we're covering the subject pretty thoroughly.'
The young man laughed, flicked blond hair from his blue eyes, glanced briefly at the pilot in front, then turned back to his friend.
'I believe it,' he said.
'And now Irving.'
'Jesus Christ... yes... I'm sorry.'
They fell silent after that, both plunged into gloom, each locked into his personal concept of what might have happened. The helicopter rolled and dipped, started shuddering and falling, and looking down they saw US 66, curving back toward the mountains. The old man rubbed his eyes, the sun blinding him, dazing him, then he reached for the knot in his tie and automatically tightened it
There they are,' his friend said.
The old man looked down, saw the dark line of the road, a ribbon winding around buttes and through valleys, shades of green, rose and lavender. Panic came and then departed, left him drained and forlorn, silvery sunlight exploding around him and then disappearing, leaving blue sky, white haze, a dark flock of birds, a jagged barrier of mountains in the distance, a stream of dense clouds above them.
The taste of death and its aftermath; the accumulation of fresh pain... his heart pounded and he let the fear depart and opened himself to his anger. He was old, most assuredly, growing older every day, but gazing down on the highway, seeing it widen and rush up toward him, seeing the police cars and the ambulance and the men around the other car, he let the rage wash away his grief and fear and charge his blood with new life. That was Irving down there. Back in Phoenix, Mary wept. The old man coughed and muttered an oath and sat back looking grim.
'I don't believe it,' he said.
The helicopter dropped lower, roared louder, shuddered roughly, brown rock and parched grass and yellow cacti moving up to enfold it Looking down he saw the police cars, the ambulance, the milling men, the latter gazing up, waving

hands, shading eyes, the red dust being swept up by the chopper and swirling around them. The chopper moved away, crossed the road, dropping lower, shuddered again and then settled down two-hundred yards from the road. There was a bump, a brief shaking, a subsidence, then peace, the engine whining into silence, the rotor blades finally stopping.

'Okay, you guys,' the pilot said loudly. 'Here we are. It's all yours.'

The young man with the blond hair and colorful clothes unsnapped his safety belt and stood up. The older man was slower, fumbling clumsily with his belt, finally managing to unsnap it and rise, breathing harshly; laboriously. There was a rattling and banging, a beam of sunlight poured in, then the pilot slid the ladder through the door and motioned them outside. The young man went out first, held his hand up to the old man, took his elbow and guided him down the ladder to the safety of drifting dust. The old man coughed and blinked, one hand shading his eyes; he felt the sudden, claustrophobic, burning heat and then followed his young friend. They kicked sand and trampled shrubs, saw a lizard, a line of ants, then they arrived at the edge of the road and saw their friend, Irving Jacobs.

Irving was in his car, his face flattened against the steering wheel, the back of his head blown away, a bloody mess all around him. His arms hung down by his sides, the wind rippling his shirt-sleeves, and his face was turned slightly toward them, staring at them with dead eyes.

'Oh my God,' the young man said.

The old man said nothing, simply shuddered and turned aside, tightened his tie and then took a deep breath and looked slowly around him. He saw police cars, the ambulance, the white medics, the milling cops, then a fat man wiping sweat from his forehead walked over to them.

'Stanford?'

'No, I'm Stanford.' The young blond man stepped forward. 'I'm sorry to have kept you all this time. I had a bit of a holdup.'

The fat man looked at Stanford, wiped more sweat from his face; he was big, but that didn't stop his gut from flopping over his belt.
'I'm Toland,' he said, 'Captain Toland. Homicide. I don't know what you birds want out here, but you better be quick. He's startin' to stink already. He's been cooked by the sun. He shot himself early this morning. Put the gun in his mouth.'
'What gun?' the old man asked.
"Who are you?' Toland said.
'I'm sorry,' Stanford said. This is Dr Frederick Epstein. Of the Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute in Washington. I told you I'd bring him.'
Washington, eh?' Toland said, mopping sweat from his brow. 'He must be a big fish.'
'Not big at all,' Epstein said. 'He was just a close friend. Now what's this gun you're talking about? My friend didn't own a gun. In fact he didn't even know how to shoot one, I can assure you of that.'
You don't have to know how to shoot one to blow your own head off.' The captain pulled out a handkerchief, mopped the back of his neck, glancing around at the cops taking measurements and photographing the dead man. 'You just unclip the safety catch,' he said, looking down at Dr Epstein, 'and stick the barrel in your mouth and pull the trigger. That's all there is to it.'
'He didn't own a gun,' Epstein repeated stubbornly. 'He wouldn't know where to buy one.'
'What are you, Doc? A scientist?'
That's right I'm a scientist.'
'You sound pretty melodramatic for a scientist. You can buy a gun anywhere.'
Epstein glanced at Stanford, saw him shrugging his shoulders; he glanced briefly at the dusty red Ford; at the policemen around it The policemen were dressed in tan, wore dark glasses and brimmed hats, seemed threatening with their pistols and clubs, murmuring jokes, laughing raucously. Epstein saw the side of the car, the door open, an arm

dangling: beneath a limp hand the sand was stained with a patch of dried blood. Epstein shuddered and turned away, felt anguish and choking rage rising out of himself and floating back to take a grip on his future. Captain Toland was staring at him, towering above him, gazing down, his fat face burned by sun and desert wind, his shirt rumpled and sweat soaked.
'It was a Luger,' Toland said. 'A German Luger. We've wrapped it up for the lab boys.'
'He wouldn't buy a gun,' Epstein said.
Then he stole it,' Toland said. 'He got a Luger and he shoved it in his mouth and that's all there is to it.'
'I don't believe that,' Epstein said.
'Jesus Christ,' Toland said. He turned his head and looked appealingly at Stanford. The Doc thinks it was murder.' The thought obviously amused Toland, made him grin and scratch his belly; then he turned back to Epstein, took his shoulder and said, 'Here, come with me, Doc.'
They walked around some lounging cops, past the ambulance, toward the Ford, Epstein feeling a deep surge of revulsion at the sight of that dangling arm. Then he gazed down at his friend, saw the bloody, shattered head, turned aside and looked down at the ground and saw a dark stain on red earth.
'Don't look at him,' Toland said. 'Just take a good look around you. Tell me what you see or what you don't see... Just have a good look.'
Epstein did as he was told, a small man, tired and grim, rubbing slowly at his beard and staring around him, his gray eyes lined with age. The desert lay there before him, scorched eternally by the sun, rolling away through the buttes, into valleys, the distant mountains in blue haze. Stillness. Desolation. His gaze returned to the men around him: the medics were pulling a stretcher from the ambulance and walking toward the red Ford. They were dragging his friend out, a dead thing, meat and bone, and he choked back his rage and revulsion, looked once, turned away again. The sky,

the white clouds, the ocher mountains beneath them; the mountains fell to the wilderness floor that stretched across to his feet.
'I don't know what you mean,' he said.
The captain sighed with satisfaction, twisted his body and glanced around him, then waved one hand languidly at the road, at the tracks of the vehicles.
Those tracks there,' he said. The tracks right in front of you. They belong to your friend's car and there isn't a trace of a skid mark: he drove up here and stopped.' The captain waved his hand again, indicating more tracks - tracks crisscrossing each other and spreading out to the police cars and ambulance. 'He was found by our patrol car. There were no other tracks here. Those tracks you see belong to our vehicles - before we came there was nothing. Just one set of tracks - your friend's tracks - there were no other vehicles. Our own car was the first to reach him. No other cars had passed this way. No tire tracks, no footprints, no nothing... He did it all on his own, Doc.'
Epstein didn't reply, simply stood there deep in thought, his unfocused eyes becoming more alert when they fell on the medics. They were at the back of the ambulance, one inside, one on the ground, Irving Jacobs strapped tightly to the stretcher that was tilted between them. Dr Epstein stepped forward, touched his friend's face with his fingers, shook his head from side to side as if bewildered, then stepped back and just watched. The stretcher was hoisted up, the gleaming doors were slammed shut; the remaining medic ran around to the driver's seat and waved a hand and climbed in. The engine roared into life, the wheels churned the dust up, then the ambulance reversed and turned around and drove along the deserted road. Epstein watched it drive away, didn't move till it disappeared, then finally sighed and walked back to young Stanford, who was looking perturbed.
'Jesus,' Stanford said, 'that was awful. How the hell could he do it?'
Epstein opened his mouth to speak, changed his mind,

shrugged his shoulders, glanced around and tightened his lips with distaste when Captain Toland approached him.
That's it,' the captain said. We're going back now. They'll do the autopsy in Phoenix. You got any more questions?'
'No, Captain,' Stanford said. 'No more questions. Thanks for your help.'
'No sweat,' the captain said, the sweat pouring down his face, dabbing at his neck with the handkerchief, his grin directed at Epstein. 'It's all part of the service.'
He turned and walked away, his large hips rolling rhythmically, a pistol slapping up and down on one thigh, a hand mopping his forehead. The other cops were in their cars, the cars reversing in clouds of dust, then screeching, wheels churning up more dust as they shot down the road. The captain turned back and waved, his flushed face split by a grin, then he chortled and climbed into his car and the car rumbled away. Stanford stood beside Dr Epstein. They watched the cops drive away. They waited until all the cars had disappeared in the distance, then they turned, the dust settling around them, and walked back to the helicopter.
'Okay?' the pilot asked.
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'Homeward bound.'
They strapped themselves into their seats and Epstein loosened his tie, wiping sweat from his neck with his hand as the chopper took off. They climbed straight up toward the sun, the sky dazzling, a blinding haze, Epstein gazing down on US 66, the drifting dust of the wilderness.
'How's your love life?' Epstein asked.
'Pretty regular,' Stanford said.
'You're picking up a bad reputation.'
'I know. I just love it.'
'I thought you were marrying some girl.'
'Yes. I was. I changed my mind.'
'You could never make decisions,' Epstein said. That's your one human weakness.'
Stanford grinned and shook his head. Epstein smiled and patted his arm. The chopper climbed higher, the land spread-

ing out below, and Epstein suddenly leaned forward, his eyes widening, filled with shock, and reached out and took Stanford by the shoulder and shook him impatiently.
'Tour flap!' he snapped. 'New Mexico and Arizona. You mentioned the Coolidge Dam.'
That's right,' Stanford said.
'Any more?' Epstein snapped. 'Apart from Coolidge! Did you have any more?'
Stanford was startled. 'Shit, yes,' he said. He stared hard at his old friend, at his flushed, impatient face, and was amazed to see the brightness in his eyes, an almost fevered intensity. 'All over the place,' he said. 'A constant flap the past three days. Over Glendale, over Prescott, over Tucson and Eloy, over Flagstaff and Sedona and Sunset Crater - the whole goddamned show.'
'Look down there? Epstein hissed.
Stanford looked down. He saw US 66. He saw the spot where Irving Jacobs had been found, the rocky earth all around it Then he blinked and looked harder. A shiver ran down his spine. He suddenly saw the rippling earth, the concentric rings of dust and sand, the rings surrounding the spot where Irving had been found and running out a great distance. It was like the thumbprint of a giant, the rings like whorls on the earth, as if the dust and sand had been blown away by some awesome explosion. Stanford blinked and kept looking. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. The huge thumbprint was half a mile in diameter, the earth scorched at its edges.
'Oh my God!' Stanford said.
The helicopter climbed higher, turned away from the sun, and neither Stanford nor Epstein said a word as they flew back to Winslow.

CHAPTER TWO

The man who stepped off the luxury cruiser onto the Puerto Banus yacht harbor near Marbella, southern Spain, was tall and sophisticated, wearing a black shirt and slacks, his eyes hidden behind dark glasses, his hair silvery but plentiful, parted neatly on the left and falling down over an unusually seamless forehead. He stood briefly on the dock, surveying the massed boats of the rich, then he turned in a sharp, decisive manner and walked alongside the restaurants. The tables were crowded, the clientele suntanned and elegant, wearing bikinis and sport shirts and sunglasses, gazing up at the mountains' haze. The man in black ignored them, walking slowly and carefully, only stopping when he arrived at the Sinatra Bar, looking in, entering warily.

The bar was bright and cool, almost empty, very quiet, one young lady at the far end of the counter, another man near the entrance. This man was middle-aged, rather plump, dressed in a white suit, the suit bulging slightly over his left breast to which a pistol was strapped. He looked up and smiled, a practiced smile, nervous, then he lightly patted the chair to his left, his fingers glittering with rings.

'Ah,' he said.'Mr Wilson!'

Wilson nodded curtly, remained standing in the doorway, removed his glasses and blinked azure eyes and stared along the bright room. The young woman was tanned and lovely, brown hair trailing down her spine, breasts and crotch em-

phasized by her bikini, the long legs crossed invitingly. Wilson looked at her, studied her, saw the indolence of the rich, and then, satisfied that she was harmless, he sat beside the white-suited man.

'Buenas dias,' the white-suited man said. 'It's been a very quiet time, senor.'

'That sounds promising,' Wilson said.

'I think so, Mr Wilson. There's been nothing unusual at all. The work's all been routine.'

'No visitors?'

'Not a knock on the door.'

'I feel better each minute.'

A short, dark Spanish girl emerged from a door behind the bar, saw Wilson and started to move toward him. Wilson smiled pleasantly, but shook his head from side to side, and the girl, with a slight, knowing nod, turned away to clean glasses.

'You're not drinking?' the man in white said. 'I thought your trip would have made you thirsty.'

'Not for wine, Fallaci. Just for rest. I am here to relax.'

Fallaci nodded and sipped his vino, his fingers glittering around the glass, then he glanced at the young lady along the bar and slowly turned back to Wilson.

'I had a telephone call this morning. From our friends in Arizona. They said to tell you that Irving Jacobs is dead. It's been announced as a suicide.'

'How unfortunate,' Wilson said. 'At least for him. I would like to leave now.'

Fallaci licked his lips, turned around and snapped his fingers, and the Spanish girl smiled and walked toward him, blue-jeaned hips swaying sensually. 'Cuanto?' Fallaci said.

'Ciente pesetas, senor.'

Fallaci put his money down on the counter. 'Muchas gracias,' he said.

He slid his legs off the stool and followed Wilson through the doorway, the sun blinding, flashing off the white walls, the rolling boats, the blue water. Fallaci blinked and glanced

around him, saw tanned thighs, a brief bikini, then he saw the upraised hand of Mr Wilson, heard the snap of his fingers.
'Where's the car?' Wilson said.
'This way,' Fallaci said.
'We're not in public now,' Wilson said.
'Sorry, sir. This way, sir.'
They walked along a narrow street, the high walls painted white, the balconies of the apartments overhead casting shadows around them. The street was cool but very short, opening out to a monstrous heat, a fierce white haze that enveloped the waste ground and shimmered over the dusty cars. Fallaci walked on ahead, his leather shoes kicking stones, a glittering hand upraised and waving, flicking sweat from his brow. He finally stopped at a black limousine, opened the rear door, waited patiently, let Wilson slip inside and settle down and then closed it again. When this was done he glanced around him, a portly figure, no longer suave, then he opened the driver's door and climbed in and switched on the ignition.
'How was Paraguay, sir?'
'It was hot,' Wilson said. 'Now please get me there as quickly as possible. I have much work to do.'
Fallaci flushed and turned away, released the hand brake, stepped on the gas, and the car moved off slowly, winding out of the parking lot, eventually turning onto the road to Fuengirola and picking up speed.
Wilson sighed and sat back, looked outside, saw the traffic, the parched blue and ocher hills rolling up to the sky, desecrated by white-walled urbanizationes, the influx of foreign wealth. Wilson grimaced with distaste, dropped his eyes, looked straight ahead, saw the dark hair on the back of Fallaci's head, the road racing toward him. Then he smiled and sat forward, pressed a button on Fallaci's seat, heard a humming as the glass pane slid down and cut him off from his driver.
The back of the car was soundproofed, air-conditioned, well cushioned, a bar, telephone and Video-TV recording system all built into the back of the front seats. There was a

mirror above the cabinet Wilson studied his own reflection. He saw a deeply tanned, strangely ageless face, blue eyes cold with intelligence. Wilson sighed, feeling removed from all his years, then he unhooked the cassette recorder microphone and started to talk.

'One. General. The British Mercantile Airship Transportation Company, in collaboration with Plessey, are currently working on an experimental prototype of a Thermo Skyship. The Skyship, which has been developed under the general leadership of Rear Admiral David Kirke, is shaped like a flying saucer with the engines positioned right around the rim. Estimated diameter: six hundred and fifty feet Approximate weight five hundred tons. The machine is reputed to get its lift partly from helium and partly from hot air generated by the swiveling jet engines. Envisaged speed at the moment is one hundred miles per hour, but most certainly this will be improved upon. The British Defense Ministry has expressed interest in this machine with a view to speeding the Rhine Army into battle, and it has been confirmed that the Royal Navy has also expressed interest in the possibility of using the Skyships for North Sea Oil defense... File for review.

'Confirmation received that for the past ten years the United States Air Force has been watching and photographing the secret Soviet laboratory at Semipalitinsk where it is believed that the Russians are developing an extremely powerful beam weapon capable of destroying intercontinental missiles at almost the speed of light. The beam is thought to comprise atomic or sub-atomic particles - electrons, protons or ions - equivalent to billions of volts of electricity and accelerated toward the target at just under one hundred and eighty thousand miles per second. John Allen, senior US government scientist, has stated that a weapon of this type now appears to be possible; and both George J. Keegan, head of USAF Intelligence, and Dr Willard Bennett, member of the US team that was obliged to abandon beam weapon work in 1972, believe that the Russians are well ahead of the Ameri-

cans in this field ... Regular surveillance of the Semipalitinsk laboratory is recommended.
'In July of 1985 NASA plans to launch a new, solar powered, ion engine spacecraft whose purpose is to fly to Halley's Comet and circle Temple 2. A space shuttle will carry the spacecraft into earth orbit and then a dual-engine Inertial Upper Stage booster will propel the one thousand six hundred-kilogram probe into an interplanetary orbit, after which the fuel boosters will drop off and the solar-powered ion engine will take over the three year, low-thrust voyage to Temple 2... File for review.'
Wilson switched the mike off, pursed his lips, glanced outside, watched the huge apartment blocks sweeping past, the mountains soaring beyond them. This stretch of road was ugly, scarred by building sites and hotels, the old villages now bustling, gaudy towns, filled with tourists and souvenirs. The old Spain was dead and the new expanded every day, spreading out along the Costa del Sol like some hideous cancer. It was the dawn of Democracy, that old dream that devoured itself, and Mr Wilson, with his ruthless intelligence, was appalled by the sight of it He sighed, pursed his lips, listened to the humming of the limousine, then sank back into his seat and switched the mike on and started to talk again.
'Two. Prosthetics. Work is progressing at an uncomfortable rate on the artificial heart, lung, gut and gill, not to mention artificial cells, blood vessels, intestines and even skin. Artificial bones, joints and sockets are being used with increasing success, the main alloys being of the cobalt and chromium variety: tantalum, titanium, niobium and molybdenum. Blood vessels, heart valves, bone, skin, blood and the cornea of the eye have all been preserved artificially. Skin, stored in DSMO for periods of years, has been successfully grafted to the human body by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Bone frozen for years and then revived with cobalt radiation has also taken when grafted to the body. likewise, red blood cells have been freeze-dried for years, and now tissue banks are disturbingly

common. Indeed, it has been pointed out that the US Navy tissue bank recently supplied some three thousand square inches of human skin to Brazilian fire victims... Request further research.
'External prosthetics. Myoelectric control is advancing every day, with the Soviets reportedly making the greatest advances in this field. Apparently the Soviets have already perfected a hand-arm prosthesis in which all five fingers are capable of closing around objects of variable shape with the precision of the human hand. British scientists have developed, among other things, myoelectric arms with interchangeable hands; while in the United States a team of scientists and engineers from Harvard, MIT and Massachusetts General Hospital have developed a sophisticated myoelectric arm that moves at any angle, speed or force simply by being thought into action. This arm picks up muscle signals generated to the natural stump, transmits these to a small amplifier and uses them to drive a compact electric motor; the machinery for all this is housed inside a flesh-colored, fiber-glass casing that resembles a real arm... Researchers at the Powered limbs Unit of West Hendon Hospital in England have come up with what amounts to an implantable electrode or transmitter, called an Emgor. This uses a resonator circuit that does not require batteries to detect myoelectric signals, thus obviating the need for frequent surgical intervention to replenish the power source. It is to be noted that amputees so treated are actually capable of unconscious gesticulations - and that similar lower body prostheses have now been developed to the point where some surgeons are willing to perform himicorporectomies: amputation of the entire lower half of the body, including legs, rectum and genitalia. This procedure has already been offered to patients in a prominent New York hospital as an alternative to death by abdominal cancer... Request further research.'
The car turned off the main road, bumping over rough ground, and Wilson looked out and saw the surrounding hills, the fields of olive trees and wheat. They passed a

scattered urbanization, the walls whitewashed and gleaming, gardens parched by the sun, the earth hard, a fine dust on the Moorish walls. Wilson studied the place casually, noted the swimming pools and bikinis, the tanned limbs of the expatriates lounging around the deck chairs and tables. Oblivious. And superfluous. The real world would pass them by. Wilson smiled and settled back, observed Mijas high above, then his blue eyes turned bright and intense as he started to talk again.

Three. Gerontology. Dr Richard Hochschild of the Microwave Instrument Company of Del Mar, California, has discovered that by adding DMAE to the water of mice one increases their life span significantly. Other investigators have successfully employed centrophenoxine to delay lipofuscin buildup in the brain of guinea pigs; likewise, Phenoxene is being used experimentally in France to improve the mental abilities of senile patients.

'Along the same lines, Dr Horace T. Poirier is close to developing a number of compounds that increase life by as much as fifty percent in mice. These include Vitamin E, mercaptothylemine, BHT, Santoquin and sodium hypophos-phite, an old drug used for the treatment of tuberculosis. Also being utilized is DMAE, dimethylaminoethalol, a lysome membrane stabilizer which strengthens cells against damage caused by lipofuscin accumulations... Eliminate Poirier.

'An increasing number of scientists now believe that the program for aging is encoded in the hypothalamus-pituitary system. Among these are Dr Joseph R. Wiseman of Chicago, who has successfully reactivated the estrus of aged female rats by stimulating the hypothalamus with electric impulses; he has also reactivated the ovarian cycles of the old females by feeding them LrDopa, a dopamine stimulator also used in the treatment of Parkinson's disease, and hormones such as progesterone, epinephrine and iproniazid ... Eliminate Wiseman.

'Dr Saul A Terkel, director of the Gerontology Research Institute, Richmond, Virginia, now believes that if life-exten-

sion were to become a national priority like the space program, and if the Americans, Russians and Japanese were to join hands in a billion dollar assault on aging and death, this could produce dramatic results in five years. Terkel has pointed out that such a program would cost no more than these countries now spend on the maintenance of old age homes. Now, backed by the full authority of the Gerontology Research Institute, Terkel is lobbying Washington with disturbing success... Eliminate Terkel.'

The car climbed the mountain road, bouncing over large stones, passing immaculate urbanizationes and dilapidated farmhouses, just occasionally passing a Spaniard on a donkey, the field hands bent in labor. Wilson frequently glanced out, observed the white haze of the sky, a thin ribbon of gray cloud above the mountains, the dizzying sweep of the valleys. The past was crumbling beneath the present, the future racing to devour them both, and Wilson sat there, trying to remember all his years, the broad terrains he had traveled. Then the limousine slowed down, took the left fork of the road, headed away from Mijas, toward Alhaurin el Grande, as Wilson closed his eyes and opened them again and talked into the microphone.

'Four. Telesurgery and telepsychiatry. Telediagnosis is now being utilized between Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston Logan International Airport, between numerous California hospitals, and between two hospitals in Edinburgh, Scotland. Also, a telesurgery linkup has been established between Massachusetts General Hospital and the Bedford Veteran's Administration Hospital eighteen miles away. In all these areas the computer becomes more predominant.

'It is also to be noted that many bioengineers are now claiming that computer and human brain will soon be directly linked. Said R. M. Page of the US Naval Research Laboratory: "The information which a machine can obtain and store from a person in a few minutes will exceed the fruits of a lifetime of man-to-man communications." As to method: "The coupling mechanisms to carry out the functions will be

myriad, including in some cases electrical connections to the body and to the brain. Some connections may be wireless, with imperceptible transmitting elements implanted in the body."

'Further note: Geneticists Harold P. Klinger and Orlando J. Miller, speaking before an international symposium on fetology, suggested that what was needed in the United States was a national registry of hereditary abnormalities to help prevent the conception of defective children. This system would have to be implemented via all newborn children when their skin and blood samples would, as a matter of course, be fed into a computerized genetic scanner which would immediately establish the presence of any chromosomal abnormalities and print them out on data cards that would be kept on permanent file in Washington DC. Computer analysis of current ethical attitudes on this subject is required. Please action.'

Wilson switched off the microphone and gazed through the window to see the archaic village of Coin. The car went through the village, past the dark eyes of the Spaniards, and traveled on down a steep, winding road, between two rows of olive trees. Wilson leaned toward the console, pressed a button, ejected the cassette tape, took the tape and slipped it into his shirt pocket and then sat back impatiently. The car eventually emerged to sunlight, to flat fields strewn with rubble, and moved uphill and then leveled out and drove straight toward the house.

The house was buried between barren hills, well protected by a high-walled compound, the walls featureless, made of square concrete blocks that had never been painted. The walls were twenty feet high, their tops covered with barbed wire, the only entrance being a large wooden door broad enough for the car. The whole compound was solid, completely hiding the house inside, standing four-square between the surrounding hills like some stark, lunar fortress.

The car stopped before the compound and Wilson stayed in the back while Fallaci got out and walked up to the door.

Wilson sat there and watched him, saw him pressing a metal buzzer, read his lips when he talked into the box and gave the code word for entrance. Fallaci then returned to the car, got inside, waited patiently; then the large wooden door slid up on metal grooves and Fallaci drove inside.

'Here we are, sir,' he said.

Wilson sat there impatiently, drumming his fingers on the seat, and Fallaci flushed and climbed out of the car and opened the rear door. Wilson sighed and climbed out, stretched himself, looked around him, neither pleased nor disturbed to be back, simply checking the compound.

The compound was empty, graveled earth between walls and house, no shrubbery, no trees, no outbuildings... just open space to be crossed. There were cameras on all the walls and they swiveled back and forth, high up, their lenses shaded from the sun, with infrared beams for night-time.

The house was linear, functional, a rectangle of brick and glass, about a hundred feet long, about fifty feet wide, the roof flat, the structure two stories high, the two doors made of solid steel. The numerous windows were large, made of bulletproof, one-way glass, and constantly moving above each of these windows were more scanning devices.

Fallaci walked up to the front door, pressed a button, glanced at Wilson; the door opened and Wilson walked inside and Fallaci then followed him. Fallaci closed the door behind him, pressed a button to set the alarms, and then he stood there with his hands behind his back, his full attention on Wilson.

'I'll have a fruit and nut cereal,' Wilson said. 'And a glass of white wine. Very dry. Very cold.'

Fallaci nodded and departed, disappeared through a nearby door, and Wilson walked along the corridor to his study. The walls were bland and impersonal, covered in spray-on felt fabric, no decoration, just digital control panels filled with flickering green numerals. Wilson studied them as he walked, noting temperatures, power levels, then he went into his study, into silence, subdued lighting, the fiber glass

Jacobean oak panels looking just like the real thing. He sat down behind his desk, beside a panel of tiered buttons, pressed a button and then sat back in the chair and studied the screens above.

There were six screens in all, banked in two rows of three, all set into the wall before the desk and wired up to the scanner. The scanners were all over the building, cutside and inside the compound walls, in the bedrooms, in the toilets, in the garage, and they were all wired for sound. Wilson surveyed the whole place from here, controlled its temperature and lighting, could open and shut any door at will, could plunge the place into darkness.

The screens flickered into life, the pictures sharp and precise, showing the kitchen, the servants' quarters, the laboratory, each from two different angles. The scanning cameras moved constantly, showing the whole of each room, and Wilson switched the different receivers off and on, thus surveying the whole house. For the most part it was empty, the rooms vague in subdued lighting, the walls covered in fiber glass and spray-on felt, the furniture functional and sparse. The building was almost futuristic, strangely sterile and impersonal, a luxury abode for transient inhabitants, the silence heightening the strangeness.

Wilson switched back to the kitchen, observed Fallaci and the crippled dwarf, both standing before the gleaming cooker unit, Fallaci mopping his sweaty brow. The dwarf was a disgusting sight, his spine bent, his legs twisted, his right hand a metal claw that was strapped to his arm with wires running into a small pack at his waist, the pack bulky and heavy. It was a primitive prosthetic and the dwarf was tired of it, forever begging Wilson to fit him a new one, always being refused. Now Wilson smiled slightly, reached down and pressed a button, saw Fallaci and the dwarf look up promptly at the camera above them.

'Hello, Rudiger,' Wilson said to the dwarf. 'How are you feeling?'

'Ah, ah,' the dwarf stuttered, his metal claw opening and

closing, his eyes blinking above a queerly flattened nose and thick, dribbling lips. 'Ah, ah ... all right... you know, sir.. ah, all right... I think... I mean ... sleepless.'
'Sleepless?' Wilson said. 'You mean nightmares?'
The metal claw waved indecisively, hinges opening and closing, passing over the luminous, frightened eyes and scraping saliva from the lips.
'Ah ... nightmares... ah, yes, sir... bad, ah... very bad ... every night, all nights, ah, nightmares... can't sleep at nights.'
That sounds terrible,' Wilson said with a smile. 'When did this start?'
The metal claw waved more frantically, the blubbering lips opening and closing, the crippled dwarf in a positive anguish of speaking, trying to force the words out
'Ah, ah... start? When you left... always, sir, always then ... when you leave... the fear... dreadful nightmares ... too frightened to leave here.'
Wilson smiled again. 'You should have gone out,' he said. 'I told you, you could leave when you wished. I'm sure the break would have helped you.'
'Ah, ah ... grateful, sir... tried to go out... couldn't do it... too frightened ... very frightened ... of what's out there ... all the nightmares... too many bad dreams.' The claw opened and closed, snapped at air, clenched steel teeth, the dwarf's head rolling helplessly on stooped shoulders, lips dribbling saliva. 'So glad, sir... you're back... so relieved ... Please, sir... want you ... help me!'
'Go to your room,' Wilson said. 'Just lie down. Close your eyes. Go to sleep.'
'Please, sir... please, no ... the nightmares!'
'No more nightmares,' Wilson said soothingly. 'I am back. No more bad dreams.'
The dwarf shook with emotion, waved his claw, muttered gratitude, then turning around, glancing nervously at Fallaci, he shuffled out of the kitchen. Fallaci stood where he was, still looking up at the camera, a sharp image on the television

screen above Wilson's blue eyes.
'He's been orderly?' Wilson said.
'Yes, sir, he's been fine. I tried to force him out once or twice, but he was too scared to go. It worked just like you said it would.'
'Good,' Wilson said. 'I'll have my food in ten minutes. I'll relax for half an hour after that You can send the girl up
then.'
'Yes, sir,' Fallaci said.
Wilson pressed another button, putting the receivers on automatic, then he pulled the cassette tape from his shirt pocket and slotted it into the console. The recorder turned itself on and Wilson sat back and started to talk again.
'Five. Brain research. Electrical stimulation of the brain, ESB, has recently become dangerously innovative. The suggestion that computer-controlled electrodes be implanted in the brains of babies a few months after birth, thus robotizing them for life, has already been made by Curtiss R. Schafer in a paper he presented before the National Electronics Conference in Chicago some time ago - and while such a suggestion may have been made half in fun, it is now clear that such devices have moved out of the realms of animal experimentation and into the human arena with volunteer subjects wired for electro-sleep, electroprostheses, electro-vision, electroanalgesia, electroanesthesia and, increasingly, electrosociology.
'Dr Jose M. R. Delgado, professor of physiology at the Yale University School of Medicine, and Dr James Olds of McGill University in Canada, have both experimented with the so-called pleasure centers of the human brain, as has Dr Robert G. Heath of Tulane University. Meanwhile, Dr C. Norman Shealy, chief of neurosurgery at the Gundersen Clinic in La Crosse, Wisconsin, has perfected electroanalgesic techniques to the point where they are now being applied to humans, mainly through the implanting of a point eight to one point two stimulating electrode in the spine rather than the brain. Regarding electrosociology, a team of doctors at

Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston General Hospi-tal have pacified violent human subjects by the implantation of electrodes into the rostral part of the caudate nucleus of the brain. It is requested that all these people be placed under immediate surveillance.'

Wilson switched the recorder off and sat back looking thoughtful, then he stood up and walked across the room and passed his hand over a control box. The opaque box glowed red and the paneled walls slid apart to reveal a linked audiovisual computer system, a mass of screens and controls. Wilson pressed the MODE switch, another switch marked VISUAL/RECORD, and a receiver screen, six feet by six, started crackling and glowing. Wilson then turned a knob, saw a door, a white wall, kept turning until he saw the crippled dwarf stretched out on his bed. The dwarf was still wearing his clothes, a pair of blue jeans, checkered shirt, and he twisted and turned uncomfortably on the bed, moaning loudly and sweating. His eyes were luminous with fear, his metal claw opening and closing; and when he glanced around the room he seemed to shrink from the empty white walls.

'Stay still,' Wilson said, speaking softly. 'Relax. Just lie quietly.'

The dwarf froze where be lay, his large eyes fixed on the camera, and Wilson slowly turned another knob marked ZOOM and saw the dwarf's face in close-up. The dwarf's eyes were filled with hope, beads of sweat shone on his nose, and his tongue crept out tentatively from his lips to lick up the saliva. Wilson studied the screen and smiled, flicked a switch, turned a knob; and the dwarf's head started jerking, the eyes widening, then closing, until his head seemed to sink into the pillow, the lips shaped in a crooked smile.

Wilson studied the large screen, observed the dwarf in sleep, turned the sound up and heard even breathing, a heart beating more normally. He then looked at the ECG, noted the subdued, irregular flickering, and satisfied that the dwarf would sleep well, he turned the screen off.

Moving away from the console, Wilson walked across the

study and went through a door into an adjoining, L-shaped lounge. Filling up the narrow wall of this room was an enormous ITT television set, a Neal tape recorder, a Philips video recorder and a bank of expensive Revox hi-fi equipment. Facing this luxurious system, about fifteen feet from it, was a low settee with a bank of switches on one arm. Wilson sat down here, found a prepared list of video programs, studied them and then pressed the switch that was wired to the kitchen. There was a soft humming sound and part of the paneled ceiling descended, dropping down until it covered Wilson's legs and formed a small table. Sitting on the table was a bowl of fruit and nut cereal, with a glass of very dry, very cold wine.

Wilson pressed another switch marked VIDEO/ PLAY/3, then he picked up his spoon and started eating as the television screen brightened. He watched the program as he ate, his blue eyes sharp and intense, occasionally rubbing his very smooth, unlined forehead, concentrating ferociously. It was a prerecorded tape, a compilation of various programs, a condensed survey of all the scientific and political events that he had missed during his absence. He finished his meal but kept watching, his brain recording, calculating, and only when the program had finished did he seem to relax. He pressed another button, the table ascended into the ceiling, and then he stood up and languidly stretched himself and went into his bedroom.

This room was like all the others, the lighting subdued, the temperature modest, a few expressionist paintings decorating the walls, more control panels flickering. Wilson undressed himself, his body lean but tense with muscle, enormous scars running across his back and chest, and stepped into the shower. Like all else in this building, the water's temperature was preset; the water also contained an olive-based detergent that negated the need for soap. Wilson stood there for some time, his brain disseminating information, then he stepped out, dried himself with a warmed towel, and lay down on the bed.

There were glass panels in the ceiling, hiding a Nordic

solarium, and Wilson pressed another button, the glass pan-els slid apart, and the solarium came on automatically, pouring down infrared rays. He lay very still, his eyes covered by protective glasses, breathing deeply, holding his breath for long periods, letting it out very slowly. His tense muscles relaxed, his scarred body seemed to glow, and then, precisely thirty minutes later, the solarium switched itself off.

The girl arrived shortly after, opening the door with some care, looking across at him and seeing him nod and padding quietly toward him. She was in her bare feet, her body wrapped in a loose sarong, her jet-black hair trailing down her spine, shining under the soft lights. Wilson still lay on the bed, completely naked, looking up at her, his azure eyes revealing no more than a cool curiosity. The girl was slim, very young, probably in her late teens, her brown eyes and copper-toned skin suggesting a half-caste Eurasian. She stood beside Wilson's bed, her head bowed, her hands clasped, and Wilson lay there and studied her at length, quietly pleased by her beauty.

'What's your name?' he finally said.

'Rita,' the girl whispered.

'You know what I require?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Good. Please proceed.'

The girl loosened her sarong, let it fall to the floor, and stood there, her naked body gleaming, covered lightly with oil. Her legs were long and slim, her waist tiny, her breasts full, the triangle of hair slightly shaved, rather smooth, almost velvety. Wilson looked her up and down, his eyes calm, analytical, then he nodded and the girl smiled with gratitude and got to her knees.

She leaned over the bed, her hair falling across his loins, then she held his flaccid penis in one hand and slid it into her mouth. He watched her, smiling thinly, feeling her lips, her rolling tongue, her teeth pinching gently, imperceptibly, her mouth wet, a warm glove. Wilson lay there and smiled, a remote smile, half regretful, then he reached out and touched

the girl's head, felt it move up and down. Her wet lips, her rolling tongue: he tried to feel her and respond, gazing down at her shining, outspread hair, trying to will himself into her. The girl was expert, well schooled, her mouth working its way on him, but the distance he had traveled, all the years, again rendered him impotent. The girl finally raised her head, his flaccid penis in her hand, her brown eyes very large, lit by fear, her face begging forgiveness.

'It's all right,' he said quietly. 'It's not your fault. Just use the machine.'

The girl was visibly relieved, standing upright, smiling nervously, then she went to the wall beside the bed and pressed an imbedded button. Two paneled doors slid apart, exposed a bright walk-in cupboard, and the naked girl walked in and emerged with a neat, mobile console. Wilson closed his eyes and lay there, heard her movements, felt her hands; she dabbed the paste on his forehead, on his cranium and temples, then she fixed the small electrodes to his skull and switched on the machine.

An imperceptible current. A flow of energy through his brain. He relaxed, gave himself to the machine and felt his body responding. Opening his eyes, he saw himself: his erect, engorged penis; the naked girl was bending over his penis, tying something around it. He closed his eyes and surrendered, his years falling away from him, voluptuous visions and perverse, buried fantasies rising up to envelop him. Fierce reality and heat; the sublime, unraveled flesh... he surveyed it and touched it and felt it and returned to his youth. The girl breathed in his face, her tongue slithering between his lips, traveled down him, her tongue and lips working, sliding over him, burning him. The visions filled him and released him, engorged his flesh and drained it, and he gasped and slowly opened his eyes and felt the inflowing peace.

The room seemed a lot brighter. The naked girl was very real. He watched her as she soaped his sperm-drenched loins, washed him clean, dried him carefully. When she had finished, she straightened up, her dark, oil-slicked body

gleaming, looking at him, hesitation in her face, her head bowed automatically. Wilson smiled at her and nodded, indi-cating that she could leave, and she pushed the console back into the cupboard, closed the doors and walked out.

Wilson put the dark glasses on, pressed a button and lay stretched out; the glass panels in the ceiling slid apart to ex-pose the solarium. Wilson lay there for some time, his eyes closed, trying to relax, but eventually his restless intellect forced him upright and made him start work again. He rolled off the bed, put his dressing gown on, walked into the study and sat down and turned on the tape recorder, speaking qui-etly, precisely.

'Dr George D. Schroeder of the American Institute of Orgonomy, Seattle, writing in the English magazine New Scientist, has stated that orgone energy weather engineering techniques are an important new element in the environmental struggle. Schroeder has finally received government backing for a lengthy program of investigations into weather engineering possibilities. Already he had discovered that orgone energy ex-ists as mass-free energy in the soil, water and atmosphere of earth, and that it is manipulable by mechanical cloud-busters, commonly called CLBs. It is to be noted that so-called tuned CLBs have proved their value not only in weather engineering but in more than one UFO investigation. This has to be stopped.

Wilson stopped talking, sat back, stroked his chin, his sil-very-gray hair falling over his blue eyes, across that smooth unlined forehead. He gazed at the opposite wall, at the banked screens and video recorders, and his bright, mathematical brain considered all of the options. He had once met Schroeder, had found him tough and intelligent, a possibility that might yet be tapped, a candidate for the future. It was a pity to lose Schroeder, but he didn't have much choice: the good professor now had government backing and that smacked of progress. Wilson gazed across the room, pursed his lips, stroked his chin, then he sighed and ran his fingers through his hair and spoke quietly, implacably.

'Eliminate Schroeder.'

CHAPTER THREE

The Audi 100 GL, all white and polished and gleaming, came up over the top of the hill and rolled down through the narrow, gray street in no particular hurry. Richard stepped forward quickly, his thumb high in the air, but the gleaming white Audi purred past, splashing water across him.

'Oh, shit,' Richard murmured.

He pulled his thumb down and wiped rain from his forehead, glancing up to see the leaden gray sky and the dark, drifting clouds. At least the rain had stopped; there was that if nothing else. Richard shivered, adjusted his knapsack, checked the camera around his neck, then soaked to the bone, his hair plastered to his head, he turned and walked along the village street, past the small, silent houses.

The road opened out at the end of the village, curving uphill past a sevententh century church, dominated by green hills. The Audi had stopped in front of the church, its engine cutting in and out, the car jerking roughly as it misfired and tapered off into silence.

'Good for you,' Richard murmured.

He wiped rain from his beard, adjusted the knapsack on his shoulders, then sauntered in a casual manner toward the stalled car. An arm emerged from the driver's window, suntanned, definitely feminine, the fingers fanning out to drop a cigarette just where Richard was walking.

'Jesus!' a woman's voice said very softly.

Richard stopped immediately, looked down, saw her green eyes, a wave of very red, shining hair tumbling past pouting lips. The woman clenched her left fist and lightly hammered the steering wheel, then licked her upper lip and glanced at Richard, her fine eyebrows raised. Richard smiled encourag-ingly at her, ran his fingers through his long hair, his blue denims and jacket still wet, the cold creeping into him.

'Can I help you?' he asked.

The woman studied him a moment, gently biting her lower lip, then, satisfied that he looked sane, she shrugged her shoulders and nodded.

'I haven't a clue what happened,' she said. 'It just suddenly cut out.'

Richard shivered and glanced around him, saw the green hills of Devon, then he let the knapsack slide from his shoul-ders and fall to the ground.

'It might be nothing,' he said. 'A bit of damp. Something jammed. It probably isn't anything serious. I'll look under the hood.'

The woman stared at him. Her gaze seemed to be unfocused. She had a thin, suntanned face, sophisticated, rather weary, fine eyebrows arching above the green eyes, lips unpainted and moist

'Get it started and I'll give you a lift,' she said. 'Cars quite simply baffle me.'

'It didn't cut out gradually?'

'No,' the woman said. 'I saw the lightning and then the car cut out. Does that make any sense to you?'

Richard glanced at the gray sky. 'Lightning?' he said. 'Are you sure? I didn't see any lightning. I don't think it was that.'

The woman shrugged again. 'It looked like lightning,' she said. Anyway, that's when the car cut out. I just don't under-stand it.'

'Not lightning,' Richard said. 'I don't think it was lightning You probably saw the lights of a plane. Let me look at the engine.'

The woman shrugged again and leaned across to her left,

her thin hand reaching down to the floor beneath the passenger seat Richard shivered, feeling cold, hearing the snapping of the lock, then he walked to the front of the car and raised the wide, heavy hood. The engine looked normal. He told the woman to try the ignition. She did so and the car roared into life and then ticked over smoothly.

Richard stepped back, surprised. He glanced past the raised hood. The woman was leaning out of the window, the wind blowing her red hair.

'What did you do?' she asked.

'Nothing,' Richard said.

'You must have done something,' the woman said.

'I just looked at it,' Richard said. He shrugged and grinned at her, stepped forward and slammed the hood down, then walked back and leaned toward the woman, his eyes fixed on the warning lights.

'It looks okay,' he said. The battery light's out. It must have been something pretty simple, and it's obviously cured itself.'

The woman smiled at him, her green eyes unfocused. You just looked at it,' she said, 'and it worked. You must be a charmer.'

Richard blushed and grinned shyly. 'I don't think so,' he said. 'Anyway, it's working okay, so do I get that lift now?'

'Where are you going?'

'St Ives.'

You've got it,' she said. 'Put your knapsack in the boot. It's not locked. Let's go while the going's good.'

Richard grinned with pleasure, a boyish grin, blue eyes gleaming, then he picked up his knapsack, glanced briefly at the gray church, and walked to the rear of the car, very glad it had stalled. He opened the trunk, heaved the knapsack in, closed the trunk and then returned to the woman, looking down at her upturned face. She had lit another cigarette, her lips pouting, blowing smoke, and the green of her eyes was slightly bloodshot, her gaze still unfocused.

'Okay,' she said. 'Get in.'

'Front or rear?' Richard asked.
'I don't like to talk over my shoulder, so get in beside me.'
Richard walked around the car, opened the door and climbed in, closed the door and sank back into the seat, appreciating the luxury. The dashboard was polished wood, the seats a deep maroon velours, and the woman, in her knee-length dark dress, seemed to match it all perfectly. Her red hair was long and lustrous, tumbling down around her shoulders, emphasizing the shifting green of her eyes when she glanced at him briefly. She put her foot on the clutch, the dress tightening, drawing upward, and Richard saw the shadowed outline of her thighs as she turned the ignition on.
'It's still working,' she said.
Richard nodded, smiled at her, clasped his hands and unclasped them, as the woman put her foot on the accelerator and the car started moving. The green hills, the dripping trees, the brooding clouds above the road... Richard kept his eyes fixed on the scenery, feeling tired and unreal.
The woman drove in a careless manner, keeping at fifty miles an hour, her right hand on the steering wheel, her left holding the cigarette, her lips pouting when she exhaled the smoke, her breasts rising and falling. Richard kept glancing sideways, attracted to her, feeling furtive, surprised that he could harbor such notions for a woman so old. Not really so old: probably in her late thirties. Nevertheless she was sexy, her legs long, her breasts firm, and Richard flushed when she suddenly stared at him with her green, slightly bloodshot eyes.
'What's your name?' she asked.
'Richard ... Richard Watson.'
'A student?'
'Yes,' Richard said. 'I go to the Art College in Hornsey. I want to be a designer.'
'Hornsey?' the woman asked.
'London,' Richard said.
'Ah, yes,' the woman said. 'North London. I'm not keen on the area.'

She drove in silence for another minute, breathing deeply, inhaling smoke, and Richard shifted uneasily in his seat, trying to keep his eyes off her.
'A designer,' she said finally. 'What kind of designer?'
'Magazines,' Richard said. That kind of thing. At least that's what I'll start at.'
The woman glanced at him and smiled, blinked her green eyes, coughed a little. Richard glanced down to see her silken legs tapering into the high-heeled shoes.
'Why are you going to St Ives?' she asked.
'Just a holiday,' Richard said. 'A friend of mine owns a small cottage and he's letting me use it.'
The woman smiled again, lips pouting, blowing smoke; the smoke swam in a haze around Richard, making him cough.
'An art student,' the woman said.
That's right' Richard said.
'All art students drink,' the woman said. 'At least that's what I've heard.' She put her cigarette in her mouth, inhaled, blew the smoke out held the steering wheel lightly in her other hand, the green hills whipping past her. 'Well?' she asked abruptly.
'What?' Richard said.
'Is it true that all art students drink?'
'I wouldn't know,' Richard said.
He coughed into his fist a bit embarrassed by her conversation, and tried not to look at the breasts thrusting out from her tight dress. The woman was obviously wealthy, a bit jaded, worldly wise, but her strange, oblique statements filled him with a sense of foreboding. He thought the woman might be drunk. He glanced briefly at her eyes. The woman looked drawn and very tired, but he still thought her sexy. Richard shifted uncomfortably. A guilty flush burned his checks. He thought of Jenny back in London, of the two weeks ahead of him, and he silently cursed his primitive lust and wondered how men survived it.
'Do you drink?' the woman asked.
'When I can afford it,' Richard said.

'Good,' the woman said. 'I'd rather not drink alone. You'll find a flask of gin in the glove compartment I think we should share it.'
Richard turned his head slightly, glanced at her, saw her eyes, twin pools of green flecked with red, and was convinced of her drunkenness. He turned away just as quickly, attracted to her, feeling foolish, pulled the glove compartment down and saw two flasks, one on top of the other.
The bottom flask,' the woman said. The top one's empty. I get tired when I drive.'
Richard blushed at that remark, removed the top flask, withdrew the bottom, unscrewed the cap, held the flask out to the woman, saw her shaking her head from side to side, her red hair like a flame.
'You first,' she said quietly.
Richard shrugged and drank some gin, felt it burning down inside him, warming him, making his head swim, alleviating his weariness. He wiped his lips and burped a little, passed the flask to the woman; she stubbed her cigarette out, took the flask, her right hand on the steering wheel. Richard watched her drinking. The shining red hair framed her face. When she finished, she passed the flask back and put her hand on the steering wheel.
'Have another,' she said.
They both drank much too fast They passed the flask back and forth. The A30 ran past Dartmoor, through Featherford and Fowley, stretched ahead through the green hills and fields, climbing up, rolling down again. They saw little of all this, both involved in their drinking, time dissolving as the drink took command and made them feel more unreal. Richard studied the woman. He thought of Jenny back in London. This thought, with its residue of guilt, crossed his mind and then passed.
'You never saw the lightning,' the woman said. 'I just don't understand that.'
Richard reached into his pocket, pulled out a cigarette, lit it and then glanced at the woman, wondering what she was

talking about The woman returned his gaze, her green eyes vague and bloodshot, and the car, making a smooth, rhythmic humming, rolled on through the quiet countryside.
'Where are you going?' Richard asked.
'To Bodmin,' the woman said. 'I live in St Nicholas. It's a very small place, very quiet... Without London I'd die.'
Richard didn't reply. The woman seemed a bit distracted. He scratched his forehead and glanced out the window, saw the drifting clouds thinning. A pearly gray haze broke through, striations of weak light beaming down, fanning out, falling over the wet fields and, the stark, neolithic remains.
'What time is it?' the woman asked.
Richard looked at his watch. Ten to six,' he said. 'Around that... give or take a few minutes.'
'You didn't see it,' the woman said.
'The lightning?'
'The light It was obviously some kind of bright light I keep thinking about it.'
Richard shivered. There was no lightning,' he said. 'No thunder, no lightning - just the rain. You must have seen an aircraft'
'With lights?'
'With lights.'
'In the daylight?'
That's right' Richard shrugged and drank some gin and passed the flask to the woman, saw the skepticism clearly in her eyes and looked back at the road. 'Okay,' he said. 'So you saw a bright light You saw a flash - a plane reflecting the sunlight I think that's what it was.'
He sighed much too loudly. The woman's eyes turned toward him. She shrugged and put the flask to her lips, driving dangerously fast
'No,' she said. 'It was too quick for that. It just came and then disappeared.'
Richard shook his bead wearily, feeling drunk, a bit disturbed, gazing out at the cold, descending evening, at the vast, bloody sky. The sun was sinking beyond the moors, a

fiery orb, large and luminous, melting slowly, spreading out along the hills in two streams of pulsating flame.
'Not possible,' Richard murmured. 'Just not possible. You must have imagined it.'
The woman didn't reply. Her red hair reached her breasts. The car hummed and vibrated, an abstract, seductive rhythm, the bleak hills of the moors rolling past, the road unwinding in front of them. Richard looked and was held, saw the marshlands and quarries, the neolithic stones silhouetted in that fierce, bloody sky. It was the landscape of a dream, serenely beautiful, strangely ominous, and it made Richard shiver and drop his eyes, wondering why it disturbed him.
'I think I'm drunk,' he murmured.
'Already?'
'Yes.'
'You must have been tired,' the woman said. 'Lie back ... try to sleep.'
Richard stubbed his cigarette out put his head back on the seat, closed his eyes and felt the drowsiness creep over him, almost embalming him. His thoughts scattered and spun, became streaming stars, dark shapes, the past and the present in one, as a shifting kaleidoscope: the cluttered rooms of the art college, a nude model in a chair, Jenny's brown eyes, the woman's flaming hair, the swirling mists over shadowed hills. He fell in and out of sleep, felt a langorous desire, saw the tight dress on the woman's shapely thighs, Jenny's darkly accusing gaze. Guilt and lust made him restless. His eyes fluttered and opened. He felt the woman's fingers at his elbow, tugging sharply, incessantly.
'There it is!' she hissed. 'Look!'
Richard shook himself awake. The car vibrated beneath him. He glanced briefly at the woman, saw her green eyes, her red hair, saw the pink bud of her tongue between her teeth and then looked at the sky. The sun was sinking in the west, a crimson orb above the hills, the sky a molten stream of red and blue, the clouds drifting away from him. Richard looked all around him. He saw nothing unusual. He looked

back at the woman, saw her bloodshot, glinting eyes, and wondered just how much she had drunk before picking him up.
'There's what?' he said.
'The woman hissed something, shook her head and smacked the steering wheel. 'Damn it,' she said. 'It was there! I just saw it! That light!'
Richard rolled his eyes mockingly. The lightning?' he said.
'No,' she snapped. 'Not lightning. Something else. A streak of light. It just passed us.'
'Passed us?'
'It crossed us. It flew east to west A long streak of light. Like a tadpole. I just blinked and it disappeared.'
'A meteor,' Richard said.
'You think so?'
'I think so.'
'Maybe you're right,' the woman said. 'I don't know ... it seemed strange.'
She shook her head slowly, her eyes brighter, less bloodshot, flitting from left to right in nervous movements, surveying the twilight sky. Richard stared at her, disturbed, wondering if she was hallucinating, now aware that the woman had drunk a lot and was dangerously tired. Then he looked up at the sky. He did it almost against his will. He saw drifting gray clouds, the crimson fire of the sinking sun, vaporous ribbons of mist along the hills, the lonely splendor of Bodmin Moor.
We're in Cornwall,' he said.
'You're a bright boy,' the woman replied. 'We've been in Cornwall for the past thirty minutes and you've finally noticed it.'
Richard flushed at her sarcasm. 'I'm pretty sleepy,' he said. 'I'm tired and the gin just knocked me out I can hardly keep my eyes open.'
The woman appeared not to have heard him. She kept looking all around her. Her green eyes were very bright, framed by flaming red hair, and she kept licking nervously at her

upper lip, her tanned brow furrowed anxiously. Her tension was contagious, reaching out and touching Richard; he glanced around and saw the moors, the hills rushing past the car, rolling up and falling away into shadow, looking ancient and ominous. Richard shivered again. He suddenly felt a bit haunted. He stared directly at the sun, at that sinking ball of fire, and the light spread out and filled his whole vision and made his eyes sparkle.
'Why strange?' he asked.
'Pardon?' the woman said.
'You said that the light you saw seemed strange. What did you mean by that?'
The woman's green eyes turned toward him, very bright no longer bloodshot, took him in and then turned back to the road and blinked repeatedly, nervously.
'I don't know,' she said.
'Think,' Richard said. 'Let's assume it wasn't a meteor or a plane. What did you think you saw?'
The woman took a deep breath, slowly licked her upper lip, then raised her left hand, spread her fingers and patted her glinting hair.
'It was very fast,' she said. 'It was very close the first time. The first time I just saw a bright flash and I thought it was lightning. The next time it was different: it was farther away. It was fast - a lot faster than a plane - and it seemed very bright. It flew from east to west. It shot across and disap peared. And it didn't really fly out of sight: it just seemed to wink out. It wasn't a plane. I know it couldn't have been a plane. It was strange. It wasn't a meteor ... I think it was climbing.'
Richard felt a bit ill. His head was light and he felt feverish. He wiped his lips with the back of his right hand, glancing vaguely around him.
'Climbing?' he asked.
'You're always repeating what I say.'
'It was faster than a plane and it was climbing? Are you sure you saw right?'

'I'm not that drunk,' the woman said. 'I think I know what I saw. That light was very bright, very fast, and the damned thing was climbing.'

'Any noise?' Richard asked.

'Not a sound,' the woman said. 'It just shot across and then it winked out... making no sound at all.'

Richard shrugged and glanced around him, saw the desolate, timeless moors, dark clouds drifting over the misty hills, the sky a darkening crimson haze. There was nothing up there. The woman was probably hallucinating. She was obviously very tired, she had drunk far too much, and now she was starting to fall apart and see things that weren't there.

This thought disturbed Richard. He wanted to get out of the car. He didn't want to end up in a ditch with his head through the windshield. He decided to avoid the subject, closed his eyes and tried to sleep. He slipped in and out of consciousness, his head spinning, stomach churning, thought of Jenny back in London, of the cottage in St Ives, of the woman's red hair and green eyes, her tongue licking her trembling lips. These visions were relentless, materializing and disappearing, giving way to streaming stars and spinning suns, to white lights in a black void. Richard shivered and muttered something. A bolt of panic lanced through him. He almost groaned and checked himself, shook his head and licked his lips, then spiraled back up through the darkness and opened his eyes again.

'What on earth... ?'

The woman glanced at Richard, shook her head in bewilderment, pressed her foot on the gas pedal and changed gears as the car coughed and spluttered. The engine roared and then cut out The woman cursed and pumped the pedal. The engine spluttered again and then was silent as the car rolled downhill. She turned the ignition key, changed gears and nothing happened. The car rolled down the hill, its wheels hissing in the silence, then it stopped at the bottom of the hill and its headlights went off.

'I don't believe this. What's wrong?'

The woman shook her head and angrily smacked the steer-ing wheel. She turned the ignition key once or twice and still nothing happened. Cursing, she looked at Richard. He shrugged and glanced around him. He saw the bloody-red sky, the gnarled silhouetted trees, a nearby circle of neolithic stones that seemed strangely ominous. Richard felt himself shivering. The silence seemed to be vibrating. He gulped and licked his lips, his heart racing inexplicably, then he turned and stared hard at the woman and imagined a roaring.

Not a roaring... something else... a strange, nerve-tin-gling humming. Richard blinked and saw that huge pulsating sun, the light shifting, expanding. 'Oh my God!' Richard mur-mured. He suddenly forgot what he was doing. The sun expanded and became a white sheet that blotted out the whole sky. Richard gasped and felt fear, pushed the woman against the door, saw her hands darting up to cover her ears, the sky beyond her a silver haze.

'Jesus Christ!' Richard hissed.

It came over the nearest hill, over the neolithic stones, a fierce incorporeal luminescence that spread out and moved forward. Richard stared and was blinded, turned away, looked again, heard a loud, almost physical humming, felt the sound was crushed by it. The woman shrieked and shook her head, her hair whipping around her face, bent forward, huddled up on hands and knees, trying to hide in her seat. The noise increased and the light expanded, swept across them, filled the car, and Richard gasped and felt a sudden scorching head that made him howl and fall down.

His head touched the woman's head. The whole car started shaking. The engine roared and then cut out again and left the woman's loud sobbing. Richard retched. He felt the burn ing of his face, touched the woman and felt her jerk away as if stung by a whip. The vibration; the noise ... Oh my God, it was cutting through him... His body trembled as his mind slipped into chaos, an intense, choking fear. What was it? Jesus Christ! Something roared and shook the car. He glanced up and saw the woman's red hair, the blinding white light

beyond her. Richard felt his heart pounding. The sweat was pouring down his face. The car rocked from side to side, shrieked in protest, and then settled down again. Leaving si-fence ... and fear.

Richard shivered and shook, reached out slowly, touched the woman; she recoiled and looked at him with wide eyes, still crouched low on the seat. They just stared at one another. Neither knew what to say. The interior of the car was very bright and then it suddenly darkened. Richard wiped sweat from his head, licked his lips, gasped for breath, his chest heaving, lungs scorched and sucked dry, arms and legs shaking terribly. The woman's green eyes were glazed, looking at him and through him; and then, as if by order, as if reading each other's thoughts, they both sat up and turned and looked out at that brilliant white haze.

'Oh my God!'

'Jesus Christ!'

The fear crawled up Richard's spine, took a hold, shook him viciously, left him limp and drained, a hollow shell, almost mindless with disbelief. The woman obviously felt the same, body twitching, dress soaked, her hands rising up to her face, the fingers outspread and trembling. They both sat there in the car, looking out, their eyes glazed, taking in the impossible dream, their senses flying away from them.

The white haze was receding. Beyond the white haze: a dark mass. The mass, that great featureless body, was blocking off the whole sky. Richard stared and was hypnotized, terrified and fascinated, looking out across that field of white light to where it eclipsed the sinking sun. He couldn't believe it. He kept looking and it remained. The white haze seemed to shimmer and fade, and then he saw it more clearly.

It was hovering above the ground, about a hundred feet up, an enormous dark mass, a dark mass containing lights, sequential flashes of green, blue and orange, very bright, very fast. The lights went from left to right, illuminating the ground below. Richard gasped and saw an immense, silvery disc stretching over the whole field. It was several stories tall,

three hundred feet in diameter, an enormous, kaleidoscopic apparition that rendered him speechless.
Fear and fascination; disbelief and stunned awareness: Richard felt his brain slipping and sliding into dark, swirling chaos. Was he drunk? Hallucinating? The woman's red hair: Was she real? He gasped for breath and tried to stop himself shaking, tried to keep himself sane. The woman trembled beside him, her hair falling around her shoulders. Her spine was arched and she seemed to shake in spasms and then set-tle down again. Richard stared past her head, saw that huge, floating mass, its colored lights flashing on and off brilliantly, illuminating the field below.
Richard sobbed and bit his lip. He looked again and saw it changing. It flared up and went dark, became one with the evening sky, then two panels of yellow light, a good three hundred feet apart, materialized to silhouette two black pu-pils, two bright eyes staring down at him. The woman gasped and bit her knuckles. Richard held on to his seat The shim mering panels disappeared, the black pupils became metallic, then they flew down from that vast inky mass and headed straight for the car.
' Jesus, no?' Richard hissed.
A whipping sound; the car shook. A brief silence; a sudden humming. Richard closed his eyes and opened them again and saw the discs at both sides of him. They were miniature flying saucers, about three feet in diameter, and they circled the car slowly, first humming, then whistling, and then a beam of light shone from each one, cutting down through the darkness.
The car began to shake. Richard groaned and clenched his fists. He glanced quickly at the woman, saw her sitting up straight, and understood, rather than saw, her paralyzed fas-cination. Richard couldn't believe it: he felt no fear from her at all. Then a disc dropped by her window, shone a bright light on her face, and she gasped, seemed to twitch, settled down, closed her eyes and just sat there. Richard dropped down to his seat. The blade of light burned his neck. It moved

away and he sat up again and saw the discs disappearing. 'It's all right,' the woman whispered, opening her eyes, looking peculiar. 'Don't be frightened. It's all right. It's all right.'

Richard stared at her and shivered, disbelieving, wracked by fear, his breath coming in large, anguished gulps, his heart pounding, his head on fire. Against his will he looked up. The panels of light blazed in the sky. He saw the immense, much darker mass above the field, the panels of light at each end of it. Then the panels swallowed the discs, blinked out, leaving darkness; then the black mass, that enormous floating shape, started glowing and flashing.

Richard sat up and stared.

The great disc was solid, a silvery craft in a white haze, towering high and spread out across the field, flashing green, blue and orange lights. It now had shape and dimension. It had long, narrow windows. Silhouettes moved back and forth across the windows, very small, faraway. The colored lights continued flashing, illuminating the field below; the tall grass and shrubs had been flattened and scorched. Richard looked up in awe. He saw the panels at either end. They were doors and they opened up again, looking larger, more ominous. Then Richard froze with fear, put his hand out, touched the woman. He saw another two discs, silvery-gray, coming out of the panels. There were searchlights on these discs, beaming down toward the car. The discs hovered just in front of the larger craft, then flew toward Richard.

He sobbed and stared around him. He felt unreal, dislocated, stripped of every defense, crouched there on the seat, feeling naked, dispossessed from the living world. What was happening? Was it real? Where was he? Hallucinating! He tried to think of who he was and what he was, but then it all fell away from him. A whipping sound, a sudden wind, the car shrieking and shaking, then silence, the other discs at each side of him, their gray metal gleaming.

Richard almost stopped breathing. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. He reached out and grabbed the woman

by the shoulder and she turned and stared at him. He saw the suntanned face, the red hair, the wet lips; her green eyes were staring at him and through him as if he didn't exist Richard shivered and turned away. He saw a disc outside the car. It was about thirty-five feet wide, hovering just above the ground, and its perimeter swept up to form a dome made of something like glass. Richard stared, paralyzed. A strange creature stared back. The opaque dome distorted its features, made it look quite grotesque. The eyes were two slits, the nose seemed to be metallic, and Richard shivered with revul-sion when he realized that it didn't have lips. The creature's skin was gray and wrinkled. It lifted up a clawlike hand. Richard screamed and then a beam of light hit him and made him oblivious.

Darkness. Streaming light A sudden nausea and dread. Richard retched and shook his head and sat up and hardly looked at the woman. No point looking: she was frozen. Richard stared straight ahead. He blinked and started to scream and then stopped and just crouched back in terror.

He was still in the car. The dark night stretched around him. The mother ship, the enormous craft, was coming down and blocking out the whole view. It seemed incredible, al-most magical - its very silence made it awesome; it was spread across the field right ahead, its colored lights flashing on and off. Richard licked his lips and murmured, rubbed his eyes and shook his head. The enormous craft settled down above the ground, fifty yards from the car.

Then the car started moving. It also started going wild. Richard's camera-strap snapped, the camera smashed against the dashboard, then his ball-point pen shot out of his pocket and fixed itself to the windshield. Richard couldn't believe it. The air was sucked from his lungs. The woman's bracelets suddenly shot off her wrists and also stuck to the windshield. Richard gasped and tried to breathe, felt himself jerking for-ward, grabbed the dashboard and pushed himself back, had to hold himself there. The car continued moving forward. Richard couldn't believe his senses. The car was silent but it

moved forward slowly toward that huge, flashing mass. Richard tried to scream again; he opened his mouth and noth-ing happened. He glanced at the woman, saw blind eyes, and then he looked at the smaller discs. They were at both sides of the car, hovering level with the car, each shooting a beam of light down upon it, drawing it with them. Magnetism? Oh my God! Quite impossible. Jesus Christ! Richard held himself into his seat and looked ahead and knew terror.

The enormous craft was there before him. It filled all of his vision. The colored lights flashed on and off, left to right, right to left, then they suddenly flickered off, leaving gray metal gleaming, then the metal seemed to split along the bottom and a long, thin white light emerged.

Richard sobbed and started shaking. His eyes were wide and disbelieving. He saw a huge metal door sliding up and then his senses were shattered. A glaring white light all around him. Silhouettes in the haze. The car was picked up and drawn toward the light and then surrounded on all sides. Richard drained out of himself. He let his senses fly away. He opened his mouth to scream but nothing happened, so he simply collapsed.

All white.

Everything.

CHAPTER FOUR

It is important that I remember. My time will soon be up. The plastic surgery and the pacemaker and the prosthetics have all been useful, but the liver still manages to elude us and so I must die. I remain philosophical. I have had more than most. I have lived a long time, made the dream a reality, and I cannot complain because nature still shelters its secrets.

We never conquered the liver. Perhaps we never will. Now I start to degenerate, feel the hardening of my veins, and my memory is not what it was and too often betrays me. No matter: it is done; we cannot be stopped now. The sun glitters off the ice as I write, and the ice is the new world.

It is important to remember. Some fragments, if nothing else. It was all so long ago, so far away, and now it seems like a dream. My parents: not important. We are blessed and cursed by birth. Two very ordinary people heading nowhere, myself growing under them.

I detested my childhood. That much I do remember. Long days in the Midwest, clouds of dust over the flatlands, my father and mother in the fields, bending over their crops. They were simple, decent people. I can hardly remember them. They talked little and they worked very hard and received scant reward. Detested it. Yes. The days stretched out forever. As a boy, still a child, how young I don't remember, I spent hours gazing up at the stars and wondering how I could get there.

I've never understood emotions. An aberration of the weak. I

am thinking of what they call 'love' and its attendant illusions. They would call me a genius. By their terms they must be right. From the beginning. (I remember this well) I was always obsessed. An emotion of a different sort. Not a need for human warmth. I saw humans in biological terms and thought the world a laboratory. The obsession was with knowing. It was all within the mind. Anything outside the mind - the need for love, for material gain - was no more than a degrading manifesta-tion of our primitive origins. What matters in Man is mind. I have always believed that. Even then, as a child, about ten years old I think, I believed that (or felt it) and lived it and would not let it go.

They would call me a genius. I would say 'integrated.' My mind and emotions were fused to perform in calm harmony. No weakness. No digressions. My flesh never defeated me. Even later, as a young man, in the offensive throes of puberty, I would hold my yellow semen in my hand and try to sniff out its properties. The vas deferens and the seminal vesicles, the bulbo-urethral and prostate glands: my ejaculations were exam-ined biologically and found to be normal. I thus conquered such distractions. I took the semen on my tongue. Various liquids and sperm, two hundred million spermatozoa; orgasm thus became a form of research and lost its great mystery.

Hard to believe it now. All so very long ago. My parents ignorant with a Bible on the table, my head in the stars. The small farm was a prison. My decent parents were viewed as wardens. A teenager, isolated, my head bursting at the seams, the lack of books, of the means of education, drove me close to insane. I knew I was exceptional. I felt trapped by circumstances. Two or three times I ran away from home, but was always brought back. So, I detested it. I just had to get away. This much I remember about my childhood: I grew up in Iowa.

Such a long time ago. The late 1800s. I remained a prisoner by lieu of my background and suffered accordingly. A genius, by their terms. Had to be, even then. For my birthday I received a microscope and then examined my own sperm. Fourteen? Fifteen? I can't remember the age. In my room I took my penis in

my hand and let the semen stain slides. The mystery of life was in biology. Ejaculation was mere phenomena. I thus reduced my shifting yearnings and dreams to their most basic nature. The human body was just a vessel. Without the mind it was superfluous. I learned early, and had no cause to doubt, that the mind took precedence.

Science. That is all. The pursuit of knowledge was all that mattered. Even then, growing up in Iowa, I had no other yearnings. The death of my mother pleased me. There was nothing personal in it. A good woman, she died as people do, and that gave me release. My father sold the farm. He took a job in Massachusetts. A small place, I don't remember the name, quite close to Worcester. Thus was I set free. Universities and libraries. My mind was filled with energy and light and I crammed it with knowledge. The Worcester Polytechnic Institute. I wonder what they called it then. I remember that I came alive there and realized my potential.

What year? Does it matter? I think 1888. Then the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the thrill of pure logic. I was an outstanding student. I was not very popular. The thrill was in logic, but the nightmare was in people: my genius isolated me completely from most of the students.

I don't remember caring much. I don't think I cared at all. (Goddard would later suffer the same, and he, too, was a genius.) The behavior of fluids at MIT. Wind pressure on surfaces, The dream of flight was what kept me alive and made the world seem more bearable. I rarely socialized. I only stopped for food and sleep. The dream of flight was my dream, aerodynamics my taskmaster, and my genius drove me forward relentlessly and would not let me rest.

Inhuman? I wonder. I have often thought about it. Not then, but later, when I succeeded, when the skies shed their secrets. Yes, only then. I remember thinking about it then. Repulsed by abstract emotions, by the human need for self-esteem, by what was known as love and affection, I lived without women. I think I tried once. There are vague recollections. Not inhuman, I must have been concerned that they would see I was

different. A girl with dark hair. Perhaps a redhead or a blonde. Spreadeagled, their flesh white as snow, their soft words unbearable. I tried, but I failed. I saw their bodies as meat. The act of love was as primitive and functional as eating or shitting. I do not recall passion. My rhythmic thrusting was demeaning. My partners' groanings drove me back into myself and made me think scientifically. I surveyed my probing penis. The parting vulva held no charms. Their heaving bodies and my downward thrusting loins lacked aesthetic refinement. The caves are just behind us: this one thought I remember. Perhaps I thought of the spermatozoa in the womb and wondered how to control them. So much for the act of love. My mind would not let me succumb. I gave up and returned to masturbation of a functional kind. This act was not for pleasure. The point was to kill the need. And my hand, which touched my flesh without guilt, was just a means to this end.

As for love: a mere illusion. Love is natures slyest trick. The emotion called love is but a tool in nature's great building plan. Love encourages procreation. It protects the helpless young. Its true purpose is not to exalt us but to make us continue. Thus did I view it. I reduced it to biology. Love was no more than the semen in my palm, but it could be destructive. Men lived their lives for love. This made them weaker men. The need for love and admiration (for self-effacement and power) was the need that made them abuse their full potential and remain close to primitive.

The possibility was intolerable. I never wanted to let it hap-pen. My genius, the ruthless brilliance of my mind, would not let me accept it. Thus I lived for my studies. I never let my flesh defeat me. My sexual needs were appeased by my own hands or by whores; my body's hungers were not confused with love and could not then distract me. No, I wasn't popular. The others students thought me strange. I think now of that time, of the bliss of isolation, and realize that my devotion to my mind made me someone unique.

My fondest memories are not of people. My fiercest pleasures all came from facts. Angles of wind attack, lift, drag a

airspeed: the experiments with the wind tunnel in the basement of Eng A, the revelations of the vane anemometer, the Lawrence Hargraves experimental reports, Sir Hiram Maxim and his engines and propellers, my mind glowing, expanding. The dream took root then. I wanted the conquest of all knowledge. I had a dream of a society devoid of conflict and dissension, a society subordinated to science and its ultimate truths. I had that dream and lived it. I devoted my whole life to it. And now, looking out at the glittering ice caps, I feel great contentment.

I never accepted the impossible. I refused to recognize it. I learned with a speed that was thought to be abnormal, living only for the lectures, for the libraries and wind tunnel, my hands black with oil, my eyes red from too much reading, breaking down and analyzing my masters, then racing ahead of them.

My father died in that time. I can't remember the funeral. A kind man, he had lived an aimless life and the lesson was clear to me. Nothing mattered but the mind. Human emotions were mere distractions. What mattered was the grandeur of science and where it might lead us. And so I continued studying. My genius left me no choice. Then Sibley College, Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York.

All things were possible there. More than most of the students knew. I do not remember faces, but I do remember names: Rolla Clinton Carpenter, Octave Chanute, Oliver Shantz and Aldred Henry Eldridge and quite a few others. Machine design and construction, experimental engineering, electrical and mechanical engineering and aerodynamics. These courses were in their infancy, were the products of the New Age. It was an age of scientific innovation and grand aspirations. A Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics. I remember that from Sibley. I think I obtained it in 1895, but I cannot be sure of that.

How stupid people are. How stupid they always were. The only emotion I can still entertain is that of contempt. For what they did to me. For what they later did to Goddard. They tried to use us and cast us aside and then control our creations. I think of the businessmen. I also think of politicians. Commerce walks hand in hand with politics, and both are corrupt. Man's

purpose is to build upon his past and thus conquer the unknown. All other aspirations are pointless; they are only of the moment. This is the dream of science. It is logic, not emotion. It is a logic that is not shared by businessmen or politicians - nor by the mass of normal men who mostly live without purpose. Such men have no real logic. They are moved by base hungers. They are blinkered and retain a narrow view that will never be broadened. They think only of the present. Their future is here and now. They take genius and fear it and use it and then cast it out. I did not know this soon enough.

Within the ice is the new world. Beyond it is the old. I look beyond the glinting plateaus and think of where I came from.

What an age it was then! So magnificent, so blind. An age of flowering genius, of corrupt commerce and politics, an age of the most insoluble contradictions, of builders and wreckers. I did not know soon enough. They financed me and used me. They took my enthusiasm and genius and then tried to pervert it. Yet what if I had known? Out of college, a BS in Aeronautics, I had to take whatever they offered me.

Finance. Equipment. The world opened up to me. The secret hangars in the wilds of Illinois formed my bridge to the future. Myself and some others. The very cream of young scientists. Sworn to secrecy, we worked night and day and made miracles commonplace. We tolerated the businessmen. We rarely thought of the politicians. With the innocence of all passionate dreamers, we just worked for our pleasure. What year was that? I think it was 1895. A full year before Langley's first successful test flights, we had already surpassed the airships and were moving toward greater things.

The work never ceased. The secrecy was total. More hangars in Iowa, in the Gulf of Mexico, yet another in a place near Fort Worth, all producing components. My first lesson in secrecy: a wide spreading of the work force. Who would know in Iowa or New Mexico or Fort Worth what the individual parts they were making would ultimately form? Thus we moved forward. Thus did I create them. The skies opened up and gave me their secrets and the dreams became real.

The second lesson in secrecy: that men will not believe their eyes. Or that men, if they do believe their eyes, will be ridiculed for it. We flew all across the country. The great wings and rotors glinted. They were very primitive flying machines, but they must have looked awesome. And so we could land. Our crude creations needed water. And like all young men who feel they are conquerors, our mood was ebullient. We played jokes on those who saw us, told the truth and then told lies, and later, when we read the newspapers, we knew the ruse had succeeded. Such a secret cannot be kept. Nevertheless, it can be protected. To protect a secret you must give away part of it and turn it into a rumor. We mixed half-truths with lies. Speculation did the rest. Who believes what they now see in the skies and can say so with ease? The world's governments understand this. It is a tactic they learned from me. We flew across the length and breadth of America and were never discovered.

All else was superfluous. It was fodder for the masses. Langley's flying machines, the Wright brothers' manned flight, the later flights of Wilbur Smith and Louis Bleriot - all were publicized trifles. Such events were mere distractions. The real progress was made in secret. By 1904 we had crossed the Pacific, and our lights, which were seen by the Navy, were called natural phenomena. Such descriptions were reassuring. I had no desire for glory. My one wish was to continue my life's work without interruptions.

How stupid they are. How stupid they always were. They now see us in the skies and close their eyes and still refuse to believe it. That's why we are winning. That's why we could never lose. They can never accept what is possible - but for us, all things are.

CHAPTER FIVE

Epstein stood quietly before the open door, hesitant, his heart beating uncomfortably, feeling nervous and childish. He was nervous because the door was open, because the house was in darkness, because Irving Jacob's death and his own failing health had reminded him of life's callous betrayals, its indiscriminate brutality. Now, in the darkness, in the silence of Camelback Hill, preparing to step inside and loathing the thought of doing so, he trembled with a youngster's baseless fear and was ashamed of himself... Irving's death and Mary's grief; his own mortality and passing time: he grew old and his childhood returned with all its haunting uncertainties... Was it suicide? Had he been murdered? Why was Mary's door wide open? Dr Epstein, stoop-shouldered and disconsolate, felt close to ridiculous.

Too melodramatic for a scientist Perhaps the chief of police had been right Epstein stood on the porch and looked up and saw the sweeping night sky. The stars glittered above the clouds, the clouds wispy and dark, drifting languidly, serene and mysterious, the black sky over all. It was quiet up there. Empty. Epstein shivered and dropped his eyes. He saw his shadow trailing out from his feet, his grotesque, faceless second half. We are not what we appear. We live and die in ignorance. Epstein felt a deep grief, an aching loss, then he knocked on the open door.

'Mary? Are you in there?'

There was no reply. The darkness led into silence. Epstein shivered and then stepped inside, wondering what he would find there. The hall led past closed doors, through the kitchen, into the living room; he saw the back of Mary's head above a chair, the chair facing the garden. Mary's head was very still, her hair dark and turning gray, and Epstein stood there, transfixed, seeing moonlight in the garden, then coughed and slowly whispered Mary's name, the pain twist-ing inside him.
'Frederick?'
'Yes.'
'I thought you would come.'
'Is that why you left the door open?'
'Yes.'
'That was dangerous.'
Mary chuckled sardonically, still sitting in the chair, fac-ing the moonlight that fell on the garden beyond the glass doors. Perhaps it was the grief, a release from her shock; nevertheless the chuckle cut through the silence and made Epstein wince. He had come prepared for tears, for hysteria or vicious rage, but now, in the presence of that ghostly chuckling, he felt simply bewildered.
'Dangerous?' she said bitterly. You think an open door is dangerous? Irving kept the doors closed all the time - but then he went for a drive. What's a closed door these days?'
Moonlight fell on the chair, glinting off her gray-black hair, the back of the chair bisecting her neck, the space around her all dark. Epstein coughed into his fist, feeling slightly absurd, then he nodded, a silent gesture of agreement, and sighed and sat down.
'You saw him?'
'Yes, I saw him.' Epstein sniffed and rubbed his beard. He was staring at the back of Mary's head, at the dark, silent room. 'He's been brought into Phoenix.'
Mary sat forward and sobbed, covering her face with her hands, bent over in the chair, in the moonlight, trying to stifle the weeping. Epstein watched her, feeling helpless, filled with

longing and grief, remembering better days, her smiling face, before the work became dangerous.
'Please, Mary,' he said.
'It's all right I'm all right.' She sat up and wiped her eyes with one hand. 'Oh my God, what a day it's been.'
'If I can do anything... anything.'
'You can't do anything. He's dead.'
'I just thought...'
'There's nothing to think. He's dead. It's all over.'
She was sitting up straight again, staring into the moonlit garden, a clenched fist shoved into her mouth, lightly tapping her teeth. Then she sighed and stood up, went to the window and walked back, turned her chair around and shook her head sadly and sat down facing Epstein. The moonlight reached out to her face, illuminating her tearwashed eyes. She was in her middle forties but her face retained its beauty, an elegant mask now ravaged by loss, the eyes brown, very large. Epstein sat there before her, feeling crushed and defeated, his love for her and Irving boiling up and turning rancid with guilt
'Here in Phoenix,' she said softly.
'Yes,' he said. The autopsy.'
'And presumably they'll ring me tomorrow?'
'Yes,' he said.'... the arrangements.'
She nodded and sighed, her gaze roaming around the room, her white hands twitching restlessly in her lap, trying to hold on to something.
'What did you come here for?' she asked.
'You knew I'd come, Mary.'
'To offer your condolences?'
'Yes.'
'And to ask me some questions.'
It was a mean, honest statement, making Epstein recoil, flushing, the guilt rushing through him as he stared at her grim face.
'Yes,' he said. 'I can't help that'
Mary nodded, smiling bitterly. 'You just never give up,'

she said. 'All of you - you just can't give up no matter what happens. I suppose I should accept it - the good wife support-ing the cause - but I can't And now Irving is dead. To hell with your institute.'
'I have to know, Mary.'
'You have to know what? That my husband was driven mad by his work and now he's found peace at last? There's your answer. Go home with it.'
'No,' Epstein said. 'I don't think that's the answer.'
'Yes it is,' she said. 'It's the only answer available.'
'I don't think it was suicide,' Epstein said. 'I feel I should tell you that'
The anger was quick to come, flashing out of her brown eyes, her head shaking from side to side in denial as she climbed to her feet. She looked down at him, this old man, this professor who felt his age, and her lips, a tight line below the pert nose, spat out all her grief.
'Damn you!' she snapped. 'Damn you and your pride! It's not that you don't believe it - it's that you can't... because you need your obsession. My husband committed suicide. Your work drove him half crazy. He couldn't sleep, he couldn't eat, he started to ignore his whole family, and it hap-pened because of your damned obsession, your belief in conspiracies. Of course he didn't kill himself! Of course it had to be murder! You've been at this game for twenty-five years, so now it has to be something!'
'Please, Mary... that's unfair.'
She shook her head and turned away, went to the windows and came back, started walking to and fro in agitation, her hands slapping her thighs.
'He was a scientist,' she said. 'He wasn't cut out to be a detective. He studied physics at Berkeley, designed nuclear reactors, worked for NASA and the American Nuclear Soci-ety, was written up in Who's Who. My husband was a fine man - an intelligent and decent man - then you involved him in your UFOs, in your speculations and intrigues, and he fell for it and became obsessed with it and paid the full price. Do you

know what it was like watching him? Seeing him crack and fall apart? Can you possibly understand what it's like to see your husband go down that way?'
'He was frightened,' Epstein said.
'Damn right, he was frightened. You and your bloody institute your associates, you all frightened him to death.'
'It wasn't us,' Epstein protested.
'It was you,' Mary said. She stopped walking and just stood there, looking down at him, her brown eyes bright with tears.
'Damn you,' she said.
Epstein had to look away, his gaze roaming around the dark room, taking in the familiar paintings, the furniture and ornaments, all the items he had seen through the years that he had visited this place. Those days were gone now. They had gone with Irving's death. It could never possibly be the same again - not for him, not for Mary. Epstein shivered with grief and rage that matched the woman's, and he wanted to reach out and console her, to soothe both their wounds.
'I saw it coming,' Mary said. 'It had been coming a long time. He wasn't capable of fighting his old friends, and it tore him apart I saw it back in 1968, during that House Science and Astronautics Committee Symposium, when he stood up and stated that he had come over to your side and now beieved in the existence of the UFOs. He should never have done that'
Epstein didn't reply. There was nothing he could say. He simply had to let her talk it out, no matter how much it hurt him. Knowing this he just sat there, watching her carefully with his tired eyes, as she walked to and fro across the room, from the darkness to moonlight.
'It was after that,' she said. 'That was when it began. He believed in it all, gave lectures and interviews, and then, when he started losing his credibility, he simply had to believe it. Why not indeed? It was all he had left. First thing he was a senior physicist at the University of Arizona, next thing he was a member of your institute, another crank chasing (UFOs... You think I'm being cruel? Most perceptive. Quite

correct. He fell in with a bunch of scientific quacks, and was ridiculed for it.'
'You don't believe that,' Epstein said.
'Yes, damn you, I believe it. Irving was a physicist, a man of some authority, and then, when he championed your cause, he lost everything... everything!' She almost choked on the last word, actually had to catch her breath, then she blinked her eyes rapidly, looking dazed, and slumped into her chair. 'Jesus Christ, I feel ill,' she said.
Epstein flinched when she sobbed again, felt himself re-coil with shame, averting his gaze when she reached for her handkerchief and dabbed at her eyes. He thought briefly of Irving, of his passion for the truth, of how that passion had led him inexorably into the UFO controversy. Epstein hadn't seduced him. Irving had joined of his own accord. And then, as it had happened to so many, something had happened to Irving... Epstein thought about it briefly, tried to cast it from his mind, and looked up, feeling pained and confused, to see Mary's dark eyes.
'It was you,' Mary said. 'I don't want you to forget that. If it hadn't been for you and your institute, he would still be alive.'
She burst into tears again, crouching over in the chair, moonlight falling on the back of her head as she shook it from side to side. The sobs were loud and wracked, filled with pain and despair, and she pressed both her hands to her face as if to blot out the truth. Epstein sat there saying nothing, too stricken to offer sympathy, deeply wounded by what she had said, wondering how he could live with it. Then she sobbed even louder, her body shaking in a fever, and he stood up and went to her chair, bent down to her, embraced her.
'Oh God!' she sobbed brokenly. 'If s a lie! It's all a lie! It's tearing me apart and I can't take it and I have to strike out! It wasn't you - I know it wasn't you ... God, it's all such a mess!' She pressed her face against his thigh, her tears flowing, head shaking, holding on to him as if he might depart and leave her with nothing. Then she looked directly at him, her face white and distraught, and he saw the brown, luminous eyes,

wild with incomprehension. 'What was it?' she sobbed. 'How did it happen? Was it me? Was it me?'
He got down on his knees beside her, held her face in his hands, shook her head from side to side, murmuring words he would not recall. Eventually she calmed a little, wiped her eyes, gave a sigh, sinking slowly back into the chair, staring up at the ceiling.
'No,' Epstein said. 'It wasn't you. It had nothing to do with you.'
'It was suicide,' she whispered.
'It wasn't suicide,' Epstein said. 'Irving wasn't the type to commit suicide. We both know that's a fact'
'Then what... ?' She shook her head, 'I just don't understand ... Why on earth... ? Who would want to ... ?' She shook her head again, bit her lip. 'I Just don't understand!'
Epstein sighed and stood up, disappeared into the darkness, returned with two glasses of bourbon and handed her one of them. She took it gratefully and drank it down, gasped for breath, put her head back, stared up at him as if not quite awake, moonlight touching her white face. Epstein sipped at his own drink, looking thoughtful, undecided, then he sat in his chair and stared at her, and spoke quietly, convincingly.
'Listen to me,' he said. 'I didn't encourage Irving to join the institute; he wrote to me on his own and suggested we work together. In fact, Irving had been privately interested in the UFOs from about 1955, and the 1965 wave had merely strengthened his growing conviction that the phenomenon had definite scientific importance. Irving never officially joined the institute; his only connection was that he would trade information with us and help us by proxy with his specialized knowledge. It is true that he visited us in Washington quite a few times, and that by the time he had gone through our files he had become convinced of the reality of the phenomenon. But I repeat: Irving did all this on his own - not because we encouraged him.'
Mary studied him carefully, her brown eyes in the moonlight, the remainder of her face in the shadows, darkness

swimming around her. She seemed a lot calmer now, more thoughtful and alert, and she studied Epstein's face as if deciding whether to talk or keep silent The tension between them was uneasy, filled with doubt and recrimination, but eventually she sighed and leaned forward and gave him her glass.
'I need another,' she said.
Epstein nodded and stood up, disappeared into the dark-ness, returned with two glasses of bourbon and handed her one of them. She didn't say anything, simply turned the glass around, watched the moonlight flashing on and off it like tum-bling diamonds. Epstein sighed and sat down, crossed his legs, sipped his drink, determined not to push her too far, to let her take her own time. Finally she sipped her bourbon, licked her moist upper lip, then slowly sank back into her chair, her face lost in the shadows.
'All right,' she said. 'What do you want to know?'
'I want to know what frightened Irving,' Epstein said. 'Or what you think might have frightened him.'
Mary shook her head and sighed. 'God,' she said. 'I don't know. At least I'm not very sure. It just seems too ridiculous.'
'Ridiculous?'
Yes, ridiculous.' She sighed again, almost mockingly. 'He never really told me what frightened him. I can only make guesses.'
She sat forward in her chair, her elbows resting on her knees, the moonlight falling over her brown eyes, glinting off the small bourbon glass.
'You've heard of Dr James E. McDonald?'
'Of course,' Epstein said.
'Then you'll know that McDonald was once at the Univer-sity of Arizona, senior physicist in the Department of Atmospheric Sciences and a leading proponent of the extra-terrestrial hypothesis.'
'Yes,' Epstein said. 'It's common knowledge.'
'Okay. Now Irving certainly didn't agree with all of McDonald's theories, but he did respect McDonald

enormously for his courage in putting forward his unpopular opinions. Indeed, if anyone may be said to have influenced Irving. McDonald would have to be that man.'

'So?'

Mary shrugged. 'Back in 1967, when the Condon Committee was being set up, McDonald was on a visit to the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, when he accidentally saw the classified version of the 1953 Robertson panel report McDonald was shocked to discover that the CIA had had a large hand in that report, and that the classified version of the report, apart from deliberately ignoring some of the most positive UFO sightings, had secretly recommended what amounted to a national brainwashing program and a complete cover-up of official UFO investigations. So, in early 1967, after seeing the classified version of this report, McDonald linked the Air Force's notorious secrecy policies to the CIA and, on the same day that the Air Force announced the establishment of the Condon Committee, made this controversial information public. Naturally, Irving - who had widespread connections with the scientific community and the media - helped him in this. And from that day on, both he and McDonald became loudly vocal critics of the Air Force and the CIA.'

'Are you trying to tell me that Irving was frightened of the CIA?'

Mary shrugged again, sighed loudly, gazed around her, the bourbon glass resting on one palm, her other hand lightly stroking it.

'I don't know,' she said. 'I think he was certainly worried about it I think that by this time he was beginning to understand that you couldn't wade too deep in those waters. You know, McDonald was in the forefront of all this, and Irving was well aware of what was happening to McDonald. McDonald attacked the Air Force and the CIA relentlessly, and by 1969 the word was out that these organizations wanted to silence him. Whether this was true or not it was certainly quite obvious that McDonald was not having an easy time.

The major defenders of the Air Force's attitudes toward UFOs were Harvard astronomer and author Donald H. Menzel, and Philip Klass, avionics editor of Aviation Week. Menzel had repeatedly explained most of the sightings - including the famous 1952 Washington sightings - as reflections, mirages, ice crystals floating in clouds, or the results of refraction and temperature inversion. On the other band, Klass, a man fer-vently opposed to the extraterrestrial hypothesis and particularly opposed to McDonald, continually tried to ridi-cule McDonald and put forward his own theory that all UFO sightings were due to coronal discharges in the atmosphere. Anyway, McDonald tore these theories to shreds and made himself a couple more enemies. According to McDonald, Klass tried to ruin him by telling the Office of Naval Research that he, McDonald, had used Navy funds on a trip to Aus-tralia to study UFOs. This caused a hell of a scandal, and led to the Navy sending an auditor to look at McDonald's con-tract. The Navy found nothing to pin on McDonald, but it still caused McDonald embarrassment and gave him a lot of prob-lems with the university administration. Then, as McDonald continued to expose Air Force and CIA shenanigans, things grew progressively worse for him. More and more profes-sional ridicule was heaped on him until, in 1971, the House Committee on Appropriations called him to testify about the SST supersonic transport plane, during which testimony he was constantly mocked as the man who saw little green men flying around in the sky. McDonald's work on the SST was his last project, in June 1971, at the age of fifty-one, McDonald drove himself into the desert and shot himself in the head -exactly like Irving.'

Mary suddenly shivered and shook her head from side to side, a clenched fist going to her mouth as if to stifle a sob. She took a deep breath and sank back, her face disappearing in darkness, then the glass of bourbon glinted in the moon-light as she had a stiff drink. There was silence for a long time. A clock ticked on the wall. Epstein hadn't heard the ticking before and it made him feel strange.

'Do you think there's a connection?' he asked.
'I don't know,' Mary said. 'It just seems too ridiculous. But I do know that Irving thought about it... and it started to frighten him.'
'Why?
'Oh... various things.'The glass came down from her lips, rested on one knee, her fingers curving lightly around it, her wedding ring glinting. 'You know, some strange things have happened to a lot of people involved in UFOs - accidents, suicides, the loss of good careers - and Irving started taking an interest in such cases. This was shortly after Dr McDonald's suicide - and also after Irving had started his heavy drinking.'
'The drinking was bad?'
'Yes, very bad,' she said. 'I'd never seen him drinking be fore, but then he started to drown in it.' She shivered again, shook her head in a dreamy manner, raised her glass to her lips and had a sip, sighing deeply, forlornly. 'Irving was particularly fascinated by the career of Captain Edward Ruppelt, who headed the Air Force's UFO investigations from 1951 to 1953. According to Irving, Ruppelt was the best man the Air Force ever used during their twenty years of UFO investigations; however, during his three years as head of Project Blue Book, Ruppelt became more and more convinced that the UFOs were real and of extraterrestrial origin, and that the Air Force was antagonistic to such a hypothesis. According to Irving, this was why, when the Robertson Panel submitted its formal conclusions to the CIA, the Pentagon and the higher echelons of the Air Force, the CIA refused to give a copy to Ruppelt and his staff. And from this point on, Ruppelt, who was critical of the whole Robertson Panel, found the ground being cut from under his feet. Apparently Ruppelt had been determined to mount a full-scale UFO investigation but faced a lot of opposition from the Pentagon, until, by mid-1953, the Blue Book staff had been stripped down to a total of three people: Ruppelt and two assistants. Consequently, Ruppelt left Blue Book permanently in August of that year,

went to work as a research engineer for the Northrop Air-craft Company, and also wrote his famous book on UFOs.'
'The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects.'
'Right Now what bothered Irving about this case was the fact that Ruppelt's book was a forthright attack on the Air Force's handling of the UFO phenomenon and a plea for a more honest and intensive investigation of it Obviously Ruppelt was a believer... but then, in 1959, three years after he had first published his book, Ruppelt revised it, totally re-versed his previous stand, and stated in the new edition that UFOs as a unique phenomenon did not exist One year later he died of a heart attack.'
Mary finished off her bourbon, placed the glass on the floor, and leaned forward until her face was in the moonlight, her brown eyes large and misty.
'Irving was bothered by the case,' she said. 'He couldn't understand Ruppelt's reversal. He investigated the case thor-oughly, interviewed a lot of people, but couldn't really come up with anything definite. There was the possibility that Ruppelt had just become fed up with it, with the constant con-troversy that surrounded the subject, with the media and and the crackpots who hounded him day in and day out. A possibility. A thin one. Certainly Irving could never accept this as an an-swer, and he never stopped pondering the riddle. Possibly because of this he became involved with a similar case, that of Dr Morris K. Jessup, the noted astronomer and selenographer.'
'I thought he was a crackpot,' Epstein said.
'Well, he may or may not have been. In his defense, it's worth noting that he was a teacher of astronomy and math-ematics at the University of Michigan and a researcher whose work led to the discovery of thousands of binary stars. In short, Jessup was an astronomer of considerable repute -until he became obsessed with the UFOs. Apparently, once that started, his ideas became a little crazier, more specula-tive and bizarre, some derivative but some strikingly original. As Irving frequently said, this wasn't all that unusual: a 1ot of

people who developed an interest in UFOs tended to turn pretty strange. Anyway ... Irving was interested in Jessup because Jessup had been conducting a lot of investigations into possible Naval experiments with field forces that could
temporarily dematerialize matter or somehow make it invisible. While this sounded pretty crazy to me - a sort of Flash Gordon fantasy - it interested Irving in the sense that he of-ten felt that the UFOs might work on just such a principle. So ...Dr Jessup had been investigating what had been known in books, magazines and various scientific journals as the Philadelphia Experiment. Allegedly, during 1943, the United States Navy had conducted a series of tests at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, at Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia, and at sea to the north of the Bermuda Triangle. Reportedly the experiment was at least partially successful, the ship used being the USS Eldridge, and its disappearance allegedly being seen from the decks of the liberty ship SS Andrew and a cargo ship, SS Malay. Apparently, after disappearing, the ship reappeared at its berth at Norfolk, then mysteriously turned up at its original dock in the Philadelphia Navy Yard. And according to other unsubstantiated reports, some of the crew died, many had to be hospitalized and more than a few had gone mad... As I said, Irving was interested in this because he thought that the seemingly incredible materialization and dematerialization of UFOs might somehow be based on unusual, controlled magnetic conditions in which the attraction between molecules could be altered temporarily to cause the transmutation or transference of matter.' 'A sort of space-time machine.'
'Exactly. Matter simply dematerializes and materializes elsewhere - hey presto! space and time don't exist.' Epstein raised his eyebrows. 'Go on,' he said. 'Okay. I know. It sounds crazy. Anyway, Irving followed
this up and discovered that in 1959, the same year Ruppelt performed his abrupt about-face with the revised edition of his book, Jessup informed Dr J. Manson Valentine – currently curator honoris of the Museum of Science of Miami and

research associate of the Bishop Museum of Honolulu - that he had reached some definite conclusions regarding the Philadelphia Experiment and wanted to show Valentine his manuscript. Valentine says that he arranged for Jessup to come for dinner on the evening of April 20 that year - but Jessup never made it that far. According to the Miami police, Jessup, some time before six-thirty that evening, drove his car to Matheson's Hammock in Dade County, Miami, and committed suicide by attaching a hose to the exhaust of his car and running the hose inside the vehicle.' 'Was the manuscript found in the car?' 'According to the Miami police report, no.' Mary rubbed at her forehead and swept the hair from her eyes, then she stood up and visibly shivered and started pac-ing the room. Epstein watched her, entranced. She was lovely, and she was also a stranger to him, a hazy figure in the moonlight.

'It made Irving worse,' she said. 'He started to drink even more. He wouldn't talk about it unless he was drunk, and then he seemed incoherent. Incoherence or craziness? I swear to God, I don't know. He was obsessed by the idea that impor-tant UFOlogists were marked men, that they always ended up in a bad way: either crazy or dead. He pointed out to me that Ruppelt had had a lot of problems during his final few years and that those problems might have contributed to his heart attack. He reminded me constantly about McDonald's last few years, about the Air Force's fear of him, about his low standing in the eyes of the CIA and the ridicule heaped upon him by his fellow scientists. Then, on June 12,1972, precisely one year after McDonald's suicide, another proponent of the UFO phenomenon, scientist and inventor Rene Hardy, was found dead, apparently a suicide by a bullet - and this made Irving paranoid.'

She stopped pacing and stared around her, eyes blinking, slightly vague, then she bent down and picked up her glass and disappeared in the darkness. Epstein listened to the bour-bon pouring, felt the tension within himself, wondered how

they had all come to this, to this fear and confusion. Then Mary returned, the glass already at her lips, and she drank
and gazed around her and sat down, her legs crossed, her hands shaking.
'You want to know what frightened me?' she said. Well, I'll tell you... And it's every bit as crazy as the rest of it.'
She had another drink, licked her lips, put her head back, her brown eyes gazing up at the ceiling, looking through it, beyond it.
'Irving had problems sleeping. He started pacing the house each night He would get up and walk around his study, muttering under his breath. He often looked out the windows. He always looked up at the sky. He started thinking They were coining to get him... I never found out who They were. He'd been working on something special. He was very secretive about it. The more he worked on it, the more he grew frightened, the less he could sleep. Then one night he was really drunk. I drank with him and we talked. I asked him what it was that had him scared, and he attempted to tell me. It wasn't easy for him. The drink had made him incoherent. He started babbling about his colleagues, about how the ridicule had increased; he said the university was putting pressure on him and he might have to leave. Naturally I was shocked. God knows, I was shocked. Then he said that he thought he was being followed, that he just had this feeling.'
Mary shook her head and sighed. She seemed remote and somehow lost She gazed at Epstein and he saw her brown eyes, the pain buried behind them.
'There are a lot of stories,' she said, 'about mysterious men who often contact people investigating UFOs. Since most of these stories come from the lunatic fringe, they are rarely given serious attention. Nevertheless, Irving was worried about them. He told me that in 1955, during that famous UFO flap, Dr Jessup had been called in for an interview at the ONR - the Office of Naval Research in Washington, DC. There it was explained to him that one of his books had been mailed to the Chief of ONR, Admiral F. N. Furth, and had

subsequently been examined by both the ONR Special Projects Office and the Aeronautics Projects Office. Precisely what was then said between the ONR and Dr Jessup remains unclear, but according to Irving, Jessup started having se-vere personal problems from then on, and those problems led directly to his suicide... Crazy, yes? Well, I thought it was crazy. No matter: the story fascinated Irving and fitted in with his theories.'

She had another drink. The clock ticked on the wall. Epstein thought of what the police chief had said... some-thing about melodrama.

'Irving thought he was being followed by three men,' Mary said. 'He had seen them in a car, outside the house, outside his office, and he felt that they were coming to get him and take him away. Of course I didn't believe a word of it I put it down to his illness. I just thought that all these stories about mysterious, nameless visitors had sunk into his subconscious and mixed in with his increasing paranoia. But Irving was adamant He couldn't let the subject go. He talked about how a lot of the UFOs were described as being surrounded by a glowing, plasmalike cloud; about how the USS Eldridge had also been described as disappearing within a luminous green cloud; about how the Bermuda Triangle and the Devil's Jaw are on approximately the same line of longitude and how many of the planes and ships that were lost in those areas were often described as disappearing in similar clouds. Irving thought there was a connection. He thought Jessup had found the connection. He thought that the disappearing ships and planes were tied in with the UFOs, and the the Navy might have stumbled onto the truth through the Philadelphia Experiment. Irving also talked a lot about McDonald, about Rene Hardy and Edward Ruppelt, about how a lot of reputable people had come to a sticky end -and about the mysterious men who harassed UFO witnesses, often claiming they were from the CIA. All of this scared Irving. It made him pace the house at nights. Then, just a few days ago, Irving read about Chuck Wakely... and

that bit of news was too much for him.' 'Chuck Wakely?'
'Yes. Chuck Wakely was a young Miami pilot who almost lost himself in a luminous cloud above the Bermuda Triangle. He was so shaken by this experience that he started to investigate the whole subject - writing about it, lecturing about it, appearing on TV and radio, and generally digging up a lot of old bones. A few days ago Chuck Wakely was shot through the window of his apartment in Miami, apparently while working on his research. The motive and assailant are still unknown.'
'Coincidence, Epstein said.
'Maybe,' Mary said. 'But that coincidence didn't particularly help Irving. In the end he just thought of the men following him - and became paranoid.'
Epstein sat forward, feeling cold, a bit unreal, his eyes drawn to the moonlight in the garden, to the stars in the night sky. What could he say? What could anyone say? The story was too bizarre to be accepted and contained by mere logic.
'What was Irving working on?' he asked.
'I don't know,' Mary said. That's what frightens me most. I went through his study today and couldn't find a damned thing.'
'No papers?' 'Nothing.'
'But he must have kept a file!' 'He had a file as thick as War and Peace, but it's just disappeared.'
Epstein sank into his chair, feeling cold, disorientated, the fear creeping over him slowly and making the silence sing... Death. Suicide. Careers broken and good men lost. He thought of Irving in the car in the desert, of McDonald and Hardy. Suicide by the bullet. Or carbon monoxide inhalation. Suicide and murder and madness: an inexplicable catalogue ... Epstein had to know the answers. There was nothing else left to know. He grew old and his time was growing short and that invited obsession. Yes, that was the word.

Obsession: the only word. It was what had taken hold of them all and then driven them ruthlessly. Epstein sighed and sat forward, his stubby fingers interlocked, his knuckles form-ing a broken white ridge that displayed a great tension.
'A strange story,' he said.
Mary laughed bitterly, shook her head and looked away, slowly raised the glass of bourbon to her lips, her brown eyes wet and vague.
'That's the story,' she said. 'That's my legacy from Irving. God knows, it's too insane to be true... but that's what it came to.'
She drank deeply of the bourbon, threw her head back and gasped, her brown eyes focused vaguely on the ceiling and seeing nothing at all. Epstein watched her, entranced, thinking of days long ago, of when his wife had been alive and they had sat in this room and felt young and beyond the reach of time, their ambitions before them. A great inno-cence had filled those days, had colored Epstein's fondest memories; now that innocence lay shattered about him and left him with old age. His wife had died five years ago, Irving had killed himself yesterday, and here, in the timeless, moonlit silence, he and Mary were parting. All the dreams had turned to dust Each possibility had reached its limit. What was left was a teasing, frustrating mystery that might yet make him mad. Epstein studied Mary carefully, saw the fading of her beauty, the spreading of her flesh, the falling breasts, the glint of gray in her dark hair. Life ap-proached and then withdrew. It bled away into the night. It was merciless, taking beauty and hope, leaving nothing to cling to.
Epstein sighed. He felt old and very tired. He stood up and gazed nervously around him and then stared at Mary. She was still in the chair. He saw the moonlight in her eyes. The eyes were luminous and wet with rampant grief, and they tore at his pounding heart
'It's getting late,' he said. 'I'll have to go. I'll try to drop in tomorrow.'

'No,' she said. 'Don't drop in tomorrow. I'll be packing tomorrow.'

Her voice was flat and remote, a stranger's voice, a chilling sound, and Epstein stood there and blinked and stared at her, not quite comprehending.

'Packing?' he said.

'Yes, packing,' she replied. 'I don't want to see you again. I don't want to see anyone.'

He almost sat down again, the shock shaking him, drain-ing him; hut instead he simply lifted one hand and lightly brushed his beard.

'It's not you,' she said. 'It's everything you represent. It's the UFOs and their victims, living's hopes and their destruc-tion; and, most of all, it's my fear that he might have been right. I'm too old for this, Frederick. I can't live within these walls. I want to run from all his friends, from his work and his associates, and I never want to see this house again, to hear a knock on the door. I'm frightened, Dr Epstein. living's fear is getting to me. I'm too weary to stay here and fight it, so I'm packing my bags. I'll attend to the funeral. I don't want you to be there. I'll leave as soon as Irving is buried, and I'll never come back. Give me a kiss, Frederick. Do that and then go. Don't talk to me. Don't say another word. Kiss me once and then leave.'

The moonlight fell on her face. Her brown eyes were wet with tears. Epstein felt a searing pain, a crippling loss, and then he stepped over to her. The darkness surrounded them, dissolved them and made them one. Epstein leaned down and kissed her on the cheek and then he walked from the house.

CHAPTER SIX

The air-conditioning in the Fontainebleau Hilton, as in most hotels, condominiums and fleabags in Miami Beach, smacked the flesh with a refrigerated chill that stopped sweat in its tracks. Wilson stood in the lobby, glancing around him, gaze thoughtful, taking in the milling people, the WASP resi-dents and tourists, not amused by the superfluous extravagance and inane conversations. He nodded briefly at Fallaci, who stood beside him, looking elegant, and together they pushed their way through the crowds and went up to the desk clerk.

There was a large mob at reception, all waving hands and shouting, drunk already and flushed with excitement, trying to sort out their room keys. Wilson stepped back, disdainful, thinking how unreal they were, and Fallaci, apparently cool in his white suit, pushed his way to the desk.

'Excuse me—' he began.

The desk clerk raised one hand and brushed blond hair from his eyes, the eyes swiveling toward Fallaci, very blue, opaque with panic, then returning to stare blindly at a man whose elbows straddled the counter. The man had short-cropped red hair, a blotched face, squinting eyes, a garish terry cloth shirt on his large frame, a cigar in his lips.

'No!' he bawled. 'You listen to me! You keep your crap for your hookers!'

'Excuse me—' Fallaci said.

'No fucking way!' the big man bawled. 'We've just been to the Ivanhoe, to the Bal Harbour on North Bay Causeway, we've been up and down that road, from Hallandale Beach to Lincoln Mall, and we haven't been offered as much as a fucking john and now we're just goddamn tired of it. What sort of jerk-offs do you think we are? You think we'll sleep on the goddamned beach? What the hell do you mean you've got a convention? We come here every year, bud!'
'I'm sorry, sir, but—'
'Don't fucking "but" me, bud! I'm not here for a goddamned snow job. I've got a bus full of people, a fucking Eastern Air-lines bus, and I'm not about to drive off again. Fuck you, bud. Where's the manager?'
'Excuse me,' Fallaci said, very polite, very firm, taking the desk clerk's coat sleeve and jerking the elbow toward him, both his voice and his insistent brown eyes making the desk clerk take notice. 'A Mr Vale,' Fallaci said. 'He's coming to see Mr McKinley. Mr McKinley and I have just been for lunch and wondered if he'd arrived.'
'Goddamned lunacy!' the big man said. 'Where the hell's the goddamned manager?' The desk clerk glanced at him quickly, licked his lips, stared at Fallaci, looked down at his desk pad and whispered, 'No, sir. There's no message.'
'Fucking madness!' the big man said.
'Excellent,' Fallaci said. 'Mr McKinley is in his room, and when Mr Vale arrives he wants him to be sent up immedi-ately. Don't bother to phone.'
'Yes, sir,' the desk clerk said, scribbling the message down.
Fallaci retreated, smiling politely at the desk clerk, watch-ing the big man slam his fist on the desk and start bawling again, his passengers milling around him.
'Well?' Wilson asked.
'He hasn't arrived yet,' Fallaci said. 'I told the desk clerk to send him straight up without using the phone.'
'Good,' Wilson said. 'Let's go up there. Let's see Mr McKinley.'

Together they walked across the flamboyant, rococo lobby, passing bikinis and bathing suits, feet in sandals and clodhoppers, hair bleached blond and purple, piled high, hanging low, plastic bracelets on thin, suntanned wrists, rhinestone sunglasses gleaming. Wilson was not impressed, never had been, never would be, now just wanting to collect his man and get out and leave Miami behind him. Nevertheless he seemed part of it - silvery haired, deeply tanned, his light suit businesslike - he might well have been a native of Broward County, just in town for the day.

'What did you tell him?' Wilson asked.

'I said we'd just had lunch with McKinley. He's going to send Professor Vale right up. We won't have any trouble.'

They took the elevator to the sixth floor, a very crowded elevator, the people noisy and in a holiday mood: young girls in paper dresses, paunchy men in Bermuda shorts, the girls gggling, the men dabbing at sweat as they cruised gently upward. Wilson stepped out with relief, surveyed the corridor, the garish walls, then he turned and walked along to 605, Fallaci walking beside him.

'This is worse than Las Vegas,' Wilson said.

'I've never been there, sir. I keep meaning to go there very year, but I never get around to it.'

'This McKinley,' Wilson said. 'You're sure he's never met Professor Vale?'

'He wouldn't know Vale from my mother. That's a hundred percent'

Wilson nodded his head. 'I hope you're right,' he said. 'I'd rather not have anything messy. I don't want any accidents.'

'This is it: 605.'

They both stopped at the door, a white door with gold embossing, and Fallaci glanced at Wilson, saw the nod, and then pressed the doorbell. Obviously Vale was expected -they heard the footsteps immediately; the door opened with-out hesitation and McKinley stared at them. He was ruddy-faced, gray-haired, wearing slacks and a flowered shirt,

a steely glint in the green of his eyes, no smile on his face.
'Professor Vale?' he asked, looking from Wilson to Fallaci, his right hand still resting on the door, as if preparing to close it.
'I'm Vale,' Wilson said. He put his hand out to McKinley. They shook hands and McKinley indicated Fallaci. Who's this?' he asked bluntly.
'My assistant,' Wilson said. 'Mr Fallaci. You don't mind? He's quite clean.'
'You said you'd come alone.'
'My personal assistant. I'm sorry. But Mr Fallaci travels with me everywhere. He knows everything... everything.'
Wilson stepped into the apartment, brushing casually past McKinley, and Fallaci followed with a smile on his lips, a po-lite smile, remote. McKinley shrugged and closed the door, looking thoughtfully at Wilson, then he waved at the mock-Renaissance chairs and said, 'Fine. Take a seat.' Wilson didn't sit. Fallaci circled the room. McKinley said, 'You guys want a drink?' and headed straight for the bar. He was a big man but muscular, very fit his movements light. 'I'm sorry about that,' he said, 'but I'm sure you understand: in this business we have to be careful; we have to know who we're dealing with.' He reached the bar and turned around. The government watches us—' he began. His eyes flicked to the right, saw Fallaci, an upraised hand, and he cursed and tried to duck to the side and then knew it was too late.
Fallaci's hand chopped through the air, turned on edge, the fingers closed, a small guillotine that snapped McKinley's neck with a fearsome precision. McKinley gasped and went down, his legs buckling, his body spinning, and Fallaci stepped out and caught him in his arms before he fell to the carpet. It had happened very quickly, very quietly, without fuss, and the dead man now lay in Fallaci's arms, body sag-ging, legs outstretched.
Wilson stepped forward and examined him. McKinley's chin lay on his chest. He had urinated in his pants and the stain was spreading out around the crotch.

'Quickly,' Wilson said. 'Get him into the bathroom. I don't want him dripping on the carpet. Get him in there immediately.'
Fallaci slid his arms deeper under McKinley's armpits and then, with the lifeless head against his chest, dragged him into the bathroom. The walls were a lurid pink, the toilet seat covered in fur, and Fallaci slung the body over a bath that watmade of white marble.
'Christ, he's heavy,' he said.
Wilson didn't reply, his gaze curious, academic, as Fallaci took a short rope from his pocket and tied it around the steel curtain rail. Then he made a small noose. 'You'll have to help me,' he said. Wilson stepped in and tugged at the corpse, his arms under its armpits. Together they lifted the body up, the lifeless arms around their shoulders, held it up until its feet were off the floor, the head under the noose. 'Hold him there,' Fallaci said. He stepped away and turned around. He opened the noose and slipped it over the dead man's head and then tightened the knot. 'That's it,' he said. Wilson let go of the corpse. The dead man dropped down abrupdy, then stopped, spinning slightly, his head jerked up by the rope, his neck stretched, the face bloating, his slippered feet dangling just above the floor, swinging gently from left to right. 'Suicide,' Fallaci said. 'He reached the end of his tether.' He took a small stool and set it on its side just in front of the dead man's swinging feet. Then he stood up and smiled.
'Okay, sir?'
'Okay.'
They left the bathroom and closed the door, went back into the other room, and stood there, glancing around in a casual fashion, intrigued by the decor. The colors were flamboyant, the furniture a bizarre mixture of styles, imitations of late-Renaissance and Victoriana and Art Nouveau, an enormous chandelier in the ceiling, intricate moldings, poor paintings. Wilson sat down in a chair, crossed his legs, checked his creases, his azure eyes calm but remote, as if focused elsewhere. He looked up at Fallaci, saw him standing

by the windows, framed by the glinting green of Biscayne Bay and the sky's sweeping white haze.
'I hope he's punctual,' Wilson said.
'He should be here any minute.'
'And you're sure he's never met that McKinley?'
'It was all done by phone.'
Wilson checked his cuff links, crossed his legs the other way. 'What about my voice?' he asked coldly. 'He might no-tice the difference.'
'No, sir,' Fallaci said. He started wandering about the room. The arrangement was made through a third party. Your voice won't mean a thing.'
Wilson studied his watch. 'We were informed that he was punctual.'
That checks,' Fallaci said. 'He's a punctual man. He won't be very late.'
The bell rang a minute later. Wilson got to his feet Fallaci looked at him, nodded, went to the room door, opened it and took a step back and said, Yes? Can I help you?'
'I'm Professor Vale,' a man said. 'Are you Mr McKinley?'
'No, sir. I'm his secretary.'
Fallaci stepped aside and Vale walked into the room, a slim man, quite short, beard and hair flecked with gray, wearing white pants and a colorful flowered shirt, a tennis racket in his right hand.
'McKinley?' he asked.
Yes,' Wilson said. 'Hello.' He stepped forward and shook Professor Vale's hand. 'I'm glad you could come.'
Professor Vale smiled slightly. He seemed young for his fifty years. Your man was very persuasive,' he said. 'If a little oblique.'
Wilson returned the smile. Yes,' he said. 'I'm sure be was. But I'm sure you'll understand our discretion when we finish our talk.' He nodded at the bar. 'Would you like a drink, pro-fessor?' The professor wiped sweat from his brow and said, Thanks. Rum and Coke.'
Wilson nodded at Fallaci. 'A white wine for me,' he said.

Fallaci went to the bar as Wilson pointed to a chair and said, 'Sit down, professor. Relax. It must have been a good game.'
The professor nodded and sat down, placed his tennis racket on the table, stretched his legs and wiped the sweat from his face with a folded white towel. 'It kills me,' he said. 'I
don't know why I do it.' He patted his stomach and said, I've got to keep it down. An academic's obsession.' Wilson smiled
at the self-mockery. Fallaci brought them both drinks. Wilson sat down and Fallaci walked away and stood behind the small bar.
'You play often?' Wilson asked.
'Only on vacation,' the professor said. 'I don't like vacations all that much, so it helps pass the time.' He drank his rum with some relish, wiped his lips with one hand, then sighed and stared directly at Wilson, quietly sizing him up. 'All right,' he said eventually. 'What do you want, Mr McKinley? Your man said it was an offer of work, and at the moment that interests me.'
'Just how much did my man tell you?' Wilson asked.
'He told me that you represented a European-based commercial organization dealing in electronics, aerospace technology, communications satellites and assorted areas of high energy research. He also said that you had produced components for ASAT warheads and European and Ameri-can ICBMs. He said, further, that you were under contract to NASA for the production of various rocket components, but that you were intending to expand quite dramatically. Finally, he said that you were desperately in need of civilian scien-tists and technicians with experience in aerospace technology, and were willing to pay well for their talents. He said no more than that'
Wilson smiled. 'He was told to be brief.'
'He was brief,' the professor said. 'Much too brief. But I must say I'm interested.'
Wilson smiled again and put his chin in his hands, his el-bows resting lightly on his knees, on his immaculate pants.
'Well, Professor Vale, your information is essentially

correct I represent Air Communications and Satellite Sys-terns, better known as ACASS, a Frankfurt-based, internation-ally financed company that specializes in the production of advanced electronic communications and spy satellite com-ponents under contract to European and US government defense establishments.'
'I know about ACASS,' the professsor said. 'I've often used your components.'
'Yes,' Wilson said, 'that stands to reason. You've worked in the past for the USAF Space and Missiles System Organiza-tion in San Diego, California; for the Linear Accelerator Center of Stanford University; and for the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory near San Francisco. You are, at the moment, an Advanced Space Programs Coordinator at the top secret Aerospace Defense Command Cheyenne Moun-tain Complex in Colorado Springs, Colorado. At these various posts you have specialized in research on advanced ICBMs and anti-satellite weapons, and you're currently engaged in research into high energy laser beams and particle beam weapons, with particular interest in the Semipalatinsk plant in Russia... Given this, you would have certainly used our components. We'd now like to use you.'
Professor Vale smiled a little, crossed his legs, glanced at Fallaci. Fallaci took his glass and topped up the rum and then handed it back to him.
'You've certainly done your homework,' the professor said.
'Yes. We're efficient.'
The professor smiled at Wilson, his eyes glinting above his glass. He sipped his rum and then sat back in the chair his boyish face looking thoughtful.
'I'm under contract to USAF,' he said.
'That contract ends in two months.'
Professor Vale grinned, his vanity stroked with such atten-tion, then he had another sip of his drink and sat up and said, 'Talk.'
Wilson leaned forward, smiling, just a little amused, think-ing first of the professor's understandable human vanity,

thinking next of the man hanging in the bathroom, his neck snapped where the rope would scar. 'Professor Vale,' he said, 'we need men like you because
we are as you said, expanding dramatically. Put simply, ACSS is planning to set up an overseas satellite launching base which will break the superpowers' monopoly of space by launching spy satellites for any Third World country will-ing to pay what we ask. At the moment this capability is available only to America and the USSR, so there is, as we
see it, an open market for the sale of such satellites to any smaller developing country that is concerned with protecting its borders and wants a sophisticated early warning system at a reasonable price. We can fill that need. We can construct simple, efficient rockets. We can launch those rockets for anyone who pays, and there are plenty of customers.'
'No doubt you'll have plenty of customers, but where will your base be?'
'A certain Third World leader in Africa has leased us ap-proximately one hundred thousand square kilometers of his country in return for a rent of fifty million dollars a year to be paid in local currency after our first commercial launch, which will be five years from now. Given that this country's inflation is running at about eighty-five percent a year, the payment will be relatively negligible by the time it is due. We have also offered to launch a satellite free of charge, but on the condition that the president pays for the actual produc-tion of the rocket. In short, what we have been given by this black lunatic, virtually for free, is one hundred thousand square kilometers of territory, total autonomy over that terri-tory, full immunity from any prosecution by the state, full control over who is allowed to remain in the territory, and absolute disciplinary control over all natives within our designated area.' 'That's insane,' the professor said.
'That's a fact,' Wilson said. That's the deal that was worked out between ACASS and the president in Africa, and the contract has been signed, sealed and delivered. Photo-

copies of the contract are on my boat and await your inspection.'
The professor studied Wilson carefully, tapping his teeth with his glass, obviously startled by what he had heard, just as obviously intrigued.
'You can't build a rocket that cheap,' he said.
'Yes,' Wilson said promptly, 'we can. The basic idea for the rocket came from some German scientists who originally worked on the V-2 rocket for Hitler. After the war one of those scientists went to Egypt to design rockets for President Nasser, retired to Austria, and then came to ACASS. Another came to the United States with Wernher von Braun, became an American citizen and leading light of the Kennedy Space Center, retired three years ago and has since worked for ACASS. The ACASS rocket is very much like a model the Nazis were perfecting when the war ended: easy to build, cheap, but efficient. Its basic unit consists of a tube filled with an oxidizing agent and another filled with diesel fuel; when these liquids combine they ignite and the rocket takes off. Also, instead of mounting rocket stages on top of one another, the ACASS rocket is simply a large bundle of standard units: the greater the load, the more units you include. It is, in short, a mass-produced rocket, quite functional and operative.'
'I'd want to see the plans.'
'You can see them. They're on the boat also.'
The professor sat back in his chair, tapping his glass against his teeth, studying Wilson and then gazing around the room, trying to take it all in. Wilson sat there saying noth-ing, thinking of the dead man in the bathroom, thinking also of what could happen to the world if ACASS had their way. Would the idiocy never cease? Could the fantastic be control-led? Wilson thought of the dead man, of the commercial company he had represented, of all the scientists who would take on any work so long as the price was right Professor Vale would not be one of them. Professor Vale would not be paid. The good professor, with his vanity and greed, would be put to use elsewhere.

'I'm interested,' Vale said, 'but I want to see some documentation. I want to see all your contracts, I want to study the rocket designs, and after that, if I'm satisfied that you're legit, I might discuss my own terms.'
'Excellent.' Wilson said. 'I'm sure you'll find them quite impressive. All you need is the safe on my boat. Could you go there right now?'
'Now?' the professor said.
'Why not?' Wilson said. 'You're only here on vacation, you said yourself that you were bored - so let's go to my boat, take a trip, some food and wine, and you can study all the documents at your leisure then go home and decide.'
'I don't know...' the professor said.
'Is your wife here?' Wilson asked.
'Yes.'
'Then why don't we collect her? I'm sure she'll enjoy it.'
That was enough for the good professor. 'I think I'll go on my own,' he said. 'I mean, I don't want her hanging around when we're talking our business. What the hell, let's just go...' He finished his drink and stood up, licked his lips and nodded his head, then walked to the bar, past Fallaci, and set his glass down.
'Where's your boat docked?' he asked.
'Another drink, sir?' Fallaci said.
'No, thanks,' the professor said.
'Pompano Beach Marina,' Wilson said. 'It should take about an hour.'
'You got a john?' the professor asked. Fallaci touched his ebow lightly. 'Yes, sir,' Fallaci said. That door there. At the far end of the room. The first door on your left.' The profes-sor thanked him and walked away, turning into the second bathroom. Fallaci then looked at Wilson, grinning nervously. 'That was close,' Wilson said.
They all left shortly after, left the dead McKinley dangling, closed the door and went down in the elevator and walked out through the lobby. The sudden brightness was dazzling, beating off the white walls, off tall buildings and sidewalks and streets, the sea beyond the palm trees. Fallaci walked on

ahead. He led them into a parking lot. Wilson sat in the rear talking casually to Professor Vale, and Fallaci drove the car onto Collins Avenue, his eyes fixed on the road.
Professor Vale was loquacious. The two rums had affected him. He kept looking out the window, at the condominiums and hotels, at the surfers and executives, at the restless wives and gaudily brazen whores and the flesh-littered sands. Mi ami Beach glided past them.
'You know Miami, Mr McKinley?'
'No, I don't,' Wilson lied. 'I used to have the boat docked in Norfolk; I only came here this year.'
'You picked the wrong year,' the professor said.'You picked the year of the pig. I've been coming to this place for fifteen years, but it's not what it used to be. Cubans and blacks, homosexuals and hookers: you get these kids from the University of Miami and they're wrecking the place. I swear to God, it's unbelievable. You wouldn't believe what goes on. I'm a white, Anglo-Saxon American, and I don't mind admitting it Take a good look around you. What the hell do you see? Drive through 79th Street or Biscayne Boulevard or Kennedy Park; you'll get a blowjob in the front seat of your car before you know where your billfold's gone. I mean these hookers are everywhere. They own Lincolns and Cadillacs. You just go into the Boom-Boom Room or the Poodle Lounge in the Fontainebleau and you'll see them shaking their tails for all they're worth, picking up on the tourists. Either that or it's the fags, from Coconut Grove to Fort Lauderdale: they've got it organized so well that the 21st Street sea wall is no longer the place to go for a broad - they've just cleared out the area. The future America is in Miami; the Brave New World is around the corner: prostitution, male and female; a lot of porno movie houses; filthy bookstores and VD and drugs and organized crime. That's Miami, Mr McKinley. That's the world delivered by science. I look around me and I wonder what it means and then I look to the future. Fuck America, I say. What's America given me? It's given me radi-cals and communists and anarchists and degenerates, and it's

offering me Miami and Las Vegas and cesspits like New York. Fuck America. Who needs it?'
The professor shook his head and chortled, short and slim, almost boyish, his bearded face denying his fifty years, the lines good humored and ageless. Wilson looked at him, amused, a cold amusement, and then the car came to a halt. 'Here we are,' Wilson said. They climbed out of the car onto the blinding white ma-rina, blinking eyes and then stretching themselves and getting used to the tropical heat Fallaci led them to the boat, a neat Italian, walking quickly, his eyes darting left and right, their delicate brown disguising ice, double-checking every human, every movement that could represent trouble. Bronzed girls in bikinis, blond youths in tight shorts, gawking tourists and surfers and lifeguards: Fallaci watched them all carefully. The sky above was a dazzling haze, the water went from blue to green, and the boats in the harbor, all sizes, all shapes, reflected sunlight from chrome and polished wood, their colored sails flapping rhythmically. Professor Vale was impressed. He was particularly im-
pressed by the boat they stopped at. A high-powered luxury cruiser, about sixty feet long, it had the air of a floating pent-house and was obviously a rich man's toy. Fallaci led them over the gangplank, onto the highly polished deck, and a serv-
ant wearing an immaculate starched white jacket stepped forward and bowed to them. Wilson followed them aboard, his eyes quickly scanning the boat, then he waved to the door of the cabin and said, 'In there, professor.' The professor glanced around him, at the blue sky and
sea, and said, 'If you don't mind I'd like to stay out here and pretend that I'm healthy.' Wilson smiled understandingly. 'That's fine with me,' he
said. 'We'll just take the boat out a few miles and discuss business then. We can talk over lunch.' The waiter stepped forward, bowed slightly at Professor Vale. He had dark skin and Oriental eyes, his face curiously smooth.

'A drink, sir?'
'Rum and Coke.'
'White rum?'
'No, dark.'
The waiter bowed again and then retreated, backing in through the cabin door.
'Where does he come from?' the professor asked.
'Hawaii,' Wilson said.
'For a moment there I thought he was Korean, but then the seemed a bit different Hawaii... should have known.' The professor shrugged and rolled his eyes, grinned at Wilson and turned around, looking over the other boats, the gleam-ing white walls of the marina, at the shimmering haze above the horizon where the sky met the sea. This is some boat,' he said.
'Thank you,' Wilson said.
'If you meant to impress me, you've succeeded.'
'Good.' Wilson said. 'We like to please. It's all part of the service.'
The waiter returned with two drinks on a tray while Fallaci, who had been standing near the cabin, disappeared through the door. The professor and Wilson took their drinks, the waiter bowed low and departed, then Professor Vale leaned against the railings and stared around him with interest.
The boat had a large crew, all dressed in white, all moving back and forth at their tasks, working methodically and si-lently. There was something strange about them. The professor didn't know what it was. They were all small and slim, dark-skinned, with narrow eyes; and the professor couldn't truly accept that they came from Hawaii. He watched them with interest They made him feel a bit unreal. They never glanced at one another, never spoke, and they kept their heads down. The professor suddenly shivered. He felt decidedly odd. He drank his rum and grinned at Wilson, still not knowing who he was, then the boat's engines rumbled and the boat moved slowly out of the harbor.
'Where are we going?' the professor asked.

Wilson shrugged. 'Nowhere special. We'll just go out a lit-tle bit, about ten or fifteen miles, and then anchor. We'll have lunch and you can study the documents.' The boat cruised out of the harbor, past white buildings
and other boats, the palmettos casting shadows on the people wandering lazily back and forth. Eventually the marina fell behind them, revealing the immense sweep of the coastline, yellow beaches dominated by condominiums and baroque, white-washed hotels. Finally there was the sea, green and blue, reflecting sunlight, the waves washing in pearly lines around the boat and streaming out in their wake.
'Beautiful, isn't it?' Wilson said.
'Yes, it is,' the professor said. 'But I always feel pretty weird out here. You can't ignore all the stories.'
'Of course... the Bermuda Triangle.'
'You sound skeptical,' the professor said.
'Oh, I'm not really that When so many boats and planes just disappear, one can't help feeling curious.'
'Right' the professor said. 'You simply can't ignore the facts. Sinking boats you can accept. Crashing planes you can accept But other things have never been explained, and they make your flesh creep. What I mean is, I'm a scientist. I try not to believe in magic. But cases like that... I don't know... we still don't know the answers.'
'What about UFOs?' Wilson asked.
'What about them, McKinley? I won't buy it that UFOs are the problem here or anywhere else. I draw the line at flying saucers. The proof for UFOs is negligible. I'll believe they exist when I see one ... and I don't think I'll see one.'
'Really?' Wilson said, sipping his wine and smiling slightly, gazing over the railings at the sea, at the cloudy horizon. 'I thought you might have seen one over the Cheyenne Moun-tain Complex.'
'Why would I see one over there?' 'Oh. I don't know...' Wilson gazed at the clouds on the horizon, coming closer, expanding. 'It's just that I'd heard that UFOs were frequently observed over scientific and military

establishments. Given that, I thought they might have been seen over the Aerospace Defense Command.'
'Balls,' the professor said. 'Anyway, the Cheyenne Moun-tain Complex has been built to survive a nuclear war - no matter how destructive - and as such it can't be seen from the air. In fact, the Cheyenne Complex is a complete under-ground city, existing right inside the mountain, resting on giant shock absorbers, webbed with miles of underground tunnels, and completely sealed off from the outer world. Be-lieve me, McKinley, when you work in that damned place you're not able to see anything in the sky - you don't see a damned thing. Our job is to track spy satellites. Those are all we've ever tracked. Neither the radar nor the telescopes have ever picked up anything else. UFOs just don't exist-'
Wilson smiled and sipped his wine, let the cool breeze fan his face, kept his gaze fixed on the sea, on the clouds near the horizon, that horizon which forever receded and led out to Bermuda. They would never reach Bermuda. They would anchor and then wait The good professor, in an intoxicated dream, would find that facts have no credence.
'I don't believe it,' the professor said.
'What?' Wilson asked.
'Spy satellites being sold in the marketplace. That's just fucking incredible.'
Wilson simply smiled. He watched the land disappearing. The sea was calm and the sky was a blue sheet, with white clouds drifting under it. Professor Vale continued talking. He seemed unsteady on his feet He sipped his drink and kept blinking his eyes and glanced vaguely around him. Wilson listened attentively. The professor was talking about pulse power weapons. The boat stopped and the anchor went down and the professor kept talking. The crew took up their positions. Fallaci reappeared on the deck. The sea washed around the boat, rolled away to the horizon, and Wilson smiled when he saw a dark mass spreading out just below them. Professor Vale kept talking. He suddenly seemed very drunk. Jets of steam were rising up from the sea and forming

into a cloud. This cloud surrounded the boat. 'We didn't invent the pulse power beam. The Russians didn't invenit either. The British invented it eighteen years ago and kept it under tight wraps. Now we're expanding its potential. We're running a race with the Russians. We're uti-lizing it as a defensive weapon, for communications and reconnaissance, and we're making quantum jumps in our technology, quietly forging ahead. These laser beams are amazing. Their possibilities are limitless. They can knock out spy satellites, zero in on flying rockets, and they can show the number plate of a car from two hundred miles up - they can pinpoint just about anything. Think of what that means, McKinley. The Cold War has been superseded. What we now have is a Balance of Terror in a post-nuclear age. People don't know what's happening.'

Wilson didn't reply. The silence rang in the professor's ears. He shook his head and saw the shifting of the clouds, a silvery haze all around him. He didn't know what was hap-pening. He felt very peculiar. Quite suddenly, sweeping away his ebullience, he felt a fierce, senseless dread. What the hell was going on? He felt drunk and disorientated. His throat went dry and his eyes went out of focus and the deck seemed to tilt.

The professor dropped his glass. He watched it falling toward the sea. It took a long time going down, spinning over, reflecting sunlight, the light flashing off in dazzling striations of incredible beauty. He never saw it hit the water. The hot air beat all around him. He looked sideways at McKinley -McKinley? - and saw blue eyes and gray hair.

Not gray: silvery. Not silvery: a shimmering white. He was here, Professor Vale, I am here to make a deal with McKinley. Then fear. The inexplicable. The white hair and azure eyes. Professor Vale tore himself from the vision and glanced wildly around him. The boat was silent and still. The sea was boiling up around it - roaring and boiling up around them all in im-mense walls of green steam.

'Jesus Christ! What the hell—?'

The professor grabbed hold of the railings, the deck shud-dering beneath his feet. The huge clouds of steam were rising from the sea and surrounding the boat. The professor couldn't believe his eyes. The clouds of steam blocked out the sky. They had formed a perfect circle around the boat, half a mile in diameter. He suddenly wanted to scream. The deck shuddered and groaned. He looked over the railing, down the side of the boat, saw an enormous dark mass below the surface, spreading out, slowly surfacing.

'The Triangle! Oh Jesus...!'

He beat his forehead with his hand, the terror sweping away his senses, glanced around and saw McKinley, azure eyes and white hair, saw the crew, the Orientals, coming to-ward him, also white, moving silently. He tried to run but it was useless: he was paralyzed with fear. He gripped the rail-ing, his eyes darting left and right, trying to take in the nightmare.

'Oh fuck! Oh my God!'

The sea suddenly roared. He stared wildly at the distant clouds. They boiled up from the waves and formed a wall that blocked out the whole sky. Then the spiraling waves ex-ploded, the spray sweeping around glinting steel. A perimeter of spikes surfaced, faraway, beneath the steam, all triangular splitting the water like metal fins, thrusting up, growing larger.

He heard the sound of his own blubbering, saw the white ridge of his knuckles, his rational self stunned by disbelief and a throttling terror. All that and something else: an unreal-ity that drained his senses; his head was spinning and he remembered the falling glass and realized he was drugged.

He tried to focus on McKinley, wondered who McKinley was, saw McKinley's blue eyes and white hair, the wall of clouds far beyond him. The boat was trapped inside those clouds. The green steam swirled and glided. The triangular grids rose from the sea, growing larger, spitting water, a great circle of glinting steel teeth that surrounded the boat.

He couldn't believe what he was seeing. The only reality

was his fear. The deck shuddered beneath his feet, the boat rocking and rumbling, and he glanced down and saw an enor-mous maass rising up to the surface. 'Grip the railing! Hold tight!' Someone was shouting at him. He licked his lips and saw McKinley. The blue eyes were very bright and intense, hyp-notizing him, chilling him. The professor did as he was told. He saw the wall of steel around him. He felt the presence of the massed crew behind him, but he didn't dare look at them.

The monster's steel jaws were closing. His eyes were drawn to the boiling sea. The dark mass was rising up and spreading out, and then it hit the boat's hull. The professor felt it and heard it the deck shuddered and screeched. There was a harsh, metallic rumbling, water rushing and hissing, then the boat suddenly rocked from side to side, settled down, finally steadied.

The professor stared, mesmerized. The whole boat was rising up. The sea poured away between the climbing walls, and an enormous steel deck broke the surface. This steel deck was smooth and solid, a quarter mile in diameter, and the walls that had looked like huge fins went right around its perimeter. The sea poured out through these walls, the enormous deck pushed the boat up, and the triangular walls of the perimeter started moving toward one another, sweeping up and curving in above the boat like interlocking, giant fingers.

The professor gazed up in awe. The steel walls curved high above him. They were roaring and hissing, water rushing down their sides, and they moved in toward one another and blocked out the green clouds. The professor stood there, mesmerized. The deck was steady beneath his feet. The triangular walls came together high above and formed a huge, empty hangar.

The walls locked and reverberated. A bright light filled the gloom. The professor looked across that great floor of steel and saw nothing but curved walls. Then the floor began to rumble. The professor almost gagged with fear. The floor started to sink, like some enormous elevator, and the walls

soared all around him, an immense globe of steel, until the light formed a blinding white haze that turned the dream to reality.
Sweeping vistas of steel and glass. A maze of ladders and catwalks. Silhouettes moving through the white haze, the air vibrating and humming. The professor saw it and felt awe and choking horror. Something cold touched his neck and then scorched it and he dropped into Hell.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Richard was standing before the large windows of the front room of the apartment, a glass of cheap red wine in his shaking right hand, his eyes bloodshot and blinking, slightly glazed with constant fear, looking over the adventure playground, the grimy rooftops of Finsbury Park, the gray sky that seemed to smother the distant maze of the City of London. The sky obsessed him, hypnotized him, filled him with fear and fascination, flitted through his dreams and colored his waking hours with the promise of horror. It was six in the evening, darkness crept across the skyline, and Richard raised his glass of wine to his lips and drank deeply, compulsively.

All white. Everything. He closed his eyes and saw the nightmare. His hand shook as he drank some more wine and then opened his eyes again. He saw the maze of the city, the distant dome of St Paul's, and above it, the darkening, cloud-filled sky that took him back to the start of it.

Richard shivered violently, finished his drink and turned away, then he walked out of the room, into the kitchen, and poured some more wine. He had a sip and glanced around him, at empty bottles and unwashed dishes, crumpled news-papers on the table, on the floor, the signs of total neglect. He had been here five days, and had only gone out for the pa-pers. He couldn't eat, he couldn't sleep, he rarely washed, and the wine made the days dissolve.

He walked out of the kitchen, stood a moment in hall, drank some wine and stared at each of the rooms in at the comforting brightness. Every light in the apartment was on. They had been on all the time. He didn't dare turn them off in case the nightmares returned and jerked him awake screaming wildly, his head bright with phantoms.

All white. Everything. He couldn't believe that it had hap-pened. He could believe even less that he had awakened three days later, alone, on the hills of Dartmoor, thirty miles from Bodmin Moor, the woman and her car no longer there, the missing days a dark void. Richard shuddered at the very thought of it, put the glass to his lips, drank deeply and walked back to the lounge and wished that Jenny would come.

He had phoned her an hour ago, the first call since his return, and had noticed the confusion in her voice, the hint of anger beneath it In truth he couldn't blame her, more pre-cisely he didn't care; now driven by the singular, desperate need to talk it out of his system.

All white. Everything. His last memory was of the white-ness. He remembered the flying discs, the enormous mother ship, the silhouettes moving slowly in the burning haze - then nothing; oblivion. A nauseous awakening on Dartmoor; stum-bling down the hill and hitching a lift and being told it was Sunday. He hadn't understood that at all - his last memory was of Thursday - and sitting there in the truck beside the farmer he had thought himself mad.

Now he stood by the window, drinking wine, shaking in spasms, rubbing his unshaven chin and looking out as the city's lights winked on. The lights were floating in darkness, a silvery web, a sparkling mosaic, and they merged with the lights in his head and took shape as the nightmare...

His feverish thoughts had filled the nights, and he had prowled from room to room through the apartment, trying to hide from his nightmares. The fear was always present, all around him, deep inside him, a living thing that breathed against his neck and made him reach for the wineglas. Ex-hausted, terrified, he dreaded sleep yet had to sleep, sitting

upright a chair, groping blindly for the bottle, muttering vague and incoherent protestations as the silence surrounded him. Richard couldn't understand it, couldn't reach it or see it. What it was, what t it meant or might mean was something concealed from him. So he drank and relived it. He wondered constantly about the woman. He saw the enormous flashing mass, the flying discs, the jolting car; and he sobbed as the white light flared up and sent him into oblivion. It had started five days ago. He had paced the apartment all that time. The world outside, that web of light and darkness now seemed alien and threatening. Richard thought about reality. He wondered what reality was. He was pondering this riddle, drowning gradually in labyrinths, when the ringing of the doorbell cut through him and made his nerves twitch.

'Jesus Chrtst!' he hissed.

He turned away from the window, stepped forward, then stopped, took another sip of wine and licked his lips and let his nerves settle down. It was all too much for him: at eight-een he felt like fifty. He glanced around the cluttered room at the debris of his hibernation, and he felt the shame reaching up to stroke him and make his cheeks burn. Then he licked his lips again, shook his head and stepped forward, left the room and walked along the straight hall, the lights stinging his eyes.

The front door had stained-glass windows, pretty mosaics of lead and wire, and he saw her silhouette through the glass, an indistinct, smokey form. He stopped, suddenly frightened, the fear followed by shame, briefly wondering if it really was her, wondering why he should doubt it Then he shook his head again, cursing softly, trying to grin, and the grin died pathetically on his face when the bell rang for a second time. 'Jenny?'

'Yes! What's the matter? Let me in! Why in God's name are you whispering through the door? What on earth's going on in there?'

Richard unlocked the door, fumbling clumsily, nervously then stepped back and pulled the door open and studied her carefully. Jenny didn't move forward, simply stared at him shocked, her right hand reaching up to her forehead, brush-ing dark hair from brown eyes.
'What on earth ... ?'
'Come in.'
'What?'
'I said come in.'
'What on earth have you been doing to yourself?'
'Don't just stand there. Come in!'
She stared at him, brow furrowed, a forefinger to her lips, then she shrugged and stepped laconically inside, her shoul-der brushing against him. This slight contact seemed electric, jolting through him like a shock - not sexual; more a sudden awareness of a being outside himself. He closed the door and turned around, saw brown eyes, a moon face, her dark hair a tangled web of curls, her long legs in blue jeans. She stared at him, studying him, then shrugged and walked away, wan-dering lazily along the hall, looking into all the rooms, raising eyebrows when she saw the awful mess: the empty, discarded bottles.
'Very nice,' she said, nodding.
She raised her eyebrows and looked at him, a quiet ap-praisal, frankly mocking, then she shrugged and walked into the room and he dutifully followed her. She stood a moment in the doorway, surveying this further desecration, then she sighed and slumped into a chair, her legs outstretched, dis-gusted.
'I don't believe this,' she said.
Richard didn't reply, simply raised his glass and drank, then walked to the window and looked out and saw the lights of the city. The whole of London was ablaze. The lights de-fied the early darkness. They then merged and fused into his nightmare, and he turned away, shivering. Jenny sat there in a chair, her shabby parka across her lap, her legs out-stretched, very long, very slim, lethargically mocking him.

'Five days,' she said. 'You said you've been here five days. I didn't believe it when you told me, but now I'm con-vinced.' She raised both her hands, lazily indicating the squalid room, then the hands dropped to rest on one another as her brown eyes looked up at him. 'You and the apartment both look the same,' she said. 'You both look fucking terrible.'

Richard tried to grin and failed; instead he shrugged and glanced around him before slowly, reluctantly looking at Jenny, wondering what he could say to her. 'It's a mess all right,' he said.
'Yes,' she said. 'A bloody mess. What the hell have you been doing all this time? Supervising an orgy?'
Richard managed to grin, a weak offering, not his usual, then his blue eyes, which normally were candid, slid furtively sideways.
'What are you looking at?' Jenny asked.
'Nothing,' he replied.
'Take a good look,' she said. 'It's worth studying. I've never seen it like this before.' Her brown eyes were lively, their languid depths flecked with steel, wandered over the patterned armchair, the stained settee, the cluttered tables, the bottles lying on the floor, the unwashed glasses, the newspapers and magazines. 'You only got this apartment so cheap,' she said, 'because my friend is still holding the lease. Now it's not a great apartment, but it is pretty good, and I don't think you'll impress him too much by turning it into a pigsty.'
Richard finished off his wine, visibly shuddered and turned away, picking a bottle off the table and filled his glass and drank again, breathing deeply.
'Don't offer me a drink,' Jenny said. The sight of you puts me off it.'
'Sorry. Didn't think. You want one?' 'No.' She smiled bleakly and looked at him. 'Even your parents think you're still down in Cornwall. What the hell's going on?'
Richard turned away abruptly and went to the window,

stood there for some time, staring out, methodically sipping his wine.
'I don't know,' he said finally. 'It seems crazy. I don't think you'll believe me.'
Try me.'
He turned around to face her, his eyes bloodshot, remote, the light shining on the wine in his glass, the glass visibly shaking.
'All right,' he said. 'I never got to St Ives. Something happened on the way to St Ives that I just can't explain. You'll probably think I've gone mad.'
'And have you?'
'What?'
'Gone mad.'
'I don't know. I'm not sure.'
He shivered again, his eyes sliding furtively sideways, the ghost of himself in this squalor, trembling lips stained with wine. Then he told her the story, talking hurriedly, frantically, pacing to and fro, his hands shaking, spilling wine, running nervous fingers through his uncombed hair, his eyes avoid-ing her face. It was suddenly easy to tell it - more than easy; a fierce necessity - and as he listened to his own voice, as the words came tumbling out, he felt as if he was coming apart, losing his old protected self, changing into someone wiser, less assured, aware of life's hidden mysteries...
That was near King Arthur's Hall. King Arthur's Hall is on Bodmin Moor. The last thing I remembered was the white light and those strange silhouettes... Like a dream, a sort of vision, not real; and I screamed and then heard myself groan-ing and had nightmares and woke up ... I was right back on Dartmoor.
'Can you imagine the feeling? I was dazed and scared shitless. It was cold, but I was burning all over - my hands were burned red. I mean, I couldn't accept it. I didn't know what had happened. I walked down to the road, hitched a lift with a farmer, and when I tried to tell him what had happened, he thought I was crazy...

'I caught a train and came back here. I saw my burned face in the mirror. That made me believe it and I got frightened, so I just kept on drinking. I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to tell anyone. I felt frightened and the fear was something else, something living inside me. What I mean is, it seemed real. The fear seemed to be a presence. I could feel it there beside me, right behind me, something tangible: living... Then I thought about the woman. What had happened to her? She was real, had to be - we spent hours in her car - then the both of us, inside that car, were drawn into the spaceship.'

'Spaceship? I don't know. I know that sounds crazy ... but something, something enormous, came down and opened up and then swallowed us... Unbelievable. Ridiculous. I can't believe that it happened. I can't believe it but it had to be real... it just had to be; had to be...

'So, I stayed here. I was scared and couldn't sleep. I forced myself out every morning, but I couldn't stay out long. I kept imagining things. I always felt I was being followed. I'd come back to the apartment and start drinking and hear all the walls creaking. I was terrified of sleeping. At night I'd fall asleep anyway. I'd dream that they were coming to get me, but they'd never materialize.

'I wanted to phone you, phone my folks or the cops, but every time my hand reached for the phone the fear would come back in spades. I think it's going away now. It's still here, but not so bad. I think the booze is starting to burn the fear out, but I still feel uneasy. What happened out there? What happened to that woman? I awakened three days later on Dartmoor. I have to know where those days went...'

He stopped talking and blinked his eyes, saw the light bulb above him, a dazzling sun, blinding him, making him melt. He shook his head and licked his lips, glanced at Jenny, turned away, picked a bottle from the table and poured more wine, let it splash on his wrist. He had a drink and gasped loudly, his head back, eyes on the ceiling, then he shuddered and slumped into a chair, facing Jenny's cold gaze.

'You're drunk,' Jenny said.
'Jesus Christ, is that your answer?'
'You're drunk and you've been drunk for five days and the drink is now talking.'
'I don't believe this,' Richard said.
'I'm no idiot,' Jenny said. 'What the hell were you doing with that woman in a parked car at night?'
'What?'
'Your lady friend. Red hair and green eyes. You and some bitch in her car in the middle of Bodmin Moor.'
'Damn it, Jenny—'
'Bodmin Moor, my love? The middle of desolate Bodmin Moor? Do you really expect me to believe that this woman's car just broke down? Come on, love, pull the other leg.'
'It didn't break down,' Richard said. 'That flying saucer made it cut out! Believe me, there was nothing wrong with the car; those things just made it stop!'
'Oh, my God, what a story!'
Richard's head began to swim, his hands shaking even more, as the logic of her feminine reason mocked his pitiful fears. He suddenly felt a strange mirth, a bitter, self-wound-ing humor, bubbling up to his throat and sticking there, almost making him choke. It was just too ridiculous - could she really be jealous? - and he licked his lips and blinked and stared at her, trying to keep her in focus.
'Fuck you,' she said. That's why you've been drinking. You hitchhike to Cornwall, you get picked up by some tart, you get drunk and she makes you an offer that you just can't refuse. God, you miserable bastard! What a Puritan you must be! You had a bit on the side, a little fling, and now you just can't admit it... But UFOs... Oh, Jesus!'
She shook her head and rolled her eyes, crossed her legs in rejection, then gazed around the room with studied inter-est, as if thinking of other things.
'It was a UFO,' Richard said.
'Filled with little green men?'
'All right, Jenny, fuck it, just forget it Go to hell. Just go home.'

'You're drunk.' 'So I'm drunk.
'You should have tried to stay sober. At least sober you'd have thought of a decent story. Now you know what the wine can do.'
Richard stood up and swayed, the room spinning around him, then he steadied himself and stepped to the table and poured some more wine.
'I'm going home,' Jenny said.
She sighed and stood up, walked across to the book-shelves, ran her finger through the dust, held it up and examined it thoroughly. She was attractive standing there, slim in blue jeans and blouse, but he studied her with no real desire, suddenly feeling removed from her. It was odd to feel that way. He felt no desire at all. He then realized that he had not thought once of sex during the whole nightmare week. Jenny's presence had not changed that. He still felt sexually dead. He was ruled by his head, by the fear, and all else had been killed in him. What did he feel? He felt nothing beyond himself. He no longer felt anything but dread, his ever present, cold horror. Jenny turned around to face him. She was tense and antagonistic: a pretty girl, someone from his past, with no place in his future... someone talking from faraway.
'I don't believe this,' she said.
'Neither do I,' Richard said.
'Did you really think I'd fall for that story? Or is the drink just too much for you?'
Richard suddenly felt rage, an unreasonable, brutal hatred, recalling the woman in the car, the flying discs outside the windows, the beams of light that shone over her eyes and turned her to stone, his own burned hands and face... Then he stepped toward Jenny, jerked his shirt collar down, bent his head and then pointed to his neck with a stained, shaking finger.
'Look!' he hissed. 'Damn you, look!'
Jenny was startled by his vehemence, almost pushing him

away, her tiny hands flapping loosely in the air and then cup-ping her face. She glanced briefly at his neck, her brow furrowed, eyes confused, and she saw the livid scar beneath his ear, running under his jawbone.
'It's a burn mark,' she said.
'Damn right, it's a burn mark! They shot a beam of light into the car and that's what it did to me.'
'Oh, Richard, for God's sake—'
He let his shirt collar go and looked at her with wild eyes, his glass of wine spilling on the floor, further staining the carpet.
'Fuck it, Jenny, it's true! These lights shone into the car. They hypnotized the woman, burned the back of my neck, and then, I swear to God, they did something to the car, took a hold of it somehow, pulled it forward, right into that space-ship. You explain it! You tell me!'
He was shouting, all flushed, a demented gleam in his eyes, those blue eyes that normally were wild and filled with good humor. Jenny watched him, transfixed, not quite frightened but nervous, seeing someone other than Richard, some stranger... a threatening presence. At that moment it be-came unreal - the room's squalor, his fierce temper - and she pursed her lips and picked up her parka and tried to hide behind anger.
'I don't have to explain it,' she said. 'I don't believe it and I won't listen. I'm not sure why you're acting this way, I'm not sure of anything. But you're drunk. You're talking crazy. I won't accept this bloody nonsense. When you're sober just pick up the phone and give me a call. I'm going home now.'
Richard stumbled toward her, his hand raised to hurl his glass, then he cracked his shin against the low table and dropped the glass and cursed loudly. Jenny stepped back, slightly frightened, staring at him with big eyes, then she shook her head sadly from side to side and walked out of the room. Richard followed her, enraged, almost stunned by his own violence, then raised his hand and shook his fist wildly as she opened the front door.

'We're asleep!' he shouted after her. 'All of us - we're asleep! You listen to me, Jenny, we're asleep! We'll all have to wake up soon!'

He hardly knew what he was shouting, didn't listen, didn't care, simply wanted to hear his own voice raging into her silence. The slamming door was his reply - slamming hard; a rebuke - and Richard cursed and turned back into the room, suddenly shaking and horrified. What had happened with Jenny? What the hell had he done? Already the scene was dreamlike, unreal, slipping out of his reach. The light bulb burned above him, strangely bright, hypnotizing, and he blinked and rushed across the silent room to look down through the window. He saw her just below him, walking along the tarmac path, slinging her parka loosely across her shoulders as she passed the parked cars. It was dark in the driveway, moonlight filtering through the trees, the fallen leaves drifting around her feet as she walked toward the broken gate. Then she was gone. She had not looked back once. Richard stood there and studied the darkness and let the silence surround him.

Fear. The inexplicable. Dread returned, creeping slyly. Richard found another glass on the table, poured more wine, started drinking. What the hell was he doing? He hadn't been a drunkard before. It was funny how quickly you got to need it, how the fear made your throat go dry. Richard drank and paced the room, his hands shaking, eyes flickering, seeing shadows, hearing whisperings in his head, sensing things all around him.

Jenny had left. She had departed and he felt dead. This death was not in Jenny's departure, but in something much larger. He had died a week ago. The other Richard had disappeared. The new Richard, a haunted man, sweaty with fear and confusion, was the matrix of something to be formed and prepared for an alien world. Dread and disbelief. A past rendered obsolescent He glanced up and saw the burning electric bulb, the rings of light all around it. All white. Everything. It had ended and

started there. His whole history, his structured life, his child's illusion of an orderly world, had been shattered in the blind-ing white haze and would never return. He was sane or he was mad. If he was sane the world was mad. The most fantas-tic possibilities now arose and left him feeling defenseless.

Richard went to the window, looked up at the stars, and was drawn to the vast sweep of the sky. It had happened: he had lived it Looking up, he knew the fear. It was the fear that it might happen again - or that it might not have happened. He couldn't separate the two. The two were one and the same. He dreaded knowing what the experience might have meant, but feared his ignorance more.

And what had he shouted at Jenny? What exactly had he meant? We're asleep. We'll all have to wake up soon... What in God's name did that mean? Richard shook his head in won-der. He didn't know what he had meant ... a belief, possibly just a suspicion, that the fantastic was actual. His farewell. His defiance.

Richard shivered and turned away and saw the room's revealing squalor. The white telephone gleamed on the table and offered its challenge. Fear. The inexplicable. He couldn't do it: he couldn't talk. He thought of Jenny, of her reaction and her departure, and he knew what it meant The whole world would think he was mad. No rational being couuld un-derstand. Richard shivered and then felt a great hunger that overrode his concern. He had to get out or collapse. He had to drag his sanity back. He felt spectral, asexual, drained of life, and he had to defeat that He shivered again and shook his head, placed his wineglass on the table. He glanced around the squalid room, heard the silence, felt the fear, then he reached out and picked up the telephone and dialed the police.

Someone spoke.

Faraway.

I retain my contempt. This one emotion is strength. I have needed that strength for many years and will not let it go. What age was I at the time? I think I must have been forty. I still think it was the explosion over Russia that led to the troubles.

That was 1908. We made a simple mistake. We had a crude form of atomic propulsion and we couldn't control it. So, we had an explosion. The Tunguska region was devastated. The accident frightened the stock company in New York and that started the problem. Some executive panicked, his panic reached the US Government, and they were frightened that the project would be exposed and reacted accordingly. They demanded control of the project. Talked of national security. They made a deal with the corporation in New York and placed us under the military.

The military mind is a perversion. It destroys all it touches. Once the military took over our project I knew it was doomed. An immediate clash of interests. I presented my case and was rejected. I had dreamed of the Atomic Age, of exploration and research, but the military had only one aim, which was national defense. I knew what that meant: they wanted machines for future wars. And despising them, I nevertheless worked with them to keep my plants open.

The fallowing years were a nightmare. My contempt for the military deepened. A complexity of paperwork, interdepartmental conflicts, interference of the most ignorant kind, then a

cutback in funds. All governments are the same. They lumber along like dinosaurs. Shortsighted, unimaginative, existing only for the moment, they make demands and then cry at the cost, thinking only of votes. Yes, I despised them. That emotion was a luxury. It burned in me all of those years and gave me strength to continue. My contempt lacked morality. I have never believed in such. Morality, that conceit of free men, is no aid to their progress. So, not moral outrage. No, it wasn't that. My contempt was for the cowardice and ineptitude that hampered my work.

My one interest was science. My major passion was flight. I was dreaming of a voyage to the stars and their infinite mysteries. This dream was not common. Those fools thought it was madness. I realized that they were draining my brain for their own pointless purposes. And so finally I revolted. Withheld vital information. Over two or three years I sabotaged my own projects, deliberately causing failure after failure, feeling pain for the first time.

Such anguish to endure. The first and last time I felt it. The knowledge that I was destroying my own work to keep it safe for the future. And for all that, I did it. My contempt was my protection. I now knew that the cost of the research had filled them with panic. My great machines would not be built: they would rot while the weapons grew. The men in charge were men moved by formless fears: they lacked vision and courage. I did not need such men. Such men were a menace. Only heroes or madmen, History's undefiled dreamers, would be capable of backing my vision and making it real.

Thus I sabotaged the project. I said our hopes had been misguided. They stared at me from behind their long table and showed great relief. My apologies were accepted. A few murmured their regrets. Then my atomic propulsion project was aborted and the hangars closed down. World War I had already started. The Dark Ages had returned. They wanted aircraft of a junctional nature, so I quietly resigned.

The worst years of my life. I was forty-five years old. My gen-ius for technology kept me working, but frustration was choking me. Years of drifting around the country. Working here,

working there. Disguising genius and displaying mere competence, thus avoiding attention. How did I survive it? With contempt. With my will. Democracy, that catch phrase of the West, became something to laugh at. Democracy was incompetence. The right to vote meant poor leadership. What was needed in the world, and what I wanted most desperately, was a government of heroes or madmen who sought the impossible. Such a government did not exist. The US government was run by cowards. Thus far years, with a pain that turned to rage, I kept my dreams to myself.

Years of cold anguish. The first and last time. Sustained by omniferous curiosity and indomitable will. My contempt for their blindness. My refusal to accept defeat. Every scientific library in the country falling under my scrutiny. All that plus the work. The demeaning jobs I did for money. My genius for engineering, electronics and aeronautics offered up in the disguise of mere competence as a means of survival. But I used even that. Used laboratories and workshops. Created small things here and there, the minor offshoots of my genius, and sold them to the moguls in suits for the freedom I needed.

Then I found a resting place. The facilities were exceptional. I stayed with an aircraft company in Texas as the chief of their research lab. All those nights spent alone. The white sheets of the draftsman. All the experiments I conducted in secret while designing their aircraft. (My head aches as I think this. I find it difficult to remember. The prosthetics and artificial heart cannot help me forever.) Electrostatic repulsion. Photosensitive cell steerage. The reaction of streams of ions to furnish rocket propulsion, then a means of neutralizing the decrease of gravity and other such matters. I never cared about their aircraft. Already they were obsolete. Already I had moved beyond mere flight and was tackling the boundary layer. The boundary layer was everything. Conquer that and the dream was mine. Thus I worked and theorized, the laboratory, the wind tunnel, but the theories still remained on the paper and could never be tested.

My dream was of evolution. Man's place in the universe. My dream was of Man as a mind that could transcend the body.

Yet how to achieve this? Man meant individual men. And such men, being imperfect tools, were distracted by hunger. The hunger for love. For admiration and power. I then tried to understand what such things meant and found them all in myself.
The hunger for love. In my loneliness I felt it. Somewhere, sometime, a memory almost gone, I wasted nights trying to heal my own wounds in a more common flesh. What way found was soon lost. The vulva's folds were a threat. The rigid shaft of my penis in their flesh gave no more than a spasm. Such a spasm shapes the world. People live and die for such. And that spasm represents what people want: admiration and power.
Knowing this, I retreated. Love's deceits showed the way. I understood in my moment of grace that their needs were illusions. I retreated and found myself. I took myself in my own hands. When my need, when my sex, became a threat I gave my semen release. Thus I understood men. They were feelings, not thought. Whereas Man, that outpouring of separate men, held the promise of greatness.
Science represents the mind. It is what we must live by. It is logic and towers above the chaos of outmoded emotions. I learned this and lived by it. I stood above my crude desires. When my flesh seduced my mind from its work, I gave it instant re-lease. A shaft of meat in the hand. The ejaculation of semen. It meant then, and to this day still means, the mere appeasement of hunger. And knowing this, I was released. The call of science was my soul. From then on I neither entered another being nor believed in men's sanctity.
Inhuman? Perhaps. But then what does 'human' mean? It means fear and confusion and doubt and emotional chaos. To be human is to err. More: to stagnate. Men are impulse encased in flesh and bone, and alone they are nothing. But Man is some-thing different. Man is mind over matter. Man is imperfection crawling from the slime to evolve into Superman.
I met Goddard in Massachusetts. I remember returning there. I was fifty years of age at the time, but feeling younger than that. How I envied Goddard! Both envied and pitied him. Another

genius humiliated by his countrymen, slowly turning eccentric. Envy. Admiration. Both share the same bed. And so I envied his achievements, respected them, analyzed them, and felt pity for the future he would have at the hands of his fellows. It was 1929. I looked upon him as a child. A suspicious, se-cretive, brilliant child with more instinct than logic. And yet he was a genius. There were things I learned from Goddard. Not much; just the odd, bizarre insight, some small things I had missed: peculiarities of steering systems, gyroscopic controls, various kinds of self-cooling combustion chambers - small things, all quite priceless. In return he learned from me. We worked together for two years. My presence unannounced, Goddard sworn to keep me secret, we spent days in the deserts of New Mexico, unraveling mysteries. Goddard sent his rockets skyward. My soul soared aloft with them. It was 1931, a troubled year, and I knew that my time had come.

Tsiolkovski and Goddard. Both still alive then. One older, one much younger than myself, both true pioneers. The basic principles of space flight: the deaf Russian's great achievement. Then the liquid-fueled rocket of young Goddard, abused beyond mention. Both stood at the threshold. Both failed the same way. Both depended on honorable men and were thus chained by small minds. Their mistake was not repeated. I did not trust honorable men. What I wanted were heroes or madmen - and the latter sufficed.

I never dwell on morality. Never did, never will. Morality is the crutch of the cripple, the mask of the weak. What of Wernher von Braun? What of Walter Dornberger? Such men were neither sinners nor saints; they were quite simply scientists. Can a scientist think of morals? Should he split peas in a pod? No, what the scientist must do is pursue his great calling. By himself he has no means. He must depend on those with power. And in doing so, he must stand aloof from all concepts of right and wrong. I always believed that. I believe it to this day. And gazing out at the wilderness, at the world of snow and ice, I think of how, after working with Goddard, I accepted this truth.

There were madmen back in power. They were obsessed and

visionary. To me, they represented the possibility of limitless cilities. I never thought of right or wrong. I simply took my opportunity. I left Goddard and America behind me - and I never returned.

CHAPTER NINE

They drove out of Galveston as the evening fell about them, a fiery sun bathing the Gulf of Mexico in a red, incandescent light. The city soon fell behind them, gave way to parched flatlands, old shacks and houses leaning on stilts, silhouetted in crimson haze. Stanford wiped sweat from his brow: the April winds outside were hot; he swore softly and glanced briefly at Epstein, saw him framed by the sinking sun. The professor looked very tired; he rubbed his eyes and coughed a lot Stanford grinned at him and then watched the road that cut through the bleak countryside.

'I got a call from a friend,' he said. 'He told me it happened this afternoon. He works in the Manned Spacecraft Center just outside Houston and he wants us to go there when he's finished. He said he would talk to us.'

Epstein smiled wearily. 'You're such an operator,' he said. 'I never imagined I'd get into MSC, so you've just made my day.'

Stanford laughed at that. Well, you know me, professor. I had this sweet girl and this girl knows this guy and this guy wants what I get from the girl and so he's very obliging.'

'You're a bastard,' Epstein said.

'I have a mom and a pa.'

'You really should settle down, Stanford. You're too old for that nonsense.'

Stanford laughed again. 'I can't make decisions,' he said.

You told me that about two weeks ago, and I think you were right. I'm an irresponsible sonofabitch. I can't let my cock go hungry. If it wasn't for that I'd have been a good scientist instead of troubleshooting for your institute. We all have our place in life.'
Epstein almost laughed but instead a cough emerged, mak-ing him cover his mouth with a handkerchief and spit the phlegm out. When he had finished he cursed softly, shook his head from side to side, then glanced out of the window of the speeding car, his eyes slightly unfocused.
'You should see a doctor,' Stanford said.
'I'm too busy, young man.'
'You've had that goddamned cough a long time.'
'I've been alive a long time.'
You're not so old.'
'I grow younger every day.' Epstein studied the bloody sunset in the west, the starkly shadowed flatlands. 'Where on earth are we going?'
'Someone's ranch,' Stanford said. 'About halfway between here and Houston. It's supposed to be just off this road. We should be there real soon.'
'What sort of rancher?'
'A struggling one-man band. A few crops and a hundred head of cattle. Now he's left with the crops.'
Epstein nodded sympathetically, closed his eyes and put his head back, sinking luxuriously into the seat, trying to sleep. The sun had almost gone, the crimson dusk turning to darkness, a ragged ribbon of mountains in the distance, suf-fused in an ocher haze. The wind was growing stronger, howling around the speeding car, clouds of dust racing across the flatlands and whipping the cactus trees.
'What did you find out about Irving?'
'I thought you were sleeping,' Stanford said.
'No,' Epstein said, 'I'm just resting. Now what about Irving?'
Stanford sighed. 'Not a thing,' he said. The loss of his pa-pers is still a mystery - and that doesn't help much.'

'The police?'
'No papers. They didn't find anything in the car. Apparently the only thing Irving took with him was that fucking pistol.'
'We checked the terrain,' Epstein said. That area was definetly radioactive. I think something came down above Irving and made that scorched circle.'
'That was one hell of a scorch mark.' 'Yes, it was huge. But assuming that something de-scended that would explain the lack of tire tracks.'
'A UFO.'
'Precisely.'
'It's too incredible,' Stanford said. 'I just can't bring myself to believe it. I try, but I can't'
'There were UFOs over the area. They were all tracked on radar. Three of them - one large and two small - and they were tracked near that area.'
'I checked on Mary's info. A lot of what she said was true. Dr Jessup committed suicide. Rene Hardy committed suicide. James McDonald drove himself into the desert and shot him-self in the head - exactly like Irving. She was also right about Chuck Wakely. He'd been stirring things up a bit. He was shot in his room in Miami a couple of weeks back.'
'I think there's a connection.'
'I think you may be right'
'And the Philadelphia Experiment?'
'All the doors are closed tight. The Navy categorically denies that it ever existed ... it's just one of those rumors.'
'Maybe,' Epstein said. 'And then again, maybe not It's a known fact that the Navy has been working for some years to develop a form of magnetic cloud that can temporarily render ships invisible. It's also widely rumored, though not yet proven, that NASA has been engaged in researching the possibilities of antigravity. Who knows what they've accom-plished. They keep a lot of their achievements quiet. As both of us know, their denials don't mean a damned thing.'
The sun sank behind the mountains, the blood-red dusk

dissolving, the sky starry, the wind howling around the car as it headed toward Houston. Epstein sank into his seat, his hands folded primly in his lap, trying not to think of Irving or Mary or the passage of time. He wasn't really growing younger. In fact his age weighed upon him. He glanced out of the speeding car, saw the swirling of the sand, the black night stretched out all around them, hybrid with mystery.
'What do you know about the CIA?'
'Odds and ends,' Stanford said.
'UFO investigations?'
They've been involved,' Stanford said. 'No one really knows how long or how much, but they have been involved.'
'Is it possible to check it out?'
'It wouldn't be too difficult.'
'No,' Epstein said. 'I mean to check it out in detail. I want to know the whole history, from the end of the war to the present I want to know when it started. I want to know why. I want to know if their concern is just for national security or if they're really concerned with something much bigger. I don't want the usual rumors, the speculations and guesswork; I want the facts straight from the horse's mouth: the com-plete, detailed picture.'
'Why?' Stanford asked.
'Because I think the answer's there. Because too many of those people have come to bad ends after having a lot of trou-ble with the establishment, scientific or military. Why was Jessup called to Washington? Why did Ruppelt revise his book? Why did Irving and Dr James McDonald both go down the same way? McDonald was harassed and humiliated. Irving had to endure the same. Mary claims that Irving thought he was being followed, and that might well be true. Others have made similar claims. Many retired or disap-peared. There's no doubt that investigating UFOs can lead to bad trouble. Does the government know something? Is the CIA involved? If the UFOs exist, and if they're extraterres-trial, that would certainly put the wind up any government, might frighten the hell out of them. I think the UFOs exist. I

also think they're extraterrestrial. It's possible that the government thinks the same and is just running scared. That would explain the harassment It would explain all their deni-als. They might be scared of people getting too close and revealing the truth.'

Stanford shook his head wearily. You're getting carried away,' he said. You've been at this game too many years and it's all getting through to you. Of course the CIA is interested - they're involved in national security. They're interested in the UFOs because they don't know what they are and be cause any unidentified objects could be dangerous. It doesn't matter what UFOs are; what matters is what they do. And what the UFOs do is cause panic and confusion, distracting pilots and tying up communications every time there's a sight-ing. In short, they're a fucking nuisance. They cost time and a lot of bread. If we could identify them positively as atmospheric phenomena, the pilots would no longer be distracted and the phones would stop ringing... thus the CIA's interest. 'But the CIA has denied that they're interested.'

'God, you're stubborn,' said Stanford.

He grinned and rolled his eyes, turned the car off to the right, left the main road in favor of a narrow track that cut obliquely through flat fields. The track was very rough, making the car bounce and groan, its headlights almost useless in the dust clouds that howled all around them. Stanford cursed and slowed down, trying to see through the darkness, the moon and stars almost blotted out by the thick swirling dust.

'Jesus,' he said, 'that's some wind out there.'

Epstein coughed and rubbed his eyes, feeling strangely suffocated, aggravated by the howling of the wind and the dense, swirling dust clouds. They were in the middle of nowhere, the storm raging through a void; he caught a glimpse of barbed wire, a gnarled tree, the black hump of a distant hill. The dust seemed to be alive, racing at them and around them, smacking the car and then exploding obliquely and

spraying back down upon them. This night had no boundary, stretching as far as the eye could see, filled with nothing but clouds of dust and the odd, indistinct tree.
There they are,' Stanford said.
Epstein stared into the storm, saw some lights far ahead, rather dull and suspended in space, the dust racing across them. He blinked and looked again, saw the lights coming closer, separating, gliding away from one another until they formed a long line. Epstein strained to see better. The lights were now a lot brighter. The car shuddered and then rolled down an incline and the lights changed again. They were ac-tually raised up on trucks. The trucks surrounded a large field. The lights were like the lamps of a football stadium, beaming down on the ground below. The whole scene was very strange. He saw the circle of lights, the dust racing across the field, indistinct figures wandering back and forth, waving arms, bending over. The sand blew all around them, clumps of sagebrush rolled and danced, and the arc lamps formed an immense globe of light surrounded by black night.
They drove up to the field, parked behind one of the trucks, and the lamps threw down a monstrous white glare that tem-porarily blinded them. Epstein closed his eyes a moment, opened them, looked again: he saw the dust sweeping through the bright light, around the men walking back and forth. All the men seemed very odd: they seemed to have no eyes nor lips. Epstein shivered and tried to concentrate and then saw the reality. The men were wearing protective glasses, their mouths covered with white filter masks. They were waving at one another, trying to shout against the wind, bending over the dark, motionless bundles that littered the ground.
'Here we go,' Stanford said. He handed Epstein a mask and glasses. 'Put them on. You'll need them out there. That stuff could choke you to death.'
Epstein did as he was told, sniffed the mask, felt claustro-phobic, then he stared at Stanford through the dark glasses and beheld a strange creature. No eyes. No lips. Epstein

thought of his UFO reports. There were connections wher-ever you cared to look and it was best not to think of them. Stanford opened the car door. He pointed ahead and then jumped out. Epstein opened his own door and jumped out and felt the fist of the wind.

The wind smacked his face, punched his chest, pushed him back; he reached out and grabbed the door of the car and then pulled himself forward. The noise was eerie, bizarre, a constant, deathly howling, the blowing sand making a sepa-rate, hissing sibilance that tortured his eardrums. Epstein felt that he was dreaming: demoniac shapes formed in the dust. A grotesque, faceless figure materialized and reached out to grab hold of him. Epstein was pulled forward. He followed Stanford toward the lights. The dust spiraled around the trucks, around the lights, around the men in the bright field. They walked past the nearest truck, saw a man kneeling down. He was dressed in coveralls, wore the mask and dark glasses, and was studying the intestines of a cow that had been disemboweled.

Stanford waved his right hand. 'All dead,' he said. 'A hundred head of cattle. All dead. Every last one of them.'

Epstein looked around the field, recognized the dark bundles, saw the dust covering blood, bone and tripe, the hides slashed and peeled back. It was a scene of incredible carnage. The wind carried the stench away. The masked men walked back and forth, looking here, looking there, kneeling down and then standing up again with their hands dripping blood. They were carrying surgical instruments, probing flesh and dismembered limbs, moving to and fro as if in a trance, still not fully believing it. Epstein suddenly shivered. It was hot, but he felt cold. He saw the gleam of white bone, a slashed udder, a pool of blood; the wind howling, the dust sweeping over all, trying to bury the horror.

Stanford led him across the field, walking between the dead cattle, around the bulldozer that was roaring into life, past the blood-covered men. The cattle were everywhere, scattered over the whole field, some stripped of their hides,

the rib cages gleaming dully, throats slashed, legs and ud-ders chopped off, eyeballs torn from their sockets. Epstein had never seen anything like it - it was a shocking, bloody sight The wind threw the sand around the men, around the trucks and the blazing lamps.

Stanford walked on ahead, skirting around blood-soaked pits, then turned his head and pointed toward a nearby truck telling Epstein to follow him. Epstein nodded and continued walking. The wind tugged at his body. He put his head down and stumbled toward the truck, trying to see through the twisting sand. Eventually he reached the truck, walked around it and saw a car, a group of men squatting in the nar-row space where the wind was less fierce.

Epstein walked up to this group and knelt down beside Stanford, noticed the tripe on the dusty coveralls, the men minus their masks. These men seemed very weary and were drinking cans of beer. The narrow space between the truck and the car afforded modest protection. Stanford pulled his mask off and Epstein gratefully did the same, then Stanford opened a can of beer, had a drink, wiped his lips and grinned at another squatting man as if they were old friends.

'Help yourself to a beer,' this man said. 'Don't wait to be asked.'

Stanford grinned boyishly. 'A fine brew,' he said. 'I only come out nights like this on the chance of a free beer.'

'What the hell are you doing here, Stanford? I thought his was a secret We only got the word an hour ago, and we haven't told anyone.'

Stanford winked. 'An old MSC friend. He gave me the word on the hot line and I just came right over.'

'He?'

'Oh, well...'

'You've been poking some cutey.'

'A man has to give something in return; if s the least I could do.'

The squatting man grinned and shook his head from side to side. 'Oh, boy,' he said, 'you really are a mover ... you're

some scientist, Stanford.' He spat dust from his mouth, wiped the grime from his eyes, had another slug of beer and glanced around him, shook his head again, slowly. 'You ever seen anything like that? It's happening all over the country. Cattle and sheep and sometimes horses: a real butcher's paradise.'
'Bless the wind,' another man said. 'Yeah' another said."... the stench.' 'Stanford, you better keep your mouth shut; we don't want this discussed.'
Stanford nodded and sipped some beer. That's under-stood,' he said. 'We had a case like this three months ago; the very same thing'
'Where was that.'
'Lubbock.'
'I think I remember it.' The squatting man looked lazily at Epstein. 'Who's this?' he asked.
Epstein flushed a little, feeling a bit out of place, but he looked the squatting man in the eyes and said, 'Frederick Epstein.'
'Who?'
'Dr Epstein's from the Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute in Washington,' Stanford said. 'He's been on a few cases like this before and he doesn't talk much.'
'The Aerial Phenomena Investigations Institute? Why the hell are you interested in this?'
'Come on, Miller!' Stanford said.
'Come on nothing,' Miller replied. 'I don't know what you birds want out here. It's got nothing to do with you.'
'Yes, it has,' Epstein said. There's been a number of cases like this right around the whole country, and they usually occur when UFOs have been reported. Cattle mutilation isn't common: there might be a connection.'
Miller drank some beer, wiped his lips with one hand, shook his head wearily from side to side and sighed in despair.
'I don't believe this,' he said. 'You fucking dogs stop at

nothing. The slightest chance to pin something on a UFO AND you just rush to grab it This has nothing to do with UFOs. There's no connection at all. What you have here is the work of a gang of rural deviants - or possibly some bizarre reli-gious ritual. It may be sick, but that's all it is: a gang of nuts on the loose.'
'I don't believe that,' Epstein said.
Tou come from Washington DC,' Miller said. 'You don't know what some of these country boys are like. The lack of sex drives them crazy.'
Stanford laughed at that 'Not my problem,' he said.
'No,' Miller said. 'Not your problem. You're a clean living city boy.' He sighed again and stood up, finished off his can of beer, threw the can on the ground at his feet and then held up his face mask. We've got work to do,' he said. We've got to bury these carcasses. I can't sit here and talk to you lunatics. Go on home. On your feet boys.'
The other men cursed and groaned, wearily climbed to their feet, started putting on their face masks and glasses, the dust whirling around them. Stanford stood up as well, handed his beer can to Epstein, walked up to Miller, tugged his elbow and leaned very close to him, hissing into the wind.
'Just tell me one thing,' he said quietly. 'Have you had any UFO reports?'
Miller looked at him coolly, turned away and surveyed the field, his shadow stretching out from his feet emphasized by the bright lights.
'I don't know what you're talking about,' he said.
Stanford wasn't smiling. 'I'm talking about fucking UFOs. I'm wondering what you boys are doing here if what you told me is true.'
'What did I tell you?'
'You told me this was nothing. You told me it was the work of some crazies. If so, it's a police case.'
'We're burying the bodies,' Miller said.
'You work for NASA,' Stanford said. 'You work for a de-contamination unit and you've done this before.'

'So, what's your bitch? Dead cattle can contaminate. We came out because we don't want this mess causing any dis-ease. We're the nearest available people. That's all there is to it. We got called out because there's no one else and because we're equipped. The local health officer called us out. He said he wanted this mess cleaned up. He said it would take too long to get civilians, and he asked us to help. There's no mystery about it.'

'Horseshit,' Stanford said.

'Suit yourself,' Miller said.

'That apartment in Austin,' Stanford said. 'It's booked up from this moment'

Miller sighed, shook his head in despair, walked a little bit away from the men, tugging Stanford along with him. They stood at the edge of the field, the carnage spread out behind them, the lamps on the trucks beaming down, the sand spiraling and hissing.

'You've got a friend in MSC?'

'That's right,' Stanford said.

'And he's the one who told you about this?'

'You hit the nail on the head.'

Miller nodded and glanced around him, the wind tugging at his clothes, the dust sweeping across the flat field and the slumped bloody cattle.

'So, you're going to see him.'

'Right,' Stanford said.

'Then presumably he'll tell you about it and I've nothing to lose.'

Miller glanced around him carefully. Epstein moved a little closer. The wind made it difficult to hear, and Miller spoke softly. There's a rancher and his daughter. The rancher seems to be in shock. The daughter's about eighteen years old and she doesn't seem too bright. The rancher's still babbling. The daughter doesn't say much at all. The rancher says he was in the house, having dinner with his daughter, when they heard a humming sound, the whole place went bananas, and a strange light, much brighter than the sun, almost blinded them both. The rancher dived to the floor.

Apparently his daughter just sat there. The light faded and the rancher got up and grabbed his rifle and rushed outside. At first he saw nothing. Then the humming began again. His daughter joined him on the porch as he looked up, so she looked up as well. There was something over his grazing land. He's pretty vague on what it was. All we know is that he thinks it was huge and that it glowed and climbed slowly. I don't think he's all there. I think they're both a bit nuts. He says the object was as big as the field, that it was silvery and disc-shaped. It hummed and climbed slowly. There were lights right around its rim. It climbed vertically to a hundred feet or so and then it shot off obliquely. His daughter smiles when he mentions it.'

'What about MSC?'

They've had radar lock-ons. The blips appeared then disappeared, kept returning and disappearing, and we sent some jets up to pursue them but there wasn't a hope. Those uni-dentifieds were moving fast. They made the jets seem like toys. They were doing two thousand miles an hour, and the jets never saw them. The radar located them here. Same place and same time. The rancher jumped in his truck and came out here and almost went crazy. He called the sheriff and the sheriff called us and here's what we found.'

Miller waved his right hand, indicating the floodlit field, the men stooped and working hard in the churned-up dust, the roaring mass of the bulldozer.

'Are these storms usual?' Epstein asked.

'Not at this time of the year.'

'It might be electrical,' Stanford said.

'It might be anything,' Miller said. He waved at the nearby men, told them to get back to work, then he put on his mask and dark goggles and said, 'Come with me.'

Stanford and Epstein followed him, skirting the edge of the field, both wearing their face masks and goggles, bent against the fierce wind. Miller climbed into a jeep, told them to get in the back, and when they did so he shot off down the road, the dust defeating his headlights. He drove for five

minutes, driving blindly and dangerously, bouncing over potholes and mounds of earth until he came to the ranch. It was large and dilapidated, an overgrown shack on stilts, creaking in the wind and hissing dust, its lights piercing the darkness. Miller drove up and stopped, killed his headlights and jumoed out, waited for Stanford and Epstein, then walked up to the steps. The house lamps were lit, framed by shuddering windows, and the light fell from the windows to the porch, illuminating the silent girl. The girl was unkempt, her long hair whipping her face. She was wearing a cheap cotton dress, her legs and arms were bare, and she stood there with a thumb in her mouth, staring up at the sky.

'Hello, Emmylou!' Miller shouted. 'What are you doing, standing out here? You're going to choke in this dust!'

The girl moved very slowly, turning her head with some reluctance, gazing down at them, her thumb still in her mouth, her brown eyes very large. She didn't say anything, simply studied Miller and Epstein. She glanced at Stanford and her eyes flicked away and then came back toward him. She smiled, the thumb still in her mouth, looking lazily at Stanford.

'Can we come in?' Miller asked.

The girl blinked and then nodded. The three men walked up the steps to the porch and then stood by the front door. They all stared at the girl. The howling wind pressed her dress to her body, revealing large breasts and hips. The dress had buttons up the front; these buttons were undone up to her thighs. The dress was blown back, exposing her legs which were brown and quite muscular.

Stanford studied her carefully. He couldn't take his eyes off her. She had the insolence of a child, a sort of lazy sensuality, standing there and sucking her thumb, staring at him and smiling. Stanford wanted to put it into her. He suddenly saw himself doing it The lust took him with immediate, startling force and stripped hus senses away. He shook his head and checked himself. He was sweating and felt feverish. The

girl sucked her thumb and stared at him, smiling slightly ambiguously.
'You're the daughter,' Stanford said.
The girl smiled at him and nodded.
'We want to talk to you and your father. We want to know what you saw out there.'
The girl stood five feet away. Stanford wanted to touch her. He could hardly stop himself from doing it The girl sucked at her thumb and stared at him and made no reply.
'Can we go inside?' Miller asked.
The girl nodded dumbly. Miller knocked on the door and then opened it and they followed him in. The house was brightly lit, with oil lamps near the windows, casting shadows on the dusty, wooden floor and the makeshift furniture. Stanford stood beside Epstein, the girl inching in behind him; he felt that she was pressing against him, and it made him uncomfortable. The shadows fell down flaking walls, crept over handmade wooden chairs. The old rancher was at the table, his hair white, his chin unshaven, a bottle of whiskey close to his left hand, most of it gone. Miller touched him on the shoulder, shook him gently, murmured to him. The old man raised his head, licked his lips, gazed around him, stared at Miller and went very red and then reached for the bottle.
'Not again,' he growled. 'No!'
Miller stepped back a little. 'Just once more,' he said. 'Just tell these men what you think you saw. It could be important.'
The old man drank from the bottle, slammed it down and glared at Miller; his eyes were bloodshot and he had the glazed look of someone not in control of himself. He wiped his lips with one hand, the fingers blistered and grimy, flick-ing whiskey from his lips and then slipping down to scratch at his chin. Miller's shadow fell across him, blotting out half his iace, and he moved out of the shadow and glared at Epstein, finally settled on Stanford. The girl was standing behind Stanford. He heard the rustling of her dress. He thought of her dress sticking to her skin, to her hot thighs and soft breasts. Stanford felt very strange, obscurely

threatened by the girl, having to force himself not to turn around touch her flesh with his hands. He couldn't un-derstand the feeling: it was something more than lust; it was like a dream carried in on the wind and now surrounding his being. Stanford felt sick with longing; he had a hard, pulsat-ing erection. He stepped back into the shadows to hide it, and the girl moved back with him. The old man was staring at him, glaring at him, snorting contemptuously, then he glared at Miller and Epstein in turn and started drinking more whis-key. His hand was shaking a lot. He was not as fierce as he looked. He spilled some whiskey down his shirt and then cursed and slammed the bottle back down. 'I saw nothing,' he said. 'Nothing!'
'Please,' Miller said.
'Go to hell,' the old man said.
'It's important that you try to remember.'
'Go to hell. I saw nothing.'
The girl moved away from Stanford, slipping quietly through the shadows, pressed herself against the window's wooden frame and gazed up at the sky. She wasn't sucking her thumb: she was biting her tongue and humming softly, her belly pressed against the windowpane, her spine arched, her breasts outthrust. Stanford tried not to stare; his eyes were drawn against their will. Shadows flickered over the girl, over Miller and Epstein, over the old man who sat at the table and spilled whiskey and cursed.
'It was silvery,' Miller prompted.
'I saw nothing,' the old man growled.
'You said it was as big as the field.'
'Jesus Christ... Fucking Jesus!'
The old man kicked his chair back, stood up straight, clutched his head, then he let out a terrible anguished scream that lacerated them all. Miller and Epstein jumped back. Stanford glanced at the girl. She smiled and slid her thumb into her mouth, then turned her eyes toward her father. The old man was clutching his head, shaking it wildly and screaming. He suddenly slammed his fist down on the table, swung

it back, swept the bottle off. The bottle flew across the room, hit the wall and exploded, the whiskey spraying over Miller and Epstein as they moved toward the door. Miller pulled the door open. The girl sucked her thumb and hummed. The old man screamed again and grabbed the table and then tipped it over. Epstein followed Miller out Stanford edged along the wall. The old man grabbed his rifle, swung it wildly around his head, and started sweeping cups and plates off a shelf that ran above the fireplace. Stanford glanced at the girl. She was smiling and humming softly. She was still sucking her thumb and her brown eyes were luminous and teasing. Stanford edged out through the door. The old man screamed and smashed things. Stanford backed into the wind and blowing sand and stumbled down the porch steps. Miller and Epstein were in the jeep, the engine running, the headlights on, and Stanford got in the back beside Epstein, pouring sweat, his heart pounding. The old man lurched through the door, a silhouette in yellow light, rushed forward and put his hand on an upright and then glared at them all. 'I saw light!' he shrieked. 'Light!'

Stanford drove along NASA Highway 1 toward the Manned Spacecraft Center. Stanford felt very strange. He felt terribly alone. Epstein was sitting in the seat right beside him, but he didn't seem real. Stanford drove fast and recklessly, now ig-noring the storm, oppressed by the heat and the noise, obsessed with the girl.

He thought back on what had happened, turned it over in his head, tried to cast it out and concentrate on his driving, but returned to the mystery... What had happened back there? What had drawn him to the girl? Was there a connec-tion between the girl's calm abstraction and her father's wild outburst? He remembered the old man clutching his head, shaking it wildly from side to side, screaming as if trying to break loose from a terrible anguish. What had actually made him scream? What had made him turn so violent? And what secret did he share with the girl who sucked her thumb and

smiled mindlessly? Stanford tried to think it out He could think only of the girl. He saw her standing on the porch, in the light from the window. Stanford couldn't understand it. His lust was almost supernatural. It was not based on her breasts and full thighs, but on her luminous, empty eyes. Stanford felt himself shivering. The sound of the wind tore at his nerves. He glanced at Epstein, at that lined, bearded face, and wondered what he was thinking. 'What do you think they saw?' he asked.
'I don't know,' Epstein said.
'They sure as hell were acting pretty strange.'
'Yes, they were,' Epstein said.
'I think what they saw affected them.'
'Yes, no doubt it did.'
'I mean, I think it might have physically affected them.'
'You think so?' Epstein said.
Stanford didn't reply to that He didn't know what to say. He looked ahead and saw the clouds of dust sweeping over the dark road. The storm was fierce and unrelenting, blotting out the moon and stars, the spinning sand forming into shapes that seemed almost alive. Stanford cursed again softly. The noise and darkness were getting to him. He thought he saw some lights far ahead, and that made him feel better.
'That looks like it,' he said.
'The Manned Spacecraft Center?'
'Yes,' Stanford said. 'Straight ahead. You can't see much from here.'
Epstein sat up and looked ahead. He thought he saw lights in the distance, but he couldn't be sure. The dust was everywhere, racing at them and around them, hammering at the car and making it vibrate. Epstein didn't feel very well. He kept thinking of the hundred butchered cows, the men in goggles and masks. Epstein shivered and coughed and glanced briefly at Stanford; his friend was just a dark form in the black night, a faint light in his eyes. Epstein wondered
what was wrong: his young friend was too quiet; he sensed a great tension in Stanford and he wondered what caused it.

Not the hundred butchered cows. Not the raving old man. Stanford was much tougher than that, was much stronger than he was. Epstein looked at his young friend, heard him murmuring something. He wondered what Stanford was thinking, then he studied the road ahead. He saw the distant lights, shining weakly through the storm, emphasizing the awful desolation of this dark, empty area.

'That man Miller,' Epstein said. 'How did you get him to talk? I heard you saying something about an apartment. What on earth did you mean?'

That finally got a laugh from Stanford. 'God, you're sharp,' he said. 'If s an apartment that I've had for years in Austin, and I let some friends use it Miller's a married man. He's not a happily married man. I've been letting him use the place this past few months for his one great affaire. He's not experienced at that game. That's the only place he can go. He doesn't want to lose his little bit of action, so his tongue started wagging.'

'That's blackmail,' Epstein said.

'Don't be sordid,' Stanford replied. He laughed again and looked at the lights ahead and then he started to frown. 'Je-sus Christ,' he said. 'What the hell... ?'

Epstein looked ahead and saw the lights through the murk. The car was racing toward them, but the lights remained un-changed: the same size, the same distance away, as if actually pacing them. Epstein sat up very straight Stanford stepped on the gas. The car roared and raced into the storm, heading straight for the distant lights, Epstein suddenly felt unreal. He bent forward and strained to see: there were twenty or thirty lights, very weak, not too big, spread out at equal dis-tances in a long line that straddled the road. Stanford cursed and gunned the engine. The distance between the car and the lights remained exactly the same.

'Goddammit, they're moving!'

Stanford almost screamed the words. He kept his eyes on the lights. The car raced into the murk, doing sixty miles an hour, but the distance between it and the lights didn't alter the least.

'They're above the road,' Epstein said, 'Fucking right!' Stanford exclaimed. They're a good hundred feet above the road and they're definitely moving!' 'How far away do you think they are?'
'About a quarter of a mile.'
'Then that line of lights is three hundred feet wide.'
'Jesus Christ... Jesus Christ!'
Stanford put his foot right down and the car leaped ahead, throwing Epstein back into his seat in an untidy heap. He quickly pushed himself back up, heard the mournful, howling wind, saw the lights in the sky far ahead, glowing through the fierce dust clouds. Stanford just kept on driving, his eyes bright and intense; he went all out, but the distance remained the same, the lights luring them on.
Stanford cursed and kept driving. Epstein held on to his seat The line of lights was very straight, very wide, and it kept the same distance. There was something weird about it. The car was roaring against the wind. The line of lights appeared not to be moving, but it stayed well ahead of them. Then it suddenly stopped: the lights rushed at them and grew larger, glowing down through the dense dust, illuminating the road below.
'Jesus Christ!' Stanford hissed.
He slammed his foot on the brake pedal, and the car shrieked and started skidding around in a spiraling cloud of dust almost turning full circle. Epstein's head hit the windshield, bounced back into the seat, his hands darting out to grab the dashboard as the car skidded around, its rear facing the motionless lights. Stanford cursed and killed the engine, opened his door and jumped out was pummeled by the wind and sand and saw the lights rising vertically. Epstein followed him out, wiping blood from his forehead; and they stood there, one at each side of the car, looking up disbeliev-ingly. The long line of lights was rigid and didn't sway from side to side. It was not too far away, about two hundred feet up, to separate lights yellow and weak, glowing through the dust

storm. The lights rose very slowly, making no discernible sound, growing smaller, moving closer together, then finally merging as one. This one light was long and thin and gradu-ally shrank to a glowing sphere. The glowing sphere slowly climbed above the storm and disappeared in the black sky.
Stanford and Epstein were stunned, glancing briefly at one another. They stood there for a long time. They both stared up at the sky. Eventually, being pummeled by wind and dust, they went back to the car.
'Where are we?' Epstein asked.
'About a mile from MSC. I thought that thing was heading straight for it, about to smash through it.'
'It was low enough,' Epstein said.
'Damned right, it was low enough. It was low enough and big enough to level MSC to the ground.'
'They must have seen it,' Epstein said.
'They couldn't have missed it,' Stanford said. 'Let's go. I want to find out what's happening. Those fuckers can't deny this one.'
Stanford drove more carefully now, feeling strangely diso-rientated, his nerves flayed by the wind and the dust and the night's weird events. He thought of the girl on the porch, of her luminous, empty eyes, of her firm breasts and brown, naked thighs, her belly pressed to the windowsill. His lust returned immediately, a primitive, unreasoning lust, and he shook his head and tried to think of something else: the old man's sudden violence ... What had descended over the field? Just what had the old man seen? Stanford tried to think it through and failed dismally, his lust growing and blinding him.
Epstein remained silent, feeling stunned and exhilarated, thinking of the vertically climbing lights and their serene, si-lent beauty. It all seemed fantastic. The whole night was like a dream. He felt a bit dizzy, coughed a lot and rubbed his eyes, exhausted and excited all at once, his heart pounding dramatically. It was his first UFO sighting and it had filled him with awe. He thought of the butchered cattle, of the old

man screaming, 'Light?, and he wondered if what he had just seen had also materialized over the grazing field. The storm was almost unnatural, certainly unprecedented; it had emerged from a placid, crimson dusk and showed no signs of abating. Epstein thought of the ascending lights -that line of lights that never swayed - and wondered what kind of object it was that could hide in this storm. Epstein glanced ahead and saw another line of lights,
hazed behind the dense clouds of dust, hanging dimly in black space He rubbed his eyes and looked again, feeling decidedly odd. The lights grew larger and illuminated a fence and a wide metal gate. It was the Manned Spacecraft Center. The lights shone from white buildings. Epstein sighed with relief and then coughed and wiped his lips with a handkerchief.

Stanford drew up to the gate and stopped the car and a guard came toward them. The guard was stooped against the wind, pressing his cap to his head, the dust whirling around him and covering his uniform. Stanford rolled the window down and the dust roared in through the car. The guard's masked face appeared at the window, his eyes hidden by goggles.

'Dr Stanford!' Stanford shouted. This here's Professor Epstein! We have an appointment with Captain Armstrong of the Space Science and Technology Administrative Office!'

'I'm sorry, sir,' the guard said. 'Your appointment's probably been canceled. We're in the middle of a special security exercise, under strictest security.'

'You don't understand, corporal... we have an appointment.'

'I'm sorry, sir. Your appointment has been canceled. You'll have to leave now.'

Stanford looked beyond the guard, saw the closed gate and fences, the roads between the buildings filled with troops, all heavily armed.

'A security exercise?'

'That's right, sir. Just routine.'

'That's an awful lot of men for a security exercise. What the hell's going on here?'

The guard's face was impassive. 'I'm sorry, sir. You'll have to leave.'
'Listen, corporal, we've got an appointment. Now just get on that telephone.'
The corporal straightened up, waved his hand at the guard's box, and another man, a sergeant, walked out, carry-ing a rifle.
'What's up?' he asked.
'We've got an appointment,' Stanford said.
'All appointments have been cancelled,' the sergeant told him. 'You're not allowed in.'
Stanford looked past the sergeant, past the fence, into the Manned Spacecraft Center, saw the troops lined along the linear roads, all studying the sky.
'Sergeant,' he said, 'we just saw some very strange lights across the road about a mile or so back. They were moving, and then when we approached them, they started to climb. Any idea what they were?'
'Probably a helicopter, sir.'
'Too big to be a helicopter, sergeant. Try something else.'
'I don't know, sir.'
'You should have seen them from here, sergeant.'
'No, sir, we didn't'
'You couldn't have possibly missed them, sergeant; they formed a very long line.'
'We haven't seen anything.'
'Why are your men studying the sky, sergeant?'
'They're looking for helicopters, sir. It's a security exer-cise. They're supposed to report the helicopters as soon as they see them.'
'You have helicopters up there in this storm?'
That's right, sir.'
'You think helicopters can fly in this weather?'
'Yes, sir. I suppose so.'
'And you're not going to report the lights we saw?'
'We haven't seen any lights, sir. Now please leave the area'

Stanford sighed, studied the soldiers behind the fence, saw them all staring up at the sky. 'Sergeant, please get on that telephone and tell Captain
Armstrong that we're here.' 'I can't do that.' 'What the hell do you mean, you can't do that?' 'Captain Armstrong isn't here, sir. No administrative per-sonnel are allowed in until the end of the exercise.' 'But he told us to meet him here!'
'That was probably before he knew about this exercise. He's not here anymore, sir.' 'Sergeant, that was only two hours ago.'
'Sorry, sir.'
'You mean you pulled this security exercise without giving anyone any notice?'
'I'm sorry, sir. You'll have to leave now.'
The sergeant straightened up and held his rifle across his chest, trying to see through the dense sand, unprotected by goggles. Stanford glared at him, unwilling to move, then the corporal placed his right hand on his pistol and reached out for the door handle. Stanford noticed the gesture, cursed softly and shook his head, then he turned on the ignition, reversed the car sharply, and headed back along NASA Highway 1, cutting through the fierce storm.
'Goddammit!' he exclaimed. 'What the hell's going on? Those bastards were lying through their teeth. They know something is up there.'
'They were studying the sky,' Epstein said.
'Damned right, they were studying the sky... They've seen something up there and now they've locked the fucking gates and they've got that place looking like a battle zone. And now Armstrong... Oh, Jesus!'
He smacked the steering wheel with one hand, shook his head from side to side, and glanced at Epstein with a gleam in his eyes.
'Where are we going?' Epstein asked.
'Clear Lake,' Stanford said. 'Armstrong lives in Nassau Bay

and I think he's probably hiding out there now. I want to talk to that bastard.'
Epstein sank back into his seat and closed his eyes, his exuberance giving way to exhaustion. The car roared and vibrated, pummeled constantly by the storm, and Epstein floated in a weird, light-flecked darkness, now removed from himself. He saw the long line of lights, rising slowly and si-lently, gliding up through the wind and dust with a startling majesty. Then he imagined the rancher's field, the same lights descending quietly, the cattle bellowing in panic and confusion as the dust beat about them... What had happened after that? What had caused the terrible carnage? Indeed, had anything descended at all or had the rancher imagined it?... Epstein coughed and wiped his lips, opened his eyes and sur-veyed the storm. Clouds of dust swept around the speeding car and raced across the dark flatlands.
'It's not like Armstrong,' Stanford said. 'I've known that guy for years. He's been passing me information for years, and he's always reliable. He told me to meet him at MSC. He's never missed an appointment If that was just a security exercise he'd have certainly known about it and he wouldn't have sent us out there in the first place. Those guards are looking for something. They sealed that place off at the last moment They must have sealed it off just after Armstrong rang me, and there must be a reason for that Armstrong said he had something to tell me. That usually means unidentifieds. I think those guards in MSC and the NASA decontamination team are part and parcel of the very same thing: there's something over this area.'
He slowed the car down, pointing his finger at murky lights, turning into the sleepy suburb of Nassau Bay and cruising along empty streets. There were lights on in the houses, silhouettes framed by windows, the lights beaming out and falling on neat lawns, the shrubbery bent by the wind. Stanford cruised for some time, studying the left side of the road, straining to see through the clouds of dust and mutter-ing under his breath.

'That's it,' he said eventually, pulling over to the right, stopping the car on a graveled drive that fronted a chalet-styled, charcoal brown house. He killed the engine and switched the lights off, opened the door and climbed out, and Epstein fol-lowed him and joined him on the porch as he was pressing the doorbell. They heard the sounds of revelry from inside, a lot of laughing and shouting. Stanford pressed the bell again, looking angry and impatient The door opened and a man stared at them, his face flushed with alcohol, red eyes blinking and settling on Stanford, opening wide with surprise. 'Oh, Christ,' he said softly.
'We had an appointment,' Stanford said.
The man seemed reluctant to open the door further, his shoulder leaning against it.
'Get out of here,' he said.
'Let us in,' Stanford said.
'I can't talk to you, Stanford. Go away. I've got people in here.'
'Your buddies from MSC?'
'That's right,' Armstrong said. 'It's a private party, Stanford. I can't talk now. Just get the hell out of here.' He started to shut the door, but Stanford stopped it with his foot, leaned forward and stared directly at Armstrong, breathing into his face.
'We've come a long way,' he said. 'We came just to see you. You said you had something to tell us - now you're slamming the door. What the hell's going on?'
'Nothing,' Armstrong said.
'Then let us in,' Stanford replied.
'I can't,' Armstrong said. 'It's a private party. For chrissakes get out of here.'
'I love parties,' Stanford said.
'You can't come in, Stanford.' 'Why not? What the fuck are you worried about? I've been in there before.'
'You know damned well why not.'
'You brought us out here,' Stanford said.

'I told you I'd meet you at MSC.'
'You weren't there,' Stanford said.
There was a lot of laughter from inside, a lot of shouting, someone singing, and Armstrong glanced nervously over his shoulder and then looked back at Stanford.
'Goddammit,' he said.
'What's going on?' Stanford asked. 'How come you suddenly throw a private party when you knew we'd be here?'
'It just happened,' Armstrong said.
'That's horseshit,' Stanford said. 'You threw that party be-cause you didn't want us to come here and find you alone. You don't want to talk, Harry. You're suddenly frightened of something. You were going to tell me something and now you're shitless, and I want to know why.'
'I'll give you a call,' Armstrong said.
'I don't want a goddamned call. I'm not leaving here until I know what's happening, so you better start talking.'
'Give me a break, for chrissakes!'
'Why?' Stanford said.
'I've got the CIA on my back!'
'We're coming in,' Stanford said.
He started to push the door open, but Armstrong pressed his shoulder against it, glancing nervously back into the house and wiping his lips. Then he looked back at Stanford. 'Okay, okay? he hissed. He slipped outside and closed the door behind him, looking briefly at Epstein. He was a small man, potbellied, his hair thinning and turning gray; he glanced back over his shoulder, at the closed door behind him, then he shivered and turned into the howling wind and spoke directly to Stanford.
'This is the last time,' he said. 'I won't talk anymore. Don't ask me why - I won't tell you - but this is the last time.'
'You mentioned the CIA.'
'No, I didn't,' Armstrong said. 'Remember that I didn't say a word. I didn't mention the CIA.'
'Okay. I never heard it.'
'Good,' Armstrong said. 'Now listen to the rest of this very

carefully and don't ever forget it. You don't call me anymore. You understand that, Stanford? What I say to you tonight is the finish. I'll only talk on those terms.'
'Christ, Armstrong, we're old friends!' 'Shut up. There's something else... This conversation never happened. The last time we talked was two hours ago.
We haven't spoken since then.' They stood facing one another, the dust sweeping between them, the wind shaking the railings of the porch. Epstein said
nothing feeling embarrassed and guilty, ashamed of his complicity to the matter, trying to avoid Armstrong's frightened gaze.

'It's a deal,' Stanford said.
'Okay,' Armstrong replied. He licked his lips and nodded, glancing nervously left and right, ascertaining that there was no one else on the porch, seeing only the swirling dust. He was still holding his drink, a half empty glass of bourbon, and he finished it off and wiped his lips and looked directly at Stanford.
'There's a flap on,' he said. 'It's a very big flap. In fact, it's the biggest flap we've ever had and that place is bananas. It all started three hours ago. We received some calls from our pilots. They reported seeing unidentifieds over the Gulf of Mexico, traveling in a northerly direction at incredible speeds. These objects were silvery lights. The pilots refused to comment further. These sightings occurred an hour before sunset and continued till darkness. Meanwhile, we were getting radar lock-ons. These lock-ons located the unidentifieds not over the Gulf of Mexico, but over that old farmer's ranch. According to the radar, something enormous had come from the direction of the Gulf of Mexico, circled around at forty thousand feet over the Manned Spacecraft Center, and was now descending as three separate blips over the ranch. These objects went off the scopes when they entered the radar's ground clutter.' Armstrong glanced around him, left and right along the porch, his eyes wandering to the far side of the street as if

searching for someone. There was no one in the street. The storm was keeping them all inside. Armstrong spat dust from his mouth and rubbed his eyes and then looked up at Stanford.
'We were going to scramble some jets,' he said, 'but just as we gave the order this dust storm blew up out of nowhere. That effectively grounded the jets - the wind over the strip was incredible - but we still kept getting lots of unidentifieds. These reports were coming in by telephone from other radar stations located at White Sands, Los Alamos and the whole Gulf of Mexico area - and according to our own radar readings, they were right above us. Naturally, because of the dust storm, we still couldn't scramble the jets, so we just had to sit there and tear our hair out Then, about half an hour before I called you, the three objects above the ranch reappeared on the radar scopes, merged and became one, and this object started flying toward the Manned Spacecraft Center, doing no more than thirty miles an hour.'
'Did you say thirty miles an hour?'
'That's what I said.'
'And it wasn't just a weather balloon?'
'No, Stanford, it wasn't.'
The sounds of the party continued inside, growing louder each minute. Armstrong listened at the door, nodded his head in satisfaction, then glanced along the porch once again, his red eyes flickering nervously.
'We all went outside,' he said. 'We watched this thing fly-ing over us. It was flying above the storm, it was pitch black out there, and all we could see were its lights. The lights formed a perfect circle. They were pretty hazy through the dark. There was nothing to measure them against, but that circle seemed monstrous... it must have been a few hun-dred feet up and it still seemed enormous. It just glided right over us, hardly moving at all, then it moved off in an easterly direction and its lights just blinked out When we got back inside there were unidentifieds all over the radarscopes.'
Armstrong took a deep breath and gazed up at the sky and

saw nothing but a curtain of dust. He shook his head wearily from side to side and started talking again. 'Shortly after that we received a call from the local sheriff,
telling us to get out to that ranch. Remembering what we had seen, we complied pretty quickly and soon received a phone call from our boys. No need to recount the message - you've already been out there - but when they found out what was happening, the MSC Intelligence promptly ordered us all off the base. Naturally we were furious. We wanted to know what was going on. What we were told was that we hadn't seen or
heard anything, that loose talk would lead to trouble, and that we were to go to our homes and remain there until further notice. That's why we're all here. That's why I can't talk to you again. What happened out there is unprecedented and we're all pretty scared.'
'The CIA?'
'I didn't say that.'
'Right: you didn't say it. Just tell me about that field of dead cattle. Where does all that fit in?'
'I don't know,' Armstrong said. 'I swear to God, I don't know. All I know is that it's happened before - all over the country.'
'One of your men said it was a bunch of local crazies, but I can't really buy that.'
'One final thing, Stanford, and that's all... I won't talk anymore.'
'Okay, one last thing.'
'It wasn't a bunch of crazies. That wasn't amateurish butchery. Whatever the reason for the butchery, it was done with a frightening efficiency. Those cattle were killed by an unknown nerve gas, they were sliced up with tools that must have been razor sharp; and their tongues and their eyes, their genitals and their udders, were removed with a surgical precision, and then spirited away. Don't ask me why. It doesn't
make sense to me. But those cattle weren't slaughtered by a bunch of nuts - they were professionally butchered.'
'The decontamination unit?'

The area's radioactive. That's why coyotes or buzzards won't touch the carcasses. It's always the same.'
'And the old man and girl?'
That's as far as I go, Stanford. That's it I'm not saying any more. Don't ever call me again.'
Armstrong opened the door, started into the house, hesi-tated, then turned back to face them, his eyes focused on Stanford.
'We're old friends,' he said, 'so I'll give you some advice. Don't go back to that ranch. I warn you, don't be tempted. Whatever you do, don't go back there. It's not worth the trouble.'
He stepped in and slammed the door. Stanford stood there, his eyes fixed on the closed door, then he turned and gazed at Epstein, shrugged his shoulders and shook his head, stepped down to the dark, graveled lawn and walked back to the car. Epstein followed him reluctantly, feeling dazed and exhausted, fighting against the wind and the dust and won-dering when it would end. Once in the car, he stared at Stanford, now pale and too tense. Stanford angrily started the car, drove out into the street, and turned back the way they had come, looking very determined.
'I'm going back there,' he said.
'To MSC?' Epstein asked.
'No,' Stanford said. To the ranch.'
'Oh, my God,' Epstein murmured.
He put his head back on the seat, closed his eyes and em-braced the darkness, quietly cursing the wind and the dust and the night's teeming mysteries. He kept his eyes closed, refusing to look outside the car, letting the anger take hold of him and shake him and return him to wakefulness. He then thought of the butchered cattle, of the old man and his daugh-ter, of the lights in the sky and the guards at MSC, of Armstrong's inexplicable reluctance to talk and Stanford's consequent fury. Something odd was definitely happening. It was causing panic and fear. He and Stanford had been lied to, locked out and warned off: the events of the night were being

suppressed and that meant they were real. Epstein coughed and muttered an oath, opened his eyes and stared at Stanford, saw his profile silhouetted in the win-dow, the storm raging beyond him. Stanford's good humor had deserted him. He had never looked so cold. The wind and dust were pummeling the car, but he just kept on driving, They finally turned off the road, went along the familiar track, passed the flat fields that stretched into the darkness on either side, and stopped near the crest of the hill that led down to the ranch. Stanford killed his headlights and they both stared straight ahead. A ghostly light formed a huge fan in the sky beyond the crest of the hill. 'What the hell—?' Stanford said.

He glanced briefly at Epstein, opened his door and tumbled out, and the wind swept the dust through the car. Epstein coughed and cleared his throat, covered his eyes with his hands, then he followed Stanford out of the car, into the storm's awful fury.

The storm seemed worse than ever, much louder, more violent, the dust lashing their faces with extraordinary strength. They had to force themselves forward, protecting their eyes with their hands, stooped over as if pushing against a wall, being shaken from side to side. Epstein felt suffocated, a bit unreal, slightly frightened; he saw Stanford on the hill, his clothes flapping about him, silhouetted in the large fan of light that split the darkness ahead. Epstein struggled up to him, reached out to grab his shoulder, and they stood there, neither saying a word, looking down on the ranch.

The area surrounding the ranch was floodlit, filled with trucks and armed troops, some of the soldiers wearing goggles and masks, staring up at the sky. Other soldiers were hard at work, crouched low and gesticulating, hammering posts into the ground and running barbed wire along them, erecting a fence that ran right around the ranch in an enor-mous rectangle. The lights in the ranch were on. The wind howled and hurled sand over all and made the whole scene unreal.

'Jesus Christ,' Stanford said. 'Do you see that? They're being fenced in!'
'Damn them,' Epstein hissed. The bastards won't get away with this.'
‘They're carrying weapons and studying the sky,' Stanford said. ‘They must be waiting for something.'
Epstein suddenly exploded, his throttled anger breaking loose; he smacked the palm of one hand with his fist and turned back toward the car. The wind lashed him, tugged at him, tried to throw him on the ground, and he cursed and shouted into the storm.
'Damn them!' he shouted. The bastards won't get away with it! We've been given the runaround once too often, and the buck stops right here. I want to know about this, Stanford! I want to know about all of it! I want the Air Force checked out, I want the facts on the CIA, I want to know what's been happening all these years and why they're keeping it quiet. The Air Force say they're not involved! The CIA say the same! They're both lying and now we have the proof, so let's find out the truth. You understand, Stanford? It's time to stop play-ing around! I want to know what's been going on, I want the facts and not their fiction, and I want to take those facts and break them down and tear this whole thing apart!'
He stopped shouting and stared at Stanford. His friend was gazing up at the sky. Epstein suddenly realized that it was quiet, that the fierce wind was dying. Startled, he looked around him: the blowing sand was settling down, spiraling gently, drifting down all around him in the stark, abrupt si-lence. Epstein couldn't believe it He looked up at the sky. He saw the dust clouds thinning out, the moon and stars reap-pearing, the soft moonlight illuminating the fields and the parched, shivering trees.
Epstein stared down at the ranch. The dust no longer ob-scured the porch. The girl was standing there and sucking her thumb, gazing up at the sky. Everyone was gazing up. The soldiers had switched off the floodlights. They were standing around the house, clearly visible in the moonlight.

neither moving nor making a sound, staring up at the sky. 'There they go,' Stanford said.
Epstein followed Stanford's gaze. He saw the three lights in the sky. They were very high up, very small, very bright, one of them the size of a dime, the other two a lot smaller. Epstein watched, mesmerized. He felt Stanford's presence beside him. The lights formed a perfect triangle, climbing vertically. moving slowly, each composed of a luminous outer layer that surrounded a darker core. Epstein felt his heart pounding. He couldn't tear his eyes away. The two smaller lights changed, glowing brighter, accelerating, then they raced with a silent, serene grace toward the large light above them. The three lights merged together, became one, a bril-liant star, then this star flared up and shot off to the south and disappeared almost instantly.
Stanford looked down at the ranch. He saw the girl on the porch. She was bathed in the moonlight, her dress fluttering against her legs, her feet bare, her thumb still in her mouth, her eyes fixed on the sky. Then she slowly turned toward him. She appeared to be staring directly at him. Stanford shivered and looked at Epstein, shivered again and shook his head, then they both returned silently to the car and headed back toward Galveston.
'I'll find out,' Stanford said.

CHAPTER TEN

Richard sat up straight on the hard wooden chair and stared nervously at the window beyond the desk. The desk was long and solid, its surface badly scarred, supporting a telephone and a couple of empty trays, all covered in dust The window was equally dusty, one of its panes badly cracked, now vibrating with the traffic that raced along Tottenham Court Road. Richard sat there for five minutes. It seemed longer than that. He was still studying the window, watching the rain splash the glass, when the door behind him suddenly opened and was slammed shut again.

Richard jerked his head around, but the two men were already past him, walking around him and sitting down behind the desk on two more wooden chairs. The men were both middle-aged, one with dark hair, one bald, both wearing nondescript suits and ties and carrying briefcases. The bald-headed man smiled, opened his briefcase and removed some papers, placed the papers fastidiously on the desk and then unclipped a ball-point pen.

'Awful weather,' he said.

The other man seemed humorless, patting his dark hair with long fingers, opening his briefcase and pulling out a tape recorder which he set down before him. Only then did he look at Richard, his dark eyes expressionless, his face sallow, his chin badly shaved, his fingers scratching the table.

'Feeling all right?' the bald-headed man asked.

'Uh?' Richard grunted.
'I said, are you feeling all right? You seem a bit tired.'
'Yes, I'm tired,' Richard said. 'I haven't had any sleep, came yesterday to report seeing a UFO, and I've been here all night.'
'Sorry about that,' the bald man said. 'Must have been a bit uncomfortable. But the police can't touch cases like this - they always have to call us.'
'Who are you?' Richard asked.
'Data processors,' the man said. 'We specialize in aeronautical phenomena and we work for the government.'
'What department?' Richard asked.
'I don't think that's important We're just here to assess what you think you saw and write it up for the record.'
'What I think I saw?'
'Don't be offended. We're not insulting you. But the sky is not as simple as it seems, and it plays tricks with people.'
'Such as?'
'St Elmo's fire can turn a perfectly ordinary airplane into a bright multicolored halo of twisting light The planet Venus, when viewed under certain conditions, will appear as a glow-ing orb that moves in the most extraordinary patterns. Comets, meteors, balloons, satellites, flares, fireworks, noctilucent clouds, plasmoids and corona discharges can all look like bright solid objects. For instance, a high altitude balloon, if struck at a low angle by the rays of the setting sun, will resemble an enormous disc flying at tremendous speed. What will appear to the observer to be the blazing exhaust of the disc will actually be the swirl of dust and ice crystals left in the wake of the balloon and also reflecting the sunlight likewise with temperature inversions. These are various lay-ers of air, all at different temperatures, which bend and twist and generally distort the rays of light to create what is best termed a mirage. Did you know that a temperature layer can pick out a boat at sea, project it as a mirage in the sky, and that that mirage will be viewed by a competent pilot as a long, dark shape filled with bright windows? Similarly, somewhere

in the country a long line of cars may be crawling up a hill, all beaming their headlights into the night sky; given the proper temperature inversion, these lights will be bent and sent traveling, will bounce off another temperature inversion thirty or forty miles away, and will appear to the observers as a mass of glowing, disc-shaped objects, all flying in perfect for-mation through the sky. As for plasmoids and ball lightning, both are basically formed by electrified gas that when burn-ing brightly oscillates, vibrates, wobbles, flies horizontally, climbs vertically, glows in blue and red colors, and can look like a sphere or a disc or a gigantic torpedo; they also hum and make other strange sounds and are very impressive ... Shall I continue?'

'No,' Richard said.

'Good,' the man said.

'I didn't see any of those things.'

'Possibly not. Let's find out.'

The bald man smiled pleasantly and sat back in his chair, tapping his teeth with his ball-point pen and nodding his head. The dark-haired man leaned forward, resting one hand on his tape recorder, not smiling, speaking in clipped, measured speech, his dark eyes fixed on Richard.

'The following questions have been designed to give the government as much information as possible concerning the unidentified aerial phenomenon that you have reported. Please try to answer the questions as accurately as possible. The information that you give will be used for research purposes and will be regarded as confidential material. Your name will not be used in connection with any statements, conclusions or publications without your permission. Now please confirm that you understand and accept this.'

'Yes,' Richard said.

The bald-headed man sat forward and leaned over the desk, his pen hovering just above his notepaper, preparing to write. The other man turned his tape recorder on and then started the questioning.

'When did you see the object?'

'The seventh of March.'
'1974?'
'Yes.'
'Time of day?'
'About eight thirty.'
'In the evening?'
'Yes.'
The bald man was making annotations in a large form, filling in the blank spaces.
'Where were you when you saw the object?'
'In Cornwall'
'Precisely.'
The A30 through Bodmin Moor. It was near King Arthur's Hall. That's between Bolventor and Bodmin. That's all I can tell you.'
'How long did you see the object?'
'Pardon?'
'The duration of the sighting.'
'I dunno. A good five minutes, I think. I blanked out after that.'
'You're certain you saw it that long?'
'I'm not certain of anything.'
'Five minutes is a long time.'
'A lot of things were happening. They couldn't have happened in under five minutes; it must have been at least that.'
'What was the condition of the sky?'
'I don't know what you mean.'
'Bright daylight? Dull daylight? Bright twilight? Just a trace of daylight? No trace of daylight? Don't remember... ?'
'Bright twilight A very red sky. The sun was just sinking.'
'Where was the sun located as you looked at the object?'
'I don't know. I can't remember... Yes, it was behind the object In fact, I thought the object was the sun. I thought the sun was exploding.'
'It eclipsed the sun?'
'Yes.'
'What did you notice concerning the sky?'

'Sorry?'
'The Stars... None? A few? A lot? Can't remember... ?'
'I can't remember. There was just this silvery haze. I don't think I saw stars.'
'And the moon?
'I didn't see it. There was just the silvery haze, then this faded and I saw the object. This object was so big that it semed to blot out the whole sky.'
'The object was brighter than the background of the sky?'
'Yes, it was at first It was the brightest thing I'd ever seen. Then it darkened and lights flashed all around it and it blotted out the sky.'
'How dark was the dark shape?'
'I don't know what you mean.'
'Was it darker than the sky at that time?'
'The sky was red. This thing was dark.'
'Did the object appear to stand still at any time?'
'It came up over the rocks and then stopped, just floating there in the sky.'
'Did it speed up and rush away at any time?'
'No, it just stayed there. It was enormous and it stayed there. It just hung there in the sky and then dropped lower and then opened up and we were—'
'Did it break up into parts or explode?'
'These questions are ridiculous. What happened was—'
'Please just answer the questions.'
'No, it didn't explode. It didn't break up either. These panels opened and two other discs flew out and—'
'Did the object give off smoke?'
'There were three objects!'
'Did the large object give off any smoke?'
'No. Not that I noticed.'
The smaller objects?'
'No. Definitely not.'
'Why definite?'
They were close. They were right outside the car. They just drifted around the car very slowly and I didn't see smoke.'

'Did any of the objects change shape?'
'No. I mean, I'm not too sure of that When I first saw the large object it just looked like a light - a very bright explosion of light that filled the whole sky. Then it changed to the dark shape. There were flashing lights all around it. I kept think-ing it was changing its shape, but I think the lights did that. It didn't change as it rested there.'
'Rested? On what?'
'It was just floating in the air.'
'How high up?'
'I don't know. It seemed about a hundred feet or so, but I couldn't be sure of that Then it came down. It dropped almost to ground level. That's when it opened along the bottom and then drew us toward it.'
'Did the object flicker, throb or pulsate?'
'It was just a sudden flaring light that faded away and was replaced by the dark shape.'
'You mentioned various lights.'
'That's right. Colored lights. They were green, blue and orange, they stretched the length of the machine, and they flickered on and off in sequence, from left to right, then right to left, flickering on and off very fast, almost making one color.'
'Where were the lights positioned?'
'I don't know. I'm not sure. I think they were near the bottom of that thing. I think they went right around it.'
'Did the object move in front of something at anytime?'
'I told you: the sun.'
'Anything closer?'
'It came over the nearby rocks and stopped in front of them. It just blotted them out.'
'Rocks?'
'The neolithic stones.'
'Did it move behind anything at any time?'
'No.'
'Did the object appear solid or transparent?'
'Solid. Definitely solid.'

'Were you wearing glasses or sunglasses?'
'No.'
'Did you observe the object through the windshield or windows?'
'Yes.' 'Did you roll the windows down at any time?'
'No.'
'Any reflections on the windshield or windows?'
'I don't know.'
'Did you view the object at any time through binoculars, a telescope, a theodolite or any other optical instrument?'
'No. There was no need for that. It was practically on top of us.'
'Did the object make any sound?'
'I don't know. I'm not sure. I think it made a humming sound. At first I thought I heard an explosion, but now I don't think I did. I think I felt something. It was a sort of vibrating noise. I don't know. I can't answer that one. There was noise. A vibrating...'
'The smaller discs?'
'A humming sound. They sometimes made a whistling noise. When they whistled, they shot beams of light over us ... I've never heard noise like that before.'
The dark-haired man sat back and turned the tape recorder off while the bald man pushed a sheet of paper at Richard and passed him a pencil.
'I want you to draw a picture that will show the general shape of the objects,' the bald man said. 'Label and include in your sketch any details of the objects that you saw, such as wings and other protrusions, and including exhaust and vapor trails. Use arrows to show the direction the various objects were traveling. Also include in the picture any motion that the object or objects made. Place an "A" at the beginning of the path, a "B" at the end of the path, and show any changes in direction during the course.'
Richard did as he was told. His hands were shaking a lot. The room was very cold but he was sweating, and he felt a bit

feverish. The two men watched him quietly. They never took their eyes off him. He heard the rain beating on the window just beyond their two heads. He did the drawing very quickly. It was a neat and accurate sketch. He then pushed the paper back to the bald man, who studied it carefully.
'That's a good drawing,' he said.
'I'm an art student,' Richard said.
'Ah, yes, the Hornsey College of Art.'
'That's right,' Richard said.
The bald man passed the sketch to his more serious com-panion, who studied it, passed it back, turned the tape recorder on again, and then spoke directly to Richard.
'Okay. Were the edges of the object fuzzy or blurred, or sharply outlined?'
The smaller discs were sharply outlined. They were disc-shaped and silvery. I couldn't see the edges of the big one. Its flashing lights were too bright. The body was just a dark mass and the flashing lights made the edges invisible.'
'What length would you estimate the various discs to be?'
'Not length: diameter. The big one was three hundred feet in diameter and at least several stories high. The other discs came in two sizes: the first two were about three feet in diameter, the second two about thirty-five feet The first two discs were completely solid. The second two had a perimeter that swept up to form a dome. The dome was made of something like glass. I remember seeing people in there. And I didn't imagine that...'
'Never mind the occupants. What do you think the objects were made of?'
'Some sort of metal.'
'You mentioned the word "silvery."'
'Silvery or metallic gray.'
'What were you doing at the time you saw the first object, and how did you happen to notice it?'
'I was in the passenger seat. The woman was driving the car. The engine spluttered and died, the headlights went out, and the car rolled to the bottom of the hill and came to a stop.

Then I thought I heard something. I didn't hear it I felt it. Then the car was filled with light - the whole area was filled with light - and that light swept over the stones in the field nearby and materialized as the object' 'What direction were you moving before the car stopped?'
'Southwest.'
'What direction were you looking when you first saw the object?'
'At the sinking sun. West' 'Are you familiar with angular direction?'
'No.'
'What were the weather conditions at the time you saw the objects?'
'It had been raining most of the day, but the clouds were disappearing, and the sky was red and gradually turning dark. There was mist coming over the hills, but none around us.'
There was no mist near the car when you were driving?'
'No.'
'Any mist during your encounter with the objects?'
'No. Just the white haze.'
'You're convinced that this haze wasn't mist?'
'Yes. It was light'
'Wind?'
'I don't think so.'
'Temperature?'
'Pretty cold.'
'What was the speed of the large object in flight?'
'I'm no good at judging speeds.'
'Roughly.'
'About thirty miles an hour.'
'Thirty?'
'Yes.'
'You know that's impossible?'
'Yes. It's impossible, but that's what it was doing. I mean that thing was just drifting.'
'The smaller discs?'
'I couldn't say. They were fast. They could sit in midair,

just drift gently around the car, or shoot off in the blinking of an eye. I couldn't give you a speed.'
'Can you give me an estimation of how far away the large object was from you?'
'When it came down, it was about fifty yards from the car, give or take a few yards.'
'Did it give off any heat?'
'Yes, I think it did. I remember feeling hot and suffo-cated... but I was pretty frightened.'
'Was this the first time you had seen an object or objects like this?'
'Yes.'
'Ever thought about them?'
'Not much.'
'Did anyone else see the objects?'
The woman driving the car.'
'Apart from her.'
'No.'
'When did you first report this officially?'
'Yesterday.'
'Why did you wait that long?'
'I was frightened.'
'Frightened? Of what?'
'I didn't think anyone would believe me.'
'Anything else?'
'I was just frightened in general. I was frightened by what had happened. I couldn't really believe it at first - I didn't want to believe it Also, I had nightmares. I kept dreaming about it. I thought maybe I was going a little crazy. I didn't want to tell anyone.'
'What did you dream about?'
'I'm not sure. I could never remember them clearly... just dreams of the white haze, silhouettes all around me, strange creatures, not saying a word, just crowding around me.'
The dark-haired man nodded and switched the tape recorder off while his bald friend pushed more paper toward Richard.

'I want you to draw the occupants,' he said.
'I can't remember,' Richard said.
'Just try,' the bald man said. Try to remember. Just to give us some idea.'
Richard did as he was told. His hands were shaking worse than ever. He was sweating, and the fear was coming back as he drew the weird faces. It took him longer than before. He was finding it hard to concentrate. He heard the rain against the window, the steady breathing of the two men, and his heart was racing faster than it should, as if succumbing to panic. He finally finished the drawing. It looked childish and ridiculous. He pushed it back to the bald-headed man and watched him study it carefully.
'A little Picasso,' the man said.
'That's what it looked like,' Richard said.
'Do you think they were wearing some kind of mask?'
'Yes, I do,' Richard said.
The bald man smiled at him, passed the drawing to his partner, and the other man studied it for some time before setting it down. He then looked directly at Richard, not smiling, and switched on his tape recorder.
'Is that nose supposed to be metal?'
'That's what it looked like,' Richard said.
'And a mask could account for the lack of lips?'
'That's right,' Richard said.
'Did the glass dome distort them?'
'I think so,' Richard said. 'I couldn't really see beyond their heads - that dome blurred the interior.'
'They stared at you?'
'Yes.'
'Did they make any gestures?'
'The creature in one of them raised his hand. It looked like a claw.'
'A metal claw?'
'Yes.'
'Any flesh?'
'Gray and wrinkled. The skin around the eyes was very

wrinkled, but I can't be too sure of that.'
'Why?'
'The transparent dome. I think it distorted their features. It was bright but it wasn't all that clear. It had a rippling effect.'
'What did you do when it raised its hand?'
'I sort of blanked out A beam of light suddenly shot over me and I think that's what did it.'
'And then?'
'I don't think I was unconscious long. I think it was just a few seconds. I woke up and saw the big ship coming down and blocking out the whole view. Then our car was drawn toward it. The car was dead, but it was moving. The thirty. five foot discs were at either side of the car, shooting beams of light down on the car and just drawing it forward.'
'You say thirty-five feet That's a rather precise estimate.'
'I know. I don't know why I think that... But I always feel sure of it.'
'Okay. Continue.'
That was it,' Richard said. We were pulled toward the big ship. The colored lights flickered off, the ship split along the bottom, we were drawn right inside, saw white light and silhouettes, and after that I don't remember a thing... I guess I just fainted.'
'Then you recovered three days later.'
'That's right. Thirty miles away.'
'And you've absolutely no idea how you got there?'
'No. No idea.'
'Have you ever suffered from amnesia?'
'No, of course not.'
'We can check on your medical records.'
Tou won't find amnesia.' Richard scratched his beard, studying the two men in turn, wondering what the both of them were thinking, feeling frightened again. 'The doctor,' he said. 'That guy examined my neck. The cops said they would give you the report What did it say?'
There was a burn mark all right. Unfortunately it was

nearly gone. It's impossible at this stage to say what caused it. Otherwise you're unchanged.' 'Unchanged?' Richard said.
'Your blood sample revealed nothing.'
'What did you expect to find?' Richard asked.
'Nothing,' the man said. He switched the tape recorder off, folded his hands beneath his chin, drummed the fingers of both hands together and kept staring at Richard. 'Well, what do you think?' Richard asked.
'What do you expect us to think?'
'I want to know what happened out there.'
'I think you probably imagined it.'
'Imagined it?'
'Yes. If s not credible,' the man said. 'I'm afraid the pieces don't fit together. It just doesn't make sense.'
'What doesn't make sense?'
'None of it,' the man said. 'What you said cannot be real because such things don't exist'
'But I saw them!'
'You think you saw them. You possibly saw a mirage. You saw the reflection of an airplane or ship, caused by temperature inversion.'
'It was real!'
'No, it wasn't It couldn't have been real. No object that big can travel thirty miles an hour and then hover without a sound above the ground. It's scientifically impossible.'
'What's scientifically impossible? What the hell does that mean? All I know is that it happened, that it happened to me, and that I came here to get an explanation because that's what I need.'
'What can we explain?' the man said. 'Do you want us to confirm it? Unidentified lights we can discuss, but what you saw is pure fantasy. It's not possible. There's no way we can accept it The facts would seem to speak for themselves: your whole story is nonsense.'
'Oh, shit!' Richard said.
'Not shit - facts. Just one question to ask and then we're

finished: Were you drunk when you saw it?'
'Drunk?' Richard said.
That's right Were you drunk? According to the report you gave to the police, you were drinking that evening.'
'Well, yes, but...'
'You were drunk.'
'I don't think it has relevance—'
'The woman herself said you drank a lot. In fact, she said you were plastered.'
Richard jerked his head up, suddenly feeling disoriented remembering the gleaming white Audi and the woman with red hair and green eyes. That woman had disappeared. She was gone when he awakened. But she had been there and had seen all that happened... It just didn't make sense.
'The woman?' Richard whispered.
'That's right: your driver. We located her at her home in St Nicholas and she told us her story. She remembered picking you up. She said you helped fix her car. She said that you drank a lot, that you became extremely drunk, and that she had to tip you out close to Bodmin when you became too offensive. She didn't see any flying saucers. She saw nothing at all. She said she dropped you off at Bodmin, that you were swaying from side to side, and that you staggered back the way you had come - heading straight back for Bodmin Moor. That's the last she saw of you. Her journey was otherwise uneventful. In short, she saw nothing unusual - and neither did you.'
'But she's lying!' Richard shouted.
'I don't think so,' the man said. 'I think you got exceptionally drunk, that you hitchhiked back to Dartmoor, and that there you saw Venus or ball lightning or a mirage, and that in your drunken state you thought it was real and then imagined the rest It's not that uncommon. People see things all the time. In a drunken condition a natural occurrence can shock you and make you see what's not there. It was all in your head, lad.'
'You don't believe that,' Richard said.

'Yes, I do,' the man replied.
'Christ, mister, I'm telling you the truth!'
'Or what you think is the truth.'
Richard silently collapsed, feeling crushed and defeated, the fear rushing back and swallowing him whole, leaving him senseless. The two men cleared the desk, snapping the locks on their briefcases, then they walked around Richard without a word and opened the door of the room. Richard jerked his head back and stared up at both the men. The dark-haired man was slipping from the room, but the bald man still stood there. Richard didn't know what to say. The walls were closing in on him. The bald man was just standing there, smiling, as Richard stared up beseechingly.
'Sonny,' the bald man said with a smile, 'you better see your psychiatrist.'

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Professor Vale was paralyzed. He knew that almost immediately. He opened his eyes and flicked them left and right because his head wouldn't move. The room was all white, shaped like a geodesic dome, its triangular plates made of aluminum, joined by thin, steel-gray tubing. The professor licked his dry lips. The paralysis didn't bother him much. He felt dreamy and unreal, a bit removed from himself, content just to lie there on the bed and let events take their course.

His eyes flicked left and right The circular wall was white and featureless. The one door was molded into the wall as if it couldn't be opened. The professor was impressed. He had never seen a room like it He gazed up at the bright, dome-shaped ceiling and saw two porthole windows. The windows were very beautiful. Exotic fish were swimming past. The professor realized that he was under the ocean, probably down on the sea bed.

None of this bothered him. In fact it filled him with interest He heard the breathing of someone nearby, but he couldn't quite see them. It didn't really matter: he would find out soon enough. He tried to move, but the paralysis was total, so he just lay there quietly. The whole room was very quiet. There was a distant humming sound. He heard the breathing of the person nearby and tried turning his head. This time he could move it.

There was another bed in the room, about twelve feet

away, made from shiny white plastic, sweeping down to the floor, and apparently molded to the body of the man who lay sleeping on top of it. This man was wrapped in a surgical gown and had a metalic skullcap on his head, small electrodes joining the skullcap to the various colored wires that ran back into a panel behind the bed. The professor studied the man at length. The man was in some sort of coma. There were straps running around his wrists and ankles, with more wires run-ning out of them.

The room was like a gigantic eggshell. The professor looked up at the ceiling. He saw strange fish staring down through the portholes and disappearing in green murk. It was eerily beautiful. The silence was serene. The room's antiseptic whiteness, its seamless circular wall, gave it the appearance of an enormous, sheltering womb and made him feel almost childlike.

The professor raised a hand and touched the hair on his head and felt his fingers scratching his scalp. He wasn't wearing a skullcap. The paralysis was going away. He moved his toes and felt the muscles in his legs and then he slowly sat upright He felt dizzy and weak, his stomach nauseous and rumbling, but he took a deep breath and glanced around him and soon felt much better.

The other man was still asleep, hardly moving, breathing evenly, his face lean and pasty, almost deathly, his chin in need of a shave. The professor studied the strange bed. It was molded out of the floor. Thrusting out of the wall behind it, and looming over the bed itself, was a unit containing lamps and plasma jars and an X-ray camera, this whole unit also molded with abstract grace from the shiny white plastic.

The professor gazed around the room. The shining whiteness stung his eyes. He glanced up and saw the fish at the portholes and then remembered the boat... The sea had turned to green steam. The metal jaws had closed above him. The metal jaws had become a giant version of the room now surrounding him... The professor was fascinated. He understood that he was drugged. He swung his legs off the

bed, placed his feet on the floor, then stood up, swaying slightly from side to side, making sure he was strong enough. The white floor wasn't moving. It didn't sway or vibrate. It appeared to be made of white fiber glass and was reasonably warm. The professor wondered where he was, wondered what was expected of him; he no longer felt in charge of him-self and wanted someone to guide him.

The humming came from the distance. He thought it came from beyond the door. The door had no handle, no keyhole or lock, but the professor walked up to it and touched it and it slid open silently, sliding into the wall. The professor just stood there. He kept rubbing his eyes. He tried to tear himself from what he saw, but he couldn't escape it.

He was staring along a corridor that curved gently out of view, its walls shaped like a tunnel, gleaming brightly, and broken up with large windows. These windows were rectangular, revealing the bottom of the ocean, beams of light boring through the murky depths, illuminating a wonderland.

The professor stepped into the corridor, gazed through the nearest window, saw writhing rocks and multicolored plants and bizarre, drifting creatures. It was awesome, incredible, the landscape of a dream; the fish monstrous and minute, stunningly beautiful and grotesque - throbbing gills, swaying tails, eyes like prisms and stars, their colors changing as they merged with one another and formed wavering rainbows. The ocean bottom was stone and sand and had a fathomless mystery; the sand swept out and rippled around the rocks which were alive with primordial life. The professor almost stopped breathing. He was stunned by what was out there. He saw a huge uncoiling eel, a web of glistening, writhing tentacles, a gelatinous mass of gold, green and violet sniffing petrified plants. He saw it all in the beams of light The lights were fixed outside the windows. The beams of light were the only illumination in those dark, vitreous depths.

The professor walked along the corridor. The floor warmed his bare feet He was still wearing his flowered shirt and shorts, and that worried him slightly. How long had he

been down here? Had he slept for hours or days? The ques-tions flickered through his mind and then departed without having quite touched him. He felt only curiosity, an over-whelming sense of awe, obsessed by the need to go farther and make contact with someone. He didn't question this de-sire: the need itself was enough. He kept walking, passing windows and the ocean's teeming life, and the corridor kept curving away from him in a long, endless circle.

The humming sound grew louder. There was a rhythmic vibration. The professor arrived at an open door at the left side of the corridor, and stopped there, momentarily trans-fixed, before stepping up to it The noise here was much louder and had a hollow, echoing ring. He looked through to an immense geodesic dome filled with ladders and catwalks.

The professor stood there a long time. He remembered seeing all this before. He glanced up at the silvery-gray dome and remembered it closing. Then he looked down again, saw the ladders and catwalks. There were glittering floors and platforms, modules made from steel and glass, shining mazes of pipes and generators, bright lights flashing off white walls. There were people down there, very small and faraway, all dressed in coveralls, climbing ladders, crossing catwalks, moving up and down those dizzying depths in elevators like cages. The professor walked toward the door. It hissed loudly and slammed shut. He touched it but it didn't open again, so he shrugged and walked off. He was amazed but not frightened. He understood that he was drugged. This thought filled him with a strange, dry amusement that never quite came to life. The corridor stretched out before him, kept curving away from him. He passed the windows overlooking the murky depths and then he came to another door. He tried to step through it, but it slammed shut in his face. He shrugged and turned away, feeling calm, unperturbed, understanding that he had to keep walking and that the closed doors were guiding him.

He finally reached the end of the corridor, arriving at a large white room. The professor stepped into the room and

stood there and looked around him. The room was circular and dim, without windows, very cool, the molded beds going right around the wall and melting into the smooth floor. All the beds were occupied, filled with men, women and children; they were all lying quietly, wrapped in surgical gowns, the wires running from electrodes on their heads, hands and legs and coiling up to the ECG machines that were fixed to the wall. The rhythmic breathing of the people on the beds was quite loud in the silence.
The professor suddenly shivered. He wasn't frightened, hut he felt odd. He walked across to the far side of the room and passed through to another room.
This room also was circular, much bigger, very bright, the wall lined with glass cabinets and winking digital control panels, with two prop-up surgical beds, surrounded by tall equipment units, standing on the center of the floor, their headrests slightly raised. There was a dwarf at one of the beds, his spine bent, his legs twisted; he was wearing a white gown, working swiftly and silently, his extraordinarily pale and delicate hands flipping back a white sheet.
'Where am I?' the professor asked. 'Who are you? Where's Mr McKinley?'
The dwarf finished his job, unconcerned, working lovingly, then he turned and stared up at the professor with large, slightly glazed eyes. He then sniffed and scratched an ear, shuffled forward laboriously, his head rolling loosely from side to side, buried between his raised shoulders.
'Ah,' he said, 'you're awake!'
'Where am I?' the professor asked.
'We were expecting you,' the dwarf replied.
'Who are you?'
'I stayed here. I was waiting.'
'Where's Mr McKinley?'
The dwarf nodded understandingly, his head rolling from side to side, then he went to what looked like a dentist's chair and started raising the headrest. The professor looked at the glass cabinets, which were about six feet long, every cabinet

containing a naked body, all apparently dead. The glass seemed lightly frosted. The control panels were flickering. The professor realized that they were cardiograph and ECG readouts, and that the people in the cabinets were still alive. He returned his gaze to the crippled dwarf, who was grinning inanely, waving at him. The professor walked over to the chair and sat down and didn't ask himself why.

'You are comfortable?' the dwarf asked.

'Yes,' the professor said.

'No fear,' the dwarf said. 'Fear is foolish.'

'Where's Mr McKinley?'

The dwarf nodded understandingly. 'Mr Wilson comes soon,' he said. 'I press a button to call Mr Wilson, and your fear... fear is over.'

The professor sat in the chair, studying the dwarf, in-trigued by him, saw him walking across the floor and pressing a button that was fixed to the wall. The dwarf grinned at him and nodded, shuffled along to some cabinets, pressed his nose to a pane of frosted glass and stared at a naked man. The man appeared to be dead. The readouts said he was alive. The dwarf turned around and waved his delicate hands and then came back to the chair. He looked right at the professor, his eyes large and very brown, grinned stupidly and then pointed to a spot just above the professor's head.

The professor looked up and saw a circular white canopy. Sunken into the base of the canopy were surgical lamps and convex lenses, all surrounding a stereotaxic skullcap and loosely hanging electrodes. The professor studied the canopy carefully. It obviously housed an X-ray camera. He studied the electrodes and the stereotaxic skullcap, then he looked at the dwarf.

'Who are you?'

'I stay and wait'

'Who are you?'

'I work good.' The dwarf grinned and waved his delicate hands. 'No need fear... fear is over.'

The professor looked at the domed ceiling. It seemed to

shine with natural light. Feeling unreal, but not at all fright-ened, he looked back at the dwarf. The pathetic creature was still grinning. His hands clashed with the rest of him. Compared to the crippled legs, and to the curved, distorted spine, the remarkably pale and delicate hands were almost movingly lovely. The dwarf grinned and shook his head, pointing excit-edly to the door ahead. The professor looked up as McKinley walked in, his blue eyes clear and steady.

'I'm Wilson,' he said.

'I thought you were McKinley.'

'McKinley came to an unfortunate end. I am Wilson. Remember that.'

Wilson looked neat and cool, his shirt and trousers black, standing starkly against the white of the circular room, a slight smile on his face. The professor just sat there, feeling a strange, distant fear; he wondered why he didn't feel it more and then remembered the drug. Wilson nodded and stepped forward, leaned over the professor. He placed his thumb on the professor's eyelid, pulled it up and examined the eye, then nodded, removed his hand and stepped back, glancing briefly around him.

'You find this interesting?' he asked.

'Yes,' the professor said.

'And you don't feel any fear?'

'I don't think so.'

'Well, that's as it should be.'

The professor glanced around him, at the white walls and glass cabinets, trying to feel fear and not succeeding, his curiosity predominant

'Was I drugged?'

'Of course.'

'I don't really feel much different.'

'You are different... you don't feel any fear, and that should be enough to confirm it Think about it What you've just been through would normally have made you crazy, but you still act as if you're untouched by it Think of what happened on the boat. Think of where you awakened. Think of

what you've just seen as you walked here and ask yourself why you're sane. Of course you were drugged. Otherwise you would be mad. Even now, as you sit there, you're still drugged, which is why you're so calm.'
'What kind of drug is it?'
'More advanced than any you know. Scientifically, your world is antiquated. You will soon find that out.'
Wilson walked to the glass cabinet, raised a hand and pointed gently. 'Observe,' he said, 'the wonders of our sci-ence. They will sleep till I waken them.' He turned and looked down at the dwarf, who was grinning and nodding wildly. Wilson patted the dwarf lightly on the head and then offered a bleak smile. This is Rudiger,' he said. 'He has wonderful hands. We removed his hands and gave him metal claws and then we gave him his hands back. Of course they're not his old hands. In fact, they're not flesh and blood. Nevertheless, they are as good as the old, and the patient is happy.' He returned to the professor, leaned close to him, stared at him. 'And you still don't feel any fear?' he asked.
'No, I don't I don't think so.'
Wilson smiled and straightened up, moving slowly and carefully, going back to the glass cabinets against the wall and surveying the bodies. They're all alive,' he said. 'We're killing them off very slowly. We want to preserve them for the future, so they'll have to die gently. We will drain all their blood, fill them with glycerine and dimethylsulfoxide to prevent ice crystals forming in their tissues, then wrap them in aluminum foil, place them in cryonic storage chambers, and only resurrect them when we need them.' He turned away from the cabinets, walked leisurely across the room, leaned over the professor once again and offered his bleak smile. 'And you still feel no fear?' he asked.
The professor gazed around the room, at the smooth, circular wall, at the solid, geodesic dome that glowed brightly above him. Then he looked at the glass cabinets. The frosted glass distorted the bodies. The jagged white lines jumped erratically above them, moving slower each minute. The

professor looked up at Wilson, saw the cold, intelligent eyes, the tanned, strangely seamless forehead under the shock of white hair.

'Who are you?' he asked.

'You know that. I'm Wilson.'

'Where do you come from?' the professor said.

'You'll learn that when you need it.'

'And the bodies in the cabinets?'

'What about them?'

'Where do they come from?'

'From earth,' Wilson said. 'From all over. We picked them up here and there.'

'I'm not frightened,' the professor said.

'No. You're still drugged.'

'What do you want from me?' the professor asked.

'I want your brain,' Wilson said.

The professor felt nothing. The hint of fear had come and gone. He just sat there, staring around the strange room, wondering just where he was. He remembered the triangular steel spikes, rising up, closing above him, remembered sinking down through the white haze, past steel ladders and catwalks. All that and much more: the long walk along the corridor; the large windows, the ocean bed, the great dome that soared above the huge decks and workshops, dwarfing the men in the modules of steel and glass, reverberating with phantom sounds. He was at the bottom of the ocean. This room was part of something enormous. He was possibly in an undersea city, but he couldn't be sure of that

'Put your head back,' Wilson said.

'Pardon?'

'Put your head back. I want to place this skullcap on your head. It won't take very long.'

The professor did as he was told. Wilson pulled the skullcap down. The professor felt the cold metal against his scalp, and then he felt a slight pressure.

'You don't have to shave my head?'

'No, my dear professor. We're no longer as primitive as that. The operation is simple.'
Wilson adjusted the skullcap. It tightened around the pro-fessor's head. The professor raised his eyes and saw a tangle of electrodes dangling down just in front of him. A pair of hands came into view, both extraordinary pale and delicate: the crippled dwarf was leaning over his shoulder and insert-ing the electrodes. The professor didn't move. His own serenity was vaguely surprising. He knew that what was hap-pening was a nightmare, but he couldn't break free of it. The dwarf inserted the electrodes. There was a distant ringing sound. The professor tried to raise his hands to his head but found them stuck to the armrest. His hands and forearms tingled. The chair's armrests were vibrating. The professor sat there, unable to move a muscle, reconciled to his fate.
'No fear,' the dwarf hissed. 'Fear is over... No fear in your future.'
The professor couldn't see the dwarf. The dwarf was obviously right behind him. Wilson was standing directly in front of him, a bleak smile on his face.
'In 1932,' he said, 'Dr Walter Hess devised the modern technique of electrode implantation, thereby demonstrating that nearly all of man's functions and emotions can be influenced by stimulation of specific areas of the brain. A state of constant drowsiness can be brought about by the simple electric stimulation of the caudate nucleus, the nucleus reticularis or the inferior thalamus; conversely, a similar stimulation of the mesencephalic reticular formation will induce instant arousal. Man is thus just a machine, to be utilized, controlled, operable by simple laws of give and take, without will of his own. The philosopher's stone has been shattered. Philosophy itself has become redundant. The mysteries of the human mind, its creativity, its moral imperatives, have been reduced to a set of components which we endlessly play with. Man is not a magical creature - he is a container of various impulses. These impulses can be rearranged to a pattern that will change his behavior.'

Wilson flicked a switch, bathing the professor in bright light, filling his head with an unusual incandescence and making it vibrate. The professor blinked his eyes, but had no will to resist He understood that what was happening was hideous, yet he still felt no fear. He drifted out of himself, observed himself succumbing quietly, his head trapped in the stereotaxic cap beyond which there was nothing. 'The hypothalamus,' Wilson continued, 'is that area of the brain which controls your most basic and primitive needs. By stimulating the appropriate areas of the hypothalamus with submicroelectronic electrodes I can regulate your blood pressure, your heart rate and respiration; your sleep, your appetite, even the diameter of your pupils; I can place you in suspended animation or make you work till you drop... Do you understand that?'

'Yes,' the professor said.

'Excellent,' Wilson said. 'Now, the rather simple bio-cybernetic system into which you are now plugged consists of a fifteen-channel programmable brain stimulator and a normal LINC-8 digital computer with the appropriate interfacing equipment At the moment, radiopaque materials are being injected into the intracerebral spaces inside your skull to facilitate, by X-ray, the visualization of various parts of your brain. The stereotaxic machine, utilizing minute spikes that have already pierced your scalp, is now taking the X-rays from numerous different angles. At this precise second the stereotaxic apparatus is making geometrical calculations using the X-rays and reference point grids to give me three-dimensional coordinates for the positioning of the electrodes ... You will feel none of this.'

The professor sat quietly, his eyes closed in surrender. His whole head was vibrating, was glowing and warm, and he felt that he was crouched up in there, his own skull surround-ing him. It made him think of the great dome. His own skull was such a dome. It was immense and he was crouched low at its center... overwhelmed by the dark space.

The desired targets have been fixed. I am drilling into your

skull. The steel electrodes are as thin as hairs, the micro-manipulators are guiding them in, and in a moment you will feel an electric current as light as a feather. You will not feel any pain. You will experience a brief panic. This panic will pass away very quickly, after which you'll feel nothing... I am taking your mind now.'

The professor sat very still, almost welcoming what was coming. His eyes were closed and he crouched in a darkness lit by tiny white flashes. His brain's interior was enormous. He actually thought he could see it. It was an immense, crenellated, dark dome rising up all round him. There was silence. A humming. A distant rumbling reverberated. He crouched alone in the wilderness of his mind and saw the holes in the sky. That sky was vast and utterly black. The holes appeared as tunnels of light The light burned through the sweeping black curtain and exploded around him.

The professor shrank within himself, feeling helpless, totally naked, suddenly whipped by a sudden, shocking terror that returned him to childhood. Then he heard his own voice, a strangled sound, cracked and pitiful, gasping out its anguished plea for release, its final expression of will:

'Please don't,' he whimpered.

It didn't matter after that. The fear passed and he was calm. The light receded and he saw the dark walls of his chained, captured mind. There was a glowing in the darkness: the light of mindless peace. The walls retreated and dissolved all around him and he opened his eyes. He saw the radiant white room, the grinning dwarf, the glass cabinets, a seamless face staring at him, the cold blue eyes reflecting him.

'I'm not from ACASS,' Wilson said. 'Mr McKinley was from ACASS. Mr McKinley wanted to hire you for his project, but we needed you more. We need people everywhere. We have to know whaf s going on. We need someone in the Cheyenne Mountain Complex, and you are that person. You will do what we tell you, without question, without fear; you will do it because you won't have a choice, because you'll feel that you want to. Your will is our will. What we will, you will do. You

will live just for service, and that service will be to us - and in doing that service you will experience the most complete satisfaction.'
'I understand,' the professor said.
'Good,' Wilson said. 'Understanding is enough. We will now take you back to Miami and deposit you there. You will go back to your room and have a sleep and awaken refreshed. You will not go to see Mr McKinley. Mr McKinley is dead. You will continue your vacation as before, as if nothing has happened. You will then return home. As usual, you will go to work. You will renew your contract with USAF, continue your work in the Cheyenne Complex, and then do whatever your head tells you to do, without fear or regret. You are not responsible for your actions. Your will is our will. You will do what we tell you to do and through that know contentment flow stand up, professor.'
The professor stood up. He surveyed the circular room. The white walls and the bodies in the cabinets both offered him comfort. He looked at Mr Wilson and felt a warm, transcendent peace. The blue eyes of Mr Wilson were his will and he felt a great freedom. The crippled dwarf shuffled toward him, his head rolling, hands outstretched; the professor saw the hands, pale and beautiful, waving him forward.
'Can I go now?' the professor asked.
'We'll take you back,' Wilson said.
'I feel very tired,' the professor said. 'I think I need a good sleep.'
The dwarf shuffled out first, his legs jerking mechanically, leading the professor into another white corridor that curved out of view. Wilson followed the professor, walking slowly and carefully. They all went along the corridor, past the white walls, through silence, eventually reaching a high, narrow door that led into another room.
'We'll wait here,' Wilson said.
The dwarf nodded, shuffled away and stopped before a closed door; there was a hissing and the steel door slid open to reveal a small room. The professor recognized it as an

elevator. The dwarf stepped in and the door closed. Wilson pointed to a chair of flowing lines and the professor sat down.
'It won't take long,' Wilson said.
The professor gazed around the room. It was white and rectangular. One whole wall was a sheet of convex glass that looked out on the ocean bed. Bright lights beamed through the murk, streams of green and silver shimmered, shoals of transparent fish and giant squid and monstrous eels drifted back and forth as if in slow motion, colors glinting and merg-ing. It was a scene of unearthly beauty. The professor thought it was wonderful. He saw grotesque eyes, bizarre fins and rainbow tails, teeth that gleamed like new razors in jaws as round and smooth as the rocks. The sand formed extraordi. nary patterns, tiny stones flashed like diamonds, the rocks sensual, alluvial, starkly shadowed, mysterious, alive with a primordial life that defied all description. It was too much for the professor: he let his gaze cleave to the walls which were white and had a pure, glacial sheen that reflected his shadow. He turned his head and glanced behind him. Another window revealed the dome. Below the dome were the canyons of glass, steel and plastic, that materialization of a science beyond all normal reckoning. The professor felt close to tears, wanting never to leave this place. He turned again and looked directly at Wilson and knew what he must do.
'You understand?' Wilson asked.
'Yes,' the professor said.
'Your work will be important. Most valuable. You will always be warmed by that.'
'I understand,' the professor said.
'Understanding is enough. We will always be with you to guide you. What we need, you will get for us.'
'I understand,' the professor said.
The elevator door opened. Wilson motioned with one hand. The professor stood up and felt a great peace as he walked through the door. Wilson stepped in behind him. The steel walls shone like glass. The doors closed and the elevator descended, dropping smoothly and silently. The

professor studied his own reflection, saw a shadow on pol-ished steel: he felt calm and alert and in control, and out of this sprang his pleasure. Wilson offered him a smile. The professor felt a quiet pride. The doors opened and he followed Wilson out and saw the high, curving steel walls.

'This is a wonderful place,' he said.

'I'm glad you like it,' Wilson said.

'I hope I can come back here some day.'

'You will,' Wilson said.

The steel floor was enormous, the dome sweeping up and over. Around the wall, scaling dizzying heights, were the ladders and catwalks. Hidden lights cast long shadows, modules gleamed upon other modules, and there were enormous generators and pumps and miles of coiling steel pipes. Most of the workers seemed faraway and wore different colored coveralls, moved up and down ladders, crossed the catwalks and balconies, and were silhouetted behind the long windows that glowed orange and blue. All this was bathed in the white haze. The professor's shadow was stark. He looked ahead, across the immense lower floor, and saw the boat on the platform.

'That's some boat,' the professor said.

'Thank you,' Wilson said.

'If you meant to impress me, you've succeeded.'

'We always do,' Wilson said.

They walked across the steel floor, their footsteps ringing with a hollow sound, eventually stopping at the platform that was raised off the floor on hydraulic supports. The professor looked up at the boat and saw the crew hard at work. The domed roof was high above, a monstrous jigsaw of shadow and light, and the eighty-five foot boat seemed small beneath it, isolated in open space. The crew was working in silence and seemed vaguely Oriental. The crippled dwarf was at the top of the ramp that ran down to the floor.

'After you,' Wilson said.

The professor walked up the ramp and stepped down onto the deck, the dwarf reaching out and touching his wrist and then darting away again. The professor stepped off the ramp,

leaned on the railings, glanced around him, his gaze taking in Wilson as he came up the ramp, then roaming across the dome's sweeping wall to the vast working space. The light glinted off the modules, off the catwalks and ladders, then fused and became a white haze that spread across the ma-chinery. The professor thought it was beautiful. He didn't really want to leave. Turning around, he saw Fallaci, still dressed in his white suit, leaning casually against the door of the cabin and talking to Wilson.

Someone tugged at the professor's trousers. He glanced down and saw the dwarf. The dwarf was grinning up at him, his head bobbing, his delicate hands waving.

'You feel good?' the dwarf asked. You feel better? No fear for your future?'

'No fear,' the professor said.

Wilson looked directly at him. 'We're going up now,' he said. 'You won't feel anything until we reach the surface, then the boat may rock slightly. Hold on to the railing.'

The professor did as he was told. It seemed a natural thing to do. He felt a very light vibration, heard a muffled droning noise, then the steel floor under the boat began to rise, moving up toward the domed roof. The professor glanced around him, saw the ladders and catwalks, felt a sudden, immeasurable loss as it all fell away from him. The steel floor kept rising, the boat rocking imperceptibly. The professor glanced down below, at the workshops and modules, and wished that he could stay here forever and explore all these wonders.

'Hold on now,' Wilson said.

The steel floor stopped rising. The silence was broken by muffled rumblings. The noise came from the encircling wall of the dome, reverberating and echoing. The professor knew it was the sea. The dome was nearing the surface. He had a final look around him, saw that technological marvel, then put his head back and stared above him at the shadow-streaked metal dome.

There was a sudden roaring sound, an insane hammering and hissing, as the sea exploded around the surfacing dome

and rushed down its curved outer wall. The professor held on to the railing. The boat rocked from side to side. The dome seemed to sway above him, then it steadied, reverberating with hollow sounds.

The professor kept looking up, the roof of the dome still high above him, then he saw thin lines of light, getting brighter, growing longer, spreading out like the ribs of a giant umbrella and exposing the vivid sky. The professor was enthralled. He stared up in growing wonder. The dome was splitting apart, becoming four monstrous triangles, then these triangles themselves split in two and moved away from each other. A shocking brightness poured into the dome. The light exploded like an enormous star. The striations blazed down around the boat and swept out through the gloom. The professor felt the burning sun, saw the vast arch of the sky. The immense, sun-reflecting, triangular walls were sinking down all around him. Then he saw the hazed horizon, the white sheet of the sky above. The sea boiled around the circle of sinking steel fins, then it swallowed them totally, poured across the great steel deck, and soon the deck was nothing more than a black mass below the turbulent waves. There was a brief, hollow ringing, the boat rocked violently and steadied, then the black mass sank deeper, grew smaller, disappeared, and then the boat was drifting lazily in the sea which swept out on all sides.

Professor Vale stared all around him. The sea was calm and very beautiful. The green waves rolled away to the horizon and a thin wedge of dark land. It was the coastline of Miami. The boat was heading straight toward it. The crew was moving back and forth, working silently at their tasks, the late afternoon sun beating down, flashing off steel and glass.

The professor leaned against the railing, saw Fallaci near the cabin. The dwarf had disappeared somewhere inside, but Mr Wilson was still there. The professor felt good about that. He was very fond of Mr Wilson. Smiling, the professor leaned

on the railing and took in the fresh sea air.
Mr Wilson finally approached him. There was a waiter by his side. Mr Wilson smiled a little and nodded while the waiter bowed low.
'What would you like to drink?' Wilson asked.
'Rum and Coke,' the professor said.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The dream of the Thousand Year Reich had all the grandeur of lunacy. Nothing was impossible. They firmly believed that. They had their volkish socialism, their need for an Aryan Utopia, and with the passion of all mad visionaries, they stepped forth to create it. Mysticism? Yes. The Reich was born from mysticism: the Cosmic Circle of Munich, the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner, the Theosophy and Rosicrucianism of Vienna and Prague, the ancient dreams of Atlantis and Lemuria, of the undefiled German. Mysticism and racism: the 'pure' blood decreed by Schuler, the Third Reich sprang out of a vision of a Utopia devoid of Jews and subhumans.

Such dreams have no limits. Simple logic cannot contain them. In such dreams the Third Reich saw the light over limitless vistas - and ignored the impossible. The whole world would be changed. Cities and nations would be erased. The earth would be cleansed of Jews and subhumans and other vermin; and in isolated colonies, in new cities of glass and stone, a chosen hierarchy of masters and slaves would create the New Order.

No doubt, they were madmen. Their strongest leaders were grotesque. They were men who lived their dreams, who were divorced from reality, who like children felt that all things were possible and that nothing could stop them.

Science is logic. Mysticism is the opposite. I despised the mys-ticism of the Nazis, but could see its potential. My own dreams were grandiose. No democracy could afford them. I needed

money and equipment and labor on a staggering scale. No democracy could sanction it. Only lunatics would. And the lunatics, all those mad visionaries, were the Reich's leading lights.

I knew this when I met Himmler. It was in 1935. Behind his spectacles his eyes had the mildness of a priest or a fool. We were in his office in Berlin. I spread my drawings on his desk. He glanced down and stroked his thinning dark hair and touched his nose with one finger. He had once been a chicken farmer. Now he headed the SS. A mild and modest killer, puritanical, quietly spoken, he was seeking to resurrect Atlantis through a Reich filled with supermen. I had checked him out beforehand. What I found was enough. He believed in mesmerism, in rein-carnation and clairvoyance, in Horbinger's cosmic world of ice and fire, in gods and god-men. His SS was a religious order. His men were bound by blood and oath. Himmler wanted to isolate them, to brainwash them and remold them, to mate them with the purest German women and produce blond perfection. He had once processed chickens; now he wanted to process people: he had a dream of a disciplined Order of masters and slaves. I wanted a similar Order - but one devoted to science. And when Himmler raised his eyes from my drawings, I knew that I could have it.

Himmler checked me out thoroughly. He couldn't believe why I had come. He first thought me an eccentric American who ought to be shot. I was held prisoner in Berlin. They interrogated me for months. In the Gestapo prison, in the Prinz Albrechtstrasse, I heard the screams of the tortured. My own interrogations were more casual. My cell was very comfortable. They fed me and supplied me with books and let me work on my notes. The interrogations were conversational. The less fortu-nate continued screaming. For two months I kept repeating my history, as they jotted down details. The prison was always busy. Bleeding people were dragged down corridors. I told my questioners of the project in Iowa and of how I had sabotaged it. The Americans don't know, I said. They thought the project was a disaster. My questioners tapped their pencils on the table and

smiled at each other. Quite often I heard gunfire. It always came from the basement. I saw soldiers carrying bodies wrapped in shrouds and putting them into the trucks. Such scenes did not disturb me. My hopes lived on undiminished. After two months, they concentrated on my drawings, still unsure of their value. I don't know who first studied them. I think the Italian, Bellonzo. Nevertheless, I was shortly released and taken back to see Himmler.

No point in even dwelling on the blood that had stained Himmler's hands. Such a quiet man he was. His good manners were impressive. A modest face with round glasses, his hair thin-ning and neatly parted, he sat behind his desk like a minor clerk offering help. He asked me what I wanted. I explained my requirements. He nodded in a slow, thoughtful manner, sometimes stroking his nose. We are very impressed, he said. Indeed, he added, we are astonished. He then told me that some technical advisors had thought my drawings miraculous.

I asked who these men were. He mentioned Bellonzo and Schriever. He said Bellonzo was getting too old, but that Schriever was brilliant. They wished to work on my project. Himmler thought it a good idea. I realized that he wanted to have me watched, so I nodded agreement. You are committed, he said. You must now bend to our will. You will never return to your own country; if you try we will kill you. I reassured him immediately. I would report directly to him. My whole project would be wrapped in strict secrecy and controlled by the SS.

I will never forget that day. My dream came alive then. Even now, the pain biting, my poor liver in disarray, I gaze out upon the glinting ice caps and remember it vividly.

I was driven to Kummersdorft West. It was sixty miles south of Berlin. We both sat in the back of the car and looked out at the city. Himmler obviously loved Berlin. The sunlight flashed oft his glasses. He stroked his nose and pointed out the sights with a quiet, clear excitement. The city was indeed majestic. The streets were filled with smiling people. The walls were decorated with swastikas and flags and obscene propaganda. The word Juden was prominent. I saw few on the pavements. Soldiers sauntered

up and down and laughed loudly, in love with themselves. The very air seemed to smile. It was the triumph of the will. In its own perverted way it was the proof of Man's awesome potential.
Perverted? Most certainly. With that truth I would live. Be-hind those walls were the high priests of a demoniac Order: Hermann Goering, Josef Goebbels, Rudolph Hess, Martin Bormann - alcoholics, drug addicts, occultists and degenerates - the very epitome of that gross irrationalism which I so much abhorred. There, too, the Gestapo butchers, the drilled ranks of the SS, and all the torture and murder that went on every day in the basements.
Yet I had to accept it. Science cannot moralize. Those irra-tional brutes were no more than the means to achieving my ends. Progress needs its trampled bones. Death gives way to more life. Evolution knows neither right nor wrong and transcends transient matters. So, I would work with them. In doing that, I could use them. And looking out upon Berlin, glancing sideways at Himmler, I felt nothing but hope for the future, the glow of fulfilment.
We drove out of the city. Planes roared overhead. Sitting beside me, very stiff and upright, Himmler started to talk. He was suddenly like a child. His eyes gleamed behind the glasses. The words poured out and splashed around my ears as if they couldn't be stopped. He said the rocket teams had left. They had been moved to Peenemunde. The research center at Kummersdorft was empty and now it was mine. We passed troops on the roads. The tanks growled through swirling dust. Himmler talked of Aryan blood and German might, of the world of the future. We will cleanse the earth, he said. We will purify the blood. We will exterminate the Jews and the infirm and mal-adjusted, use the lesser races as slaves to the Reich, create a race of pure Nordics. There was no need to reply. Right or wrong did not touch me. When Himmler talked of his New Order, of his masters and slaves, I had the feeling that it just might succeed and that I could utilize it.
Unlimited labor was what I needed. No democracy could supply it. But here, in this country where all freedom had been

destroyed, where the will of the people was one will - the Volk - and where discipline and slavery walked hand in hand - here, at the dawn of the new era, I could do the impossible. Yes, I grabbed at it. I was fifty-seven years of age. I thought then, before I knew what could be done, that my time was too short. Thus I didn't moralize. Not then and not now. I looked out at the aircraft at the tanks and machine-gun carriers, at the troops who were numbered in their thousands, and accepted it all. History will exonerate me. What I did, I did for progress. I sit now in my mountain lair, the white wilderness below me, and I know with the certainty of faith that my life has meant something. I am changing the course of history. I am aiding evolution. When I go, as I now know I must, my achievements will live on.

I knew this at the time. The sight of the proving range convinced me. The experimental station was between two artillery ranges, safely isolated from the surrounding towns and villages, all the hangars in good shape. Here Wernher von Braun had worked. And Walter Dornberger and Klaus Riedel. Those names, and those of Grottrup and Becker, made me smile condescendingly. The A-3 and A-5 rockets. So highly praised, so primitive. And the V-1 and V-2 would be feared when I thought them mere toys. Nevertheless those men had gone. They had been moved to Peenemunde. They would not be here to view what I was doing, would not know I existed. In this I agreed with Himmler. Even the Fuhrer would not know. Himmler had his own plans for the future and did not want them mentioned.

Himmler showed me around the hangars. He introduced me to the workers. I met the Italian, Bellonzo, who was old and gray-haired, and the younger Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever, who seemed dangerously ambitious. The old Italian was a physicist. Rudolph Schriever was an engineer. Both men were engaged in aeronautical research, both were keen on my drawings. I didn't really want those men. They had been around too long. I was disturbed by their knowledge of my work, and by their closeness to Himmler. They obviously wanted to impress him: bowed and scraped in his presence. I knew immediately

that they would try to pick my brains and then usurp my authority.
I could not allow that. What I needed was total secrecy. After my experience in Iowa, aware that no one could be trusted, I had already planned to strengthen my position by becoming in-valuable. I would hide the most vital facts. I would doctor all the drawings. I would split the work up, spread it widely among the work force, and thus insure that no single individual could du-plicate my success. In this way I would protect myself. I would become indispensable. And so, as I shook hands, as I talked to Schriever and Bellonzo, I decided not to let them get too close to whatever was workable.
Yes, I was ruthless. I had to protect myself. I was aware of my dependence upon the Nazis - and of how weak that made me. Sooner or later they might disown me - the war might drain their resources - and if that happened, I had to be ready to make good my escape. I would take my secrets with me. I would leave them useless toys. But by then, if I made use of my time, I would have what I wanted.
Such thoughts were not expressed. Himmler smiled and led me out. We returned to his car and climbed in and headed back to Berlin. There was paperwork to be completed. Requisition forms and orders: more manufacturers, more instruments, more pyrotechnicists, more welding experts and laborers. I did not think it was possible. The required numbers seemed awesome. I wondered if even Himmler, with his frightening, godlike powers, could requisition workers in such numbers for a clandestine project. Himmler smiled at my obvious doubts. He stroked his nose and blinked his eyes. He said that I had no need to worry, that he had something to show me.
The fields of Germany were green. I heard aircraft overhead. We passed columns of troops and growling tanks, but the peace soon returned. This memory remains vivid. The sun shone from a blue sky. It was difficult to believe that war would come and devastate all of Europe. Then we passed barbed wire fences. Beyond the wire were smoking chimneys. We drove through guarded gates, beneath watchtowers and guns, kept driving

toward the long, wooden buildings, passed a series of gallows. The wind made the ropes dance. Ragged people were digging ditches. We drove on and reached the center of the camp and saw the Reich's buried nightmare.

Himmler made the driver stop. A nervous soldier let us out. We stood together in the mud of the compound, surrounded by prisoners. Himmler smiled and rubbed his nose. I saw the guards with the bullwhips. The hundreds of men, women and children were filthy and silent. Nearly all had shaved heads. Their bones showed through their flesh. Their large eyes were filled with anguish and despair and a hopeless submission. I heard the crack of the whips. The dogs snarled and someone screamed. Himmler blinked and rubbed his nose, smiled with quiet, modest pride, and then waved one hand languidly in the air to take in all the misery. 'Your workers,' he said.

'You don't go too close to UFOs. It's a dangerous thing to do. If you go too close to UFOs you get burned, and you rarely recover. Just look at me, Stanford. I run this flea-pit in Albuquerque. I was a World War Two pilot, decorations up the ass; I fought in the Pacific and Europe and returned home a hero. What the hell am I doing here? You must have asked yourself that question. I ask the same question every night and I just wake up screaming.'

Gardner was bent across the table, his right hand waving wildly, his left hand holding a glass of neat bourbon, the bottle in front of him.

Well, I tell you,' he continued, 'I'm not the only one like this. There are a lot of us hiding out, lying low, running scared, and we're doing it because we haven't a choice, because the doors have been closed to us. You don't talk about UFOs. If you do, strange tilings happen. You can never pin down what it is, but things start going haywire.'

He raised his glass and drank some bourbon, slopping it down his shirt front, then he put his glass back on the table and glanced all around him. The bar was noisy and crowded, a real homegrown honky-tonk, a jukebox blaring out of one corner, the lights mercifully dim. Stanford reached out for the bottle, filled up Gardner's glass, glancing casually at the women along the bar to see if one was worth having.

'You knew Ruppelt?' Stanford asked.

'Sure,' Gardner said. 'You wouldn't be here if you didn't know that We worked for a time together, we respected one another, and even when he left, when those bastards pushed him out, he still came to see me now and then, very quiet, just for old time's sake. Ruppelt was a believer. I've no doubts about that at all. He was a believer and he died a believer, no matter what his book said.'
'You mean he took the UFOs seriously?' Stanford asked.
'Fucking right,' Gardner said.
Stanford studied Gardner's face, the hollow cheeks, the bloodshot eyes, took note of the stubble on his chin and his darkly stained teeth. Something had happened to Gardner - something not very nice - and now the former Air Force hero was a wreck, always drunk in his own bar.
'I thought Ruppelt was a career man,' Stanford said. 'I didn't think he'd believe that'
'He believed in the Air Force,' Gardner said. 'And the Air Force believed it.'
'I'd always thought the opposite.'
'That's bullshit,' Gardner said. 'A PR's diarrhea. The Air Force believed in UFOs from as far back as 1947.'
'Really?'
'Yeah, really. I was with the Air Technical Intelligence Center at the time - then based at Wright Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio - and believe me, we were in a state of near panic. And why? Because contrary to their own publicity, the military was being plagued with their own sightings: first over Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama, then, to our horror, over the White Sands Proving Ground - right smack in the middle of our A-bomb territory. Finally, what really got us going was a whole series of sightings on July 8, 1947, over Muroc Air Base - now Edwards AFB - our top secret Air Force test center in the Mojave Desert.'
'I know about those sightings,' Stanford said. They really were something.'
'Fucking A,' Gardner said.
He put his glass to his lips, had a drink, topped it up, cursed

the noise of the blaring jukebox and put his glass on the ta-ble. Stanford topped his own glass up, glanced around the crowded bar, talcing note of the Stetsons and boots and the girls in tight dresses. 'I'm told that those sightings led to Project Sign.' 'Right,' Gardner said. 'No less a luminary than General Nathan Twining, commander of the Air Material Command, wrote to the commanding general of the Army-Air Forces stat-ing that the phenomenon was something real, that it wasn't visionary or fictitious, and that the objects were disc-shaped, as large as aircraft, and controlled. Shortly after that, about December '47, we established Project Sign, gave it a 2A classification, and handed it over to Wright-Patterson Air Force
Base.' 'That was just before the death of Captain Mantell.' 'Oh, yeah,' Gardner said. 'A famous case.' 'I'm told he died chasing a UFO, but the Air Force denies it.'
'Right,' Gardner said. 'Those fuckers tried to wipe it out. But that case, and a lot of other unknown sightings, really shook the hell out of us.'
'How do you mean?' Stanford said.
Gardner had another drink, licked his lips and glanced around him, waved at a couple of friends and then looked back at Stanford.
'Well,' he said, 'it prompted Project Sign to write an official, top-secret Estimate of the Situation - and we didn't piss around when we did it. That Estimate traced the whole history of UFO sightings, included the fireballs and ghost rockets and American sightings before 1947, and concluded, I kid you not, that the UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin. We then sent the report through channels, all the way to the Chief of Staff, General Hoyt Vandenberg, but the good general, to our amazement, sent it back with instructions to bury it.'
Stanford sipped his bourbon and saw a girl at the bar, her Monde hair tumbling down to her shoulders, her tits pointing

at him. Stanford smiled at the girl, the girl smiled right back, and Stanford placed his glass on the table and scratched his right ear.
'You run a good bar,' Stanford said. 'Lots of action, I no-tice.'
'Yeah,' Gardner said. 'Lots of action. I gotta admit that.'
'General Vandenberg sounds pretty odd to me. He must have caused you some problems.'
Gardner nodded his agreement, drank some bourbon and burped, then waved his left hand in the air, his eyes bleary and bloodshot. 'It was there and then,' he said, 'when that report was sent back, that we realized just how shitty the job was. In fact word filtered back to us that Vandenberg had called us all mad - and the repercussions from that story were pretty rough. Fear of further offending Vandenberg quickly led to a whole new policy: in the future all Sign personnel were to assume that all UFO reports were misidentifications, hallucinations or hoaxes. Not only that, but we had to check with FBI officers, and with the criminal and subversive files of police departments, looking into the private lives of the witnesses to see if they were reliable. No need to say it: that was fair warning to us all that it wasn't wise to open your mouth too wide... And shortly after, the Sign Estimate was incinerated.'
'Then Project Sign became Project Grudge.'
'Right,' Gardner said. 'A sure sign of General Vandenberg's displeasure.'
Stanford looked at the bar and saw the girl with blonde hair, now talking to a very large brunette, the pair of them giggling. The blonde girl turned and stared, smiled at him and stroked her hair, then she turned away and whispered to the other girl and they giggled again.
'I've heard bad stories about Grudge,' Stanford said. 'A real shitty assignment.'
'Right. We were told to kill the whole affair. Now our job was to shift the investigation away from the actual UFOs and

on to the poor bastards who reported them - we had to prove that the UFOs did not exist.'
'That must have been pretty difficult,' Stanford said. 'I mean, according to the Grudge Report, snow job though it was, a good twenty-three percent of your sightings were still classed as unknowns.'
'Big deal,' Gardner said. That was obviously still too much for General Vandenberg. The same day we released that re-port, the Air Force announced the termination of the project, all the Grudge records were stored, a few officers walked the plank, and the rest of our personnel were widely scattered.'
'But you remained.'
'Yeah.'
'You must have felt pretty bad.'
'Fucking right,' Gardner said. 'I began to think that the Air Force was only making a pretense at investigating UFOs, when in fact they didn't want us to find out anything. I couldn't figure out their attitude. It just didn't make sense. All I knew was that reported unknowns led to really bad trouble.'
Stanford studied Gardner's face, saw the dark, bloodshot eyes, and was awed by how far the man had fallen. It was best not to think about it Men like Gardner were the victims. It was hard to think of Gardner as a highly decorated fighter pilot, hard to think of him working on Project Blue Book when the project was honorable. Gardner and Ruppelt: they had both paid the price. Now Gardner talked like a man without a future, still glancing behind him.
'Tell me about Ruppelt' Stanford said. There's a real mystery there.'
'Not a mystery,' Gardner said. 'Clear as glass. They just slid the blade in.'
He topped up his glass, emptied the bottle and put it down, picked it up again and waved it at the barman and demanded another. Stanford sat back and waited. He didn't want to push too hard. It was supposed to be a casual conversation and it had to remain that way. Stanford glanced around the room. The air was filled with blue smoke. High-heeled boots

stomped the floor, Stetsons clashed, the tight dresses were glittering. Stanford saw the blonde girl. She smiled at him and raised her glass. Stanford thought she might soften up Gardner, so he nodded and grinned. The barman brought them another bottle. He slapped Gardner on the back. When he left, Gardner poured them both drinks and then started to talk again.

'Ruppelt was assigned to the Air Technical Intelligence Center in January 1951 - and like me, he was working under lieutenant Jerry Cummings. Now, up to that time Ruppelt hadn't paid too much attention to UFO reports, but what he read in our files turned him on. As I remember, he was par-ticularly impressed by two reports that involved movies taken at the White Sands Proving Ground. Now bear in mind that the White Sands Proving Ground was fully instrumented to track high-altitude, fast moving objects - namely, the guided missiles - and had camera stations equipped with cinetheodolite cameras located all over the area. So, on two different days in June 1950, two UFOs were actually shot by two different cameras, and the guys who performed the analysis were, by putting a correction factor in the data gathered by the two cameras, able to arrive at a rough estimation of speed, altitude and size. According to their reports, those UFOs were higher than forty thousand feet, traveling at over two thousand miles an hour, and were over three hundred feet in diameter.'

'Jesus,' Stanford said.

Tucking right Now those reports really got Ruppelt going. He was hooked on the UFOs, started working like a beaver, and that's when we really got together, going through the old files.'

Gardner stared around the room. He was obviously growing restless. He owned the whole bar, it was his, and he wanted to use it. Stanford recognized the signs. Gardner seemed a little petulant. Stanford thought of Epstein waiting in Washington, and decided to push it.

'What led to Project Blue Book?' Stanford asked.

'The Lubbock lights,' Gardner said. Those and the Fort Monmouth sightings. They really stirred the shit up.'
'This must be boring you,' Stanford said.
'I don't mind.'
'Let's have a little company,' Stanford said. That blonde and brunette.'
Stanford swiveled around and raised his glass to the blonde girl, then waved his left hand in an inviting gesture. The blonde glanced at the brunette, looked at Stanford, feigned surprise, then pointed her finger at herself and watched Stanford's head nodding. Gardner looked on, amazed. He thought Stanford was pretty cool. The girls giggled and then walked toward the table, holding on to each other. The jukebox was still shrieking. Couples danced without touching. The two girls pushed through the crowds, reached the table and stopped, looked at Stanford and Gardner in turn and gave them broad, streetwise smiles.
'Hi,' the brunette said.
'Peace on earth,' Stanford said. 'We thought you might like a little drink with two honorable men.'
'Oh, Jesus,' the brunette said.
'Don't pray,' Stanford said. 'We don't hold with religion on Friday nights. Just set yourself down.'
They both giggled and sat down. They looked different up close. The blonde wore jeans and halter, her tanned belly exposed, her breasts thrusting forward in challenge, her nose upturned, her eyes hard. The brunette was much bigger, far heavier, less pretty, her loose dress hiding unwanted flesh, her face masked in thick makeup. Gardner figured them for hookers. Stanford knew that for a fact. The girls flicked their eyes at Stanford, looked away, giggled once and then sighed.
'I'm Joanna,' the blonde said. This here's my friend Carol. We both live on the other side of town. We've never been here before.'
'I'm Stanford,' Stanford said. This gentleman is Mr Gardner. We're both bored with the sound of our own voices and we thought you'd distract us.'

The girls giggled again. That's a shame,' the brunette said. 'I thought you guys loved one another. So involved with each other.'
'What were you talking about?' the blonde asked.
'UFOs,' Gardner muttered.
'UFOs?'
'Flying saucers,' Stanford said. 'Mr Gardner's an expert.'
'The large brunette shivered. 'Christ, they're creepy,' she said.
'Fantastic,' the blonde said. 'My favorite subject. Are you really an expert?'
She stared straight at Gardner. Her eyes were large and blue. Gardner grinned and sat up in his chair, almost preening himself.
'I guess so,' he said.
'He's being modest,' Stanford said. This guy was chasing UFOs for the Air Force. He knows all about them.'
The blonde moved close to Gardner, her breasts brushing against his arm, her blue eyes very large and excited, her knee touching his knee. Gardner couldn't resist it, acted more drunk than he was, put his arm around the girl and then hugged her, slyly touching her left tit
Tell her about the Lubbock lights,' Stanford said. 'Give her all of the details.'
Gardner grinned at the blonde. 'Okay, sweetheart,' he said. 'Let me give you a display of expertise that'll boggle your mind.'
Stanford poured them all drinks. Gardner drank and hugged the blonde. The brunette glanced around her and shivered and hissed, This is creepy.' The blonde giggled and hugged Gardner. Stanford watched them both carefully. Gardner grinned at the three of them in turn and then started to talk.
The Lubbock affair began on the evening of August 25, 1951, when an employee of the Atomic Energy Commission's supersecret Sandia Corporation - one with a top 'Q' security clearance - looked up from his garden on the outskirts of

Albuquerque to see a huge aircraft flying swiftly and silently over his home. He later described it as having the shape of a "flying wing", about one and a half times the size of a B-36, with six to eight softly glowing bluish lights on the aft end of its wings. On that same night, about twenty minutes after this sigting, four professors from the Texas Technological Col-lege at Lubbock observed a formation of lights streaking across the sky: about fifteen to thirty separate lights, all a bluish-green color, moving from north to south in a semicircular formation ... Then, early in the morning of 26 August, only a few hours after the Lubbock sightings, two different radars at an Air Defense Command radar station located in Washington State showed an unknown target traveling at nine hundred miles an hour at thirteen hundred feet and heading in a northwesterly direction. Nor did it end there. On August 31, at the height of the flap, two ladies were driving near Matador, seventy miles northeast of Lubbock, when they saw a "pear-shaped object" about one hundred and fifty yards ahead of them, about one hundred and twenty feet in the air, drifting slowly to the east at less than the take-off speed of a Cub airplane. One of those witnesses was pretty familiar with aircraft - she was married to an Air Force officer and had lived near air bases for years - and she swore that the object was about the size of a B-29 fuselage, had a porthole on one side, made absolutely no noise as it moved into the wind, and that it suddenly picked up speed and then climbed out of sight, seemingly making a tight, spiraling motion. That same evening an amateur photographer took five photos of a V formation of the same bluish-green lights as they flew over his backyard. And finally, a rancher's wife told her husband -who related the story to Captain Ruppelt - that she had seen a large object gliding swiftly and silently over her house. That object was viewed about ten minutes after the Sandia Corporation viewed his object, it was described as "an airplane without a body", and the woman said that on the aft edge of the wing were pairs of glowing bluish lights - an exact description of the Albuquerque sighting by the Sandia employee.'

'Christ,' the blonde said.
'I don't believe this,' the brunette said. 'I mean, people see things all the time. You can't prove they exist.'
'Not so,' Gardner said. 'We investigated all the Lubbock sightings thoroughly. First, we discovered that the Washing-ton State radar lock-on was a solid target - not a weather target - and it was then easy to work out that an object flying between that radar station and Lubbock would have been on a northwesterly course at the time it was seen at the two places - and that it would have had a speed of approximately nine hundred miles an hour, as calculated by the radar. Next, we analyzed the five photographs taken by the amateur pho-tographer. The lights had crossed about one hundred and twenty degrees of open sky at a thirty-degree-per-second angular velocity - which corresponded exactly to the angular velocity carefully measured by the four professors from the tech college at Lubbock. Analysis of the photos also showed that the lights were a great deal brighter than the surrounding stars and that their unusual intensity could have been caused by an exceptionally bright light source which had a color at the most distant red end of the spectrum, bordering on infrared.'
'Jesus,' the brunette said, 'he sounds like Einstein. What the hell does that mean?'
Gardner preened at her bewilderment, grinned at each of them in turn, then fixed his bleary gaze upon Stanford, ignoring the girls.
'Well,' he said, 'since the human eye isn't sensitive to such a light, the light could seem dim to the eye - as many of the Lubbock lights did - but be exceptionally bright on film - as they were on our photographs. And, according to the Photo Reconnaissance Laboratory, at the time there was nothing flying that had those pretty magical characteristics. However, what really knocked us out was the discovery that the lights on the photos were amazingly similar to the description given by the Atomic Energy Commission employee of the lights on the aft edge of the huge UFO that passed over his house.'

'So,' Stanford said, leaning forward, 'did something fly over Albuquerque and travel two hundred and fifty miles to Lubbock at a speed of nine hundred miles an hour? And did the radar station in Washington State pick up that same object?'
'According to the witnesses,' Gardner said, 'and to our radar and visual tracking calculations, it did. Our Lubbock files were also studied by a group of rocket experts, nuclear physicists and intelligence experts, and they were all convinced that the Lubbock lights were of extraterrestrial origin.'
'Oh, God,' the blonde said, 'they must be real. I mean, you hear that, they've got to be.'
'Shit,' said the brunette. 'It's all shit. Let's talk about sex.' She reached out for her glass, had a drink, put the glass down, gave them all a look of disgust and then lit up a cigarette. Stanford smiled understandingly, reached out and stroked her cheek. 'Sex,' he said. 'I like the sound of that I think we might even try it.' He sat back and smiled at her. His smile was returned. The blonde pouted in a theatrical fashion and gave Gardner a hug. 'Just ignore them,' she said. 'I think it's really far out I mean, stuff like this you don't hear every day. I feel shivery all over.' Her breasts moved when she shivered. Gardner seemed a lot brighter. Stanford shrugged as if he didn't really care, and then topped up their glasses.
'It's all shit,' the brunette repeated.
'Is it?' Stanford said. 'Well I heard that the Pentagon was involved. Is that true, Mr Gardner?'
'Right,' Gardner said. 'Not many people know that. The Pentagon, no matter what you hear, was fucking involved all right The Fort Monmouth sightings started it. All the witnesses were top brass. Those sightings caused a fucking sensation and really got the ball rolling. I mean, within hours of those sightings we received a call from the Director of Intelligence of the Air Force, Major General Cabell, telling us to get someone from ATIC to Jersey fast and find out what the hell was going on. Shortly after that, the T-33 pilot and an Air Force major who had tried to pursue the UFO were on a

plane to New York where they were grilled by two of our best men. By the following day our two men, Lieutenant Cummings and lieutenant Colonel Rosengarten, were sitting down in the Pentagon, having words with Major General Cabell. Every word of that meeting was duly recorded - but according to our sources the recording was considered so hot it was later destroyed. No matter... now totally con-vinced of the legitimacy of the UFO problem, Major General Cabell ordered ATIC to establish a new UFO project. And since Cummings was due for release from active duty, Cap-tain Ruppelt was put in charge of the operation. In April 1952, Project Grudge was renamed Project Blue Book, and Ruppelt really took that project seriously.'

Stanford stared straight at Gardner. This was what he wanted to hear. More accurately, it was what Epstein wanted to hear, and Stanford had to deliver.

'Business,' the brunette said. 'I'm fed up with all this shit. I think you two guys should make an offer. I've got a living to make.'

'Oh, for God's sake,' the blonde said, 'that can wait. I mean, we both need a break.'

That's right,' Stanford said. 'Let's all have another drink. Don't worry: we're both here for the night. And we're not short on bread.'

The brunette puckered her lips, glared at her friend and then shrugged. Stanford picked the bottle up and poured more drinks and then looked straight at Gardner.

This is amazing,' he said. 'I can hardly believe my ears. I mean, I never thought they took it that serious. The Pentagon! Jesus?'

He was stroking Gardner's vanity and the response was immediate: Gardner slid his arm away from the blonde and talked directly to Stanford.

'Not only the Pentagon,' he said. 'The fucking CIA, too.'

'What?'

'You heard me right,' Gardner said. 'By June of that year Project Blue Book was really going strong and had received

more official reports than it had received in any previous month in its history. In fact, the number of reports coming in at that time was fucking astonishing - and Air Force officers in the Pentagon became frantic. In July, ATIC received over five hundred reports - more than three times the number received in June - and then, when one of the top dogs in the CIA - and most of his guests - saw a silent, vertically climb-ing UFO over his home in Alexandria, Virginia, General Samford, Director of Intelligence, called Ruppelt to a secret meeting in Washington. At that meeting were General gamford, members of his staff, intelligence officers from the Navy and, according to Ruppelt, quite a few CIA officers. That was the first time the CIA officially stepped into the picture -and it was also the start of all our troubles.'

'You mean that's when Ruppelt started to get screwed.'

'Right,' Gardner said. 'What finally blew the balloon was the unprecedented number of July sightings, peaking in the famous UFO invasion of Washington DC in 1952. After that, it was murder.'

I'm filing my fingernails,' the brunette said. 'I've got nothing else to do. I'm sitting on my fanny getting numb, so I'm filing my fingernails.'

Everyone glanced at her. She was filing her fingernails. There were people dancing close to the table, and the jukebox was wailing. The blonde shook to the rhythm, looked at Stanford and winked. Stanford smiled, but kept his eyes fixed on Gardner, trying to keep him pinned down.

The Washington sightings were incredible,' he said, 'but what went on in the background? I mean, what's the connection with Ruppelt? I think you said it affected him.'

'Yeah,' Gardner said. 'It did. Ruppelt wasn't in Washington during the night of the sightings, but he got the flak right in the face. In fact, Ruppelt hadn't even been informed of the sightings, and he only found out when he bought a newspaper at the Washington National Airport Terminal Building when he got off an airliner from Dayton, Ohio. He rushed immediately to the Pentagon where he had an urgent

meeting with Major Dewey Fournet and Colonel Bower, an intelligence officer from Boiling AFB. They told him that throughout the night the restricted air corridor around the White House had been filled with interceptor jets trying to chase UFOs, that the UFOs had been radar tracked all around Washington, that an analysis of the sightings had completely ruled out temperature inversions, and that the radar opera-tors at Washington National Airport and Andrews AFB - plus at least two veteran airline pilots - had all sworn that their sightings were caused by the radar waves bouncing off hard, solid objects.'

'So,' Stanford said, 'what happened to Ruppelt?' 'Well,' Gardner said, 'on behalf of the Air Force, Al Chops gave the press an official "No Comment" on the sightings. In the meantime, Captain Ruppelt tried to set up a thorough investigation, but was shafted wherever he turned. He planned to go all over the area, to every sighting location, but he hardly got his foot out of the Pentagon. First, he called the transportation section for a car - and was refused. Next, he went down to the finance office to see if he could rent a car -and was refused. Next, he was reminded that he was supposed to be on his way back to Dayton, and that if he didn't leave he would be technically AWOL. Ruppelt gave up in disgust and returned to Wright-Patterson in Dayton.'

'Are you trying to tell me that the Air Force deliberately got rid of their most competent investigator?' 'What the hell do you think it sounds like?' 'Okay,' Stanford said. 'So within a week to the hour of the first major flap, another invasion took place over Washington DC.'

'Right,' Gardner said. 'And this time it was even worse. At about ten thirty on the evening of July 26, the same radar operators who had seen the UFOs the week before picked up several of the very same objects... and this time the UFOs were spread out in a huge arc around Washington - from Virginia to Andrews AFB. In short, they had Washington boxed in.'

Stanford glanced at the brunette, saw her filing her finger-nails, then glanced at the bare-bellied blonde and received an excited grin.
'So,' Stanford said, 'the White House took the invasion pretty seriously.' 'They sure did,' Gardner said. Throughout that night there was chaos in Washington. The press was furious because all reporters and photographers had been ordered out of the ra-dar rooms at the time our interceptors were chasing the UFOs. However, once the press had gone arguments really blew up in all those radar towers and in the Pentagon itself. According to Dewey Fournet, the Pentagon liaison man, everyone in the radar rooms had been convinced that the targets had been caused by solid, metallic objects and couldn't possibly have been anything else. And whatever those things were, they could literally hover in the air, then abruptly accelerate to seven thousand miles an hour.'
'Jesus,' the blonde said. To think I read about those saucers! Is it true President Nixon actually saw them?'
'It was 1952,' the brunette said. 'You got your presidents wrong.'
'Yeah,' Gardner said. 'When I was there, word came down the grapevine that President Truman himself had almost gone apeshit when he saw UFOs skimming right around the White House. That story was quickly squashed by some of the President's aides, but shortly after, about ten that morning, the President's air aide, Brigadier General Landry, called Intelligence at Truman's personal request to find out what the hell had been going on. Ruppelt himself took that call and he had to hedge his answers, because he couldn't explain the sightings at all.'
The brunette opened her shoulder bag, put her nail file away, then stared at the three of them in turn, her lips puckering distastefully.
'I'm finished,' she said. 'My fingernails are all filed. I'm sit-ting here trying to make a living, but I'm not getting action.'
'Oh, Carol!' the blonde snapped.

'I'm just a working girl,' Carol said. 'I need to live just like anyone else, and these two guys aren't helping.'
'We've got rooms,' Gardner said.
'I know that,' Carol said.
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'If s a deal. Just give us five minutes.'
Carol sniffed and then nodded, had a drink and glanced around her. 'Right,' she said. 'As long as that's settled. I mean, we've got other customers.'
The blonde smiled at Stanford. Gardner smiled at the blonde. Stanford winked at the blonde and then leaned for-ward and stared straight at Gardner.
'What do you think it all meant?' Stanford asked.
Gardner sighed. 'It was the Washington sightings, more than anything else, that made all of us at Blue Book a bit suspicious of the Air Force's stance on UFOs. In fact, we spent over a year investigating those sightings, and what we came across really shook us. For a start, when the tower operators at Andrews AFB were later interrogated about the "large, fiery, orange-colored sphere" they had reported over their radio, they completely changed their story and said that what they had really seen was a star and that they had just been excited. Now, apart from the fucking idiocy of highly skilled radio operators describing a normal star as a "large fiery, orange-colored sphere" right over their control tower, Ruppelt also found out that according to astronomical charts there were no exceptionally bright stars where the UFO was reported to have been seen. Ruppelt then found out, from what he claimed was a reliable source, that the tower operators had been "persuaded" a bit. likewise, the pilot of an F-94C, who had told us about vainly trying to intercept unidentified lights, later stated in his official report that all he had seen was a ground light reflecting off a layer of haze - an equally ridiculous statement since both the pilot and the radar had confirmed that the lights had repeatedly disappeared and re appeared in the sky before finally shooting away. Then. regarding the Air Force's continuing stance that the lights had been caused by temperature inversions, we checked out

the strength of the inversions through the Air Defense Com-mand Weather Forecast Center - and at no time during the flap was there a temperature inversion remotely strong enough to show up on the radar. Finally, no weather target makes a one hundred and eighty degree turn and flies away every time an airplane reaches it The Washington sightings, according to Blue Book, are still unknowns.'

Stanford started to forget the girls. He felt a cold, clear excitement. He thought of Epstein in the office in Washington, waiting patiently to hear from him. Epstein had been fight The Air Force had covered up. Why they had covered up was a mystery that Stanford might solve.

'As I said,' Gardner continued, 'it was the official reaction to the Washington sightings that made a lot of us suspicious of the Air Force. Too many people were telling us one thing and then changing their story for their "official" reports. Also, it became more and more obvious that the top brass of the Air Force were trying to blind us with some dodgy maneuvers. After the Washington sightings, Ruppelt became convinced that pilots reporting UFOs were being intimidated into either changing their reports or simply remaining silent, that a lot of information was being withheld from Blue Book, and that the CIA was stepping into the picture for unexplained reasons.'

'You were really worried about the CIA?'

'Yeah. The person who worried us most during this time was General Hoyt Vandenberg. Bear in mind that it was Vandenberg who had buried the original Project Sign Estimate, who had reportedly called us all mad, and who had directly or indirectly caused the fear of ridicule that has ever since hindered all UFO projects. It was also because of Vandenberg that the Sign Estimate was incinerated and that Project Sign was insultingly renamed Project Grudge. Now, while none of us could be sure of just how much Vandenberg was influencing either the Air Force or the CIA, the knowledge that he had been head of the Central Intelligence Group - later the CIA - from June 1946 to May 1947, that his uncle

had been chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee -then the next most powerful committee in the Senate - that Vandenberg obviously still had great influence in those ar-eas, and that pressure was always coming from those areas to suppress knowledge of UFO investigations, did nothing to make us trust him any more. It therefore came as no surprise when we heard that the CIA and some high-ranking officers including Generals Vandenberg and Samford, were, against the objections of the Battelle Memorial Institute, convening a panel of scientists to "analyze" all the Blue Book data. Nor did it surprise us to discover that this panel was to be headed by Dr H. P. Robertson, director of the Weapons System Evaluation Group in the Office of the Secretary of Defense -and a CIA classified employee.'

'What do you know about the Robertson Panel?' Stanford asked.

Gardner glanced at the two hookers, stared at Stanford, licked his lips, now excited and wanting to continue, but nervous of doing so. He looked at the girls again. The blonde smiled and licked her lips. The brunette had her chin in her hand, her lips puckered in boredom.

'I'm getting impatient,' she said. 'I think you're giving us a snow job. I don't think you intend taking us upstairs. A pair of fags, I got sitting here.'

'I can't afford you,' Gardner said.

'It's on me,' Stanford said. 'I've got a pocketful of bread and I'm horny, so let's fix something up.'

'Jesus, thanks,' Gardner said. 'I mean, that's really fucking decent. Tell you what, send the girls up to the room and then we'll finish the talk.'

'Oh, shit,' the blonde said.

'This is confidential,' Gardner said. 'I wanna finish this story with my buddy, so just wait for us upstairs.'

'How long?' the brunette asked.

'About five minutes,' Gardner said.

'Here,' Stanford said. 'It's a deposit. It guarantees we'll be up there.'

He passed over fifty dollars. The brunette put it in her bag. She stood up and then looked down at the blonde and said, 'Okay, let's go.' The blonde sighed and stood up, turned her nose up at them both. What room?' she asked. 'We have to know what room. We can't fuck in the corridor.' Gardner told her the room number. She sniffed loudly and walked away. The brunette grinned at them both, followed the blonde across the room, and they both passed the screaming jukebox and disappeared in the crowd. Gardner sighed and filled his glass, had a drink and glanced around him, then he leaned across the table and stared at Stanford, his dark eyes intense.

'Okay,' he said. The only thing I really know about the Robertson Panel is that it was convened in secrecy in Washington in 1953, and that contrary to the evidence submitted by Project Blue Book it wrote a totally negative report which led to the virtual dissolving of our operation. First, the panel submitted its report to the CIA, the higher echelons of the Air Force and the Pentagon, but refused to give a copy to Ruppelt or any of the Blue Book staff. Next, Ruppelt and Captain Garland were summoned to CIA headquarters where it was explained to them that the Robertson Panel had recommended expanding Blue Book's staff and terminating all secrecy in the project This naturally encouraged Ruppelt, but his pleasure turned sour when he discovered that the CIA had been lying to him. In fact, it later transpired that the Robertson Panel had recommended a tightening of security, a mass "debunking" of the phenomenon, and a subtle ridiculing of UFO witnesses and the phenomenon in general.'

Gardner looked around him. The room was smokey and packed. The jukebox was screaming in the corner, surrounded by dancers.

'So,' he said. 'When it became obvious that the CIA had lied to us and that the Air Force was in fact trying to strangle Blue Book, a lot of us at ATIC got very nervous. Ruppelt himself began to feel that he was facing growing opposition from the Pentagon to his plans for expanding Blue Book's activities. This feeling was confirmed when he asked for a transfer,

but agreed to stay on with Blue Book until a replacement could be found. He had asked for that transfer in December but by the following February no replacement had materialized. Nor were there any replacements when Lieutenant Flues was transferred to the Alaskan Air Command, when lieutenant Rothstein's tour of active duty ended, or when others on the staff left or were transferred out In short, Ruppeit left a drastically reduced Blue Book organization in February and by the time he returned, in July of that same year he found that the Air Force had reassigned most of his re-maining staff, that they had sent no replacements, and that Blue Book now consisted of only himself and a mere two assistants. To put it bluntly, Project Blue Book had been fucked.'

'And you think it was intentional?' Stanford said.

'Yeah,' Gardner said. 'It was deliberate. I was out of the Air Force by the time Ruppelt returned, and what happened to me wasn't uncommon. In fact, once Ruppeit had left for Denver, it became clear to us all that the Air Force had deliberately not replaced him because they wanted to strip Blue Book of its one remaining figure of authority. With no competent officer in charge, Blue Book had little means of resisting the numerous transfers and subtle pressures that eventually strangled it. Of course, a few of us tried to speak out against all that, but it was the worst fucking thing we could have done. More and more I saw guys getting harassed for no good reason, having their confidence shattered, their good records ruined, and then getting transferred out by way of punishment - or being asked to resign. That happened to me. Those fuckers just went out to get me. I started getting picked up for negligence, for dumb insolence and other shit, and then they started moving me around from place to place, from one hole to another. After that, I gave up. I couldn't take it anymore. I was drinking like a fish, my wife packed up and left, and then eventually, like a lot of the others, I just had to resign... You don't go too close to UFOs. It's a dangerous thing to do. If you go too

close to UFOs you get burned - and you rarely recover.'
Gardner picked his glass up and finished it off with one gulp then wiped his lips with the back of his free hand and glanced wildly around him.
'Jesus,' he said, 'I'm drunk. I think I need a good fuck. I have to blow this out of my system. Let's hit those two whores.'
He stood up and swayed, grabbed the table and steadied himself, then Stanford stood up and took him by the elbow and turned him around. They pushed their way through the noisy crowd, passed the dancers around the jukebox, emerged from the haze of blue smoke and found the dark, narrow stairs.
'What happened to Ruppelt?' Stanford asked. 'You haven't told me. You never finished the story.'
Gardner stumbled on the stairs. The drink had suddenly hit him hard. Stanford slid his arm around him and helped him up, wondering how he had come to this.
'I don't know,' Gardner said. 'He just got fucked up like me. He came to see me just after he'd left the Air Force, and we drank beer and talked. Ruppelt's head was filled with questions. He couldn't let the subject go. He had left, but the subject still obsessed him and kept him awake at night He wondered what had gone wrong with Blue Book. He wondered why they had run it down. He wondered why the Air Force had played a double game - and he kept asking questions.'
They reached the top of the stairs. The corridor was short and dark. Gardner snorted and lurched forward, swaying dangerously from side to side, but Stanford grabbed him and turned him around and pressed him into the wall.
'What questions?' Stanford asked.
Gardner coughed into his fist. He stared at Stanford with bloodshot eyes. Then he spoke, his voice harsh and self-mocking, releasing his bitterness.
'Why, when the Air Force was telling the whole world that the study of UFOs hadn't produced enough evidence to war-

rant investigation, did they secretly order all reports to be investigated? Why, when all of us had actually read General Twining's statement that the phenomenon was something real, did they deny that such a statement had ever been sub-mitted? Why, when they themselves initiated Project Sign and received its official report concluding that the UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin, did they dissolve the project and then burn the report? Why, when Project Sign was changed to Project Grudge, did they go all out to ridicule the reported sightings and then disperse most of the staff on that project? Why, when the Air Force continued to claim that they had absolutely no interest in UFOs, did they insist that all reports be sent to the Pentagon? Why, when Lieutenant Cummings and Lieutenant Rosengarten discussed UFOs in the Pentagon with the Director of Intelligence of the Air Force, was the recording of that meeting destroyed? Finally, why did the CIA lie to Ruppelt, why was the Robertson report kept from him, and why was Project Blue Book run down? Those questions haven't been answered.'

Stanford opened the bedroom door. The light beamed into the corridor. The two hookers were sitting up on the bed, drinking bourbon and giggling. The room was small and shabby. The double bed was unmade. Stanford pushed Gardner in, shut the door with a bang, then he turned and walked along the dark corridor until he came to the stairs. He stood there a long time. The bar below seemed far away. The darkness was alive with possibilities and strange, formless mysteries.

'Why?' Stanford asked.

'Why?' Epstein asked. We always come back to why. There are too many contradictions and ambiguities. We have to know a lot more.'
Stanford sighed and nodded wearily. The Caribbean sun stung his eyes. He glanced back at St Thomas, at the bubbling white wake of the boat, felt the deck shaking under his feet and heard the engine's dull rumblings.
'I haven't finished yet,' he said. That Gardner was just the start I've got this old CIA friend in Washington, and he's promised to talk to me.'
'He's still in the CIA?'
'You've got to be kidding,' Stanford said. 'No. He left ten years ago... but he was pretty high up.'
'I want to know more about Ruppelt I want to know what happened to him. I want to know what the Robertson Panel actually said behind closed doors. I want to know who was on that panel. I think that's fairly important. I want to know who they were and I want to know their precise recommendations. We were wrong about the Air Force. We've been fooled for twenty years. The Air Force and the CIA and the Pentagon have been involved, and that involvement has been kept a tight secret. I want to know why.'
'This friend was in on it,' Stanford said. 'He assured me of that much. He said there were strange things going on and that they didn't make sense to him. He's willing to talk. He'll

pick up where that tape left off. I'll go see him as soon as we get back and then give you a transcript.'
Stanford glanced around the ferry. There weren't many passengers aboard. He saw a blonde-haired Dutch girl with the brown skin of a vahine, a couple of dusky workers argu-ing loudly in Creole French, a few American holidaymakers, waving hands, snapping pictures, and a black woman of Afri-can descent selling mangoes and pineapples. They were all framed by the sea, very calm, a dazzling blue, sweeping out to the cays and islets of the American Virgin Islands, their rolling hills blue-gray and parched green, a few clouds in the silvery sky.
'This is some place,' Stanford said.
'What did you think of St Thomas?'
'It looked like 42nd Street,' Stanford said.
'You should know,' Epstein said.
Stanford squinted against the sun. 'Is that the hotel?' he asked. He was looking at a sprawling white complex dominating an islet.
‘That's it,' Epstein said.
Stanford nodded and turned around, leaned against the iron railing, let the trade winds blowing in from the northeast dry the sweat on his face. His gaze fell on the black woman. She was selling her fruit from a woven basket She was wearing a white blouse and a skirt, a colorful apron over the skirt, and had a bright orange turban on her head, her black hair pulled up under it. Stanford kept looking at her. She saw him staring and smiled back. She had laughing brown eyes, a sort of innocent sensuality, and he immediately thought of the girl on the porch in the ranch outside Galveston. He thought a lot about that girl and still couldn't understand it He thought about that girl night and day, and was becoming obsessed.
'Remember Galveston?' Stanford said.
'Could I ever forget it?' Epstein replied.
'I'm thinking of going back there,' Stanford said. 'I want to talk to those people.'
'That was a year ago.'

'So, it was a year ago.'
That's a very long time,' Epstein said. 'You won't do any good.'
'Why do you say that?'
'They wouldn't talk when we were there. The old man was mad and the girl was dumb. I don't think they'll talk now.'
'I don't care,' Stanford said. 'I want to try anyway. I want to know what those people really experienced, and this time I'll push them.'
'The Army might still be there.'
'I don't think so,' Stanford said.
'All right,' Epstein said. 'Please yourself. We've got nothing but time.'
Epstein shrugged and glanced around him, his gray hair blown by the breeze, his jacket hanging over his left arm, his grubby tie hanging loose. He had aged a lot in the past year, had thinned down and was coughing more, the lines on his face more predominant, his movements slow and exhausted. Stanford had noticed the change. It had started with living's death. Dr Epstein now looked his true age and was shrinking each day.
Stanford was also changing, was more tense, less ebullient, now driven by forces beyond his comprehension, lured by riddles and mysteries. He thought constantly about the flatlands, about the lights in the sky, about the dust and the wind and the dead cattle and the girl on the porch. Stanford couldn't understand it. It was much more than sex. He had thought about the girl for a year and now she seemed to be part of him. There was something unreal about it. He felt as if the girl was calling him. He was losing track of time, losing touch with reality, and often felt that he was trapped in a frozen present, still blinded by dust clouds.
Life was an illusion. He believed that more and more. He had pursued the invisible for too long and now was paying the price. Nothing seemed real anymore, nothing here, nothing immediate; his one reality was a night of wind and dust and strange lights and masked figures. What did it all mean?

Why was he now so driven? Stanford glanced around the ferry, saw the faces black and white, saw the blue sea and cays and islets that burned under a white sun. He felt hot and suffocated, slowly dissolving where he stood, and he turned toward the prow of the boat as it approached the small island.
'That's some hotel,' he said.
'It collects the vacation crowds.'
'It looks like a fucking Moorish castle.'
'A touch of Hollywood,' Epstein said.
The ferry was nearing the islet, heading straight for the rocks, then it turned and drifted toward a wooden dock and then bumped alongside it One of the crew jumped off the boat, started tying the ropes, and Stanford gazed up the climbing parched land and saw the walls of the hotel. The walls were whitewashed and gleaming, broken up by horseshoe arches, rising up in tiers above a swimming pool and lined with colorful flowers. It was a single-storey building, sprawling across the upper slopes, dominating the sunbleached, rocky island with serene grandiosity. The ferry bumped against the dock. The crew put the gangplank down. Stanford looked along the dock, saw a bus and some cars, a few people milling about in the dust, examining the disembarking passengers.
'Is he there?' Stanford asked.
'Yes,' Epstein said. The man in the sport shirt and shorts.'
'They all look like that,' Stanford said.
Epstein nodded and smiled, watched the passengers disembark, waited until the last stepped off the ferry and then followed them down. He walked slowly and carefully, as if not sure of his footing, gazing down past the gangplank at the water which eddied and rippled. Stanford followed him down, glancing vaguely around him, at the crystal clear blue of the sea, the green islands, the silvery sky. The heat was incredible. The air shimmered before his eyes. He stepped onto the wooden dock, followed Epstein's stocky form, and a short man wearing a sport shirt and shorts stepped forward to greet them.

'Long time no see,' he said to Epstein. 'You look pretty exhausted.'
The man was small and too fat, his shirt loosened around his belly, his white hair blowing over bright green eyes and a tanned, humorous face. He and Epstein shook hands, ex-changed a few jocular pleasantries, then Epstein turned to introduce Stanford who also shook the man's hand.
'Robert Stanford,' Epstein said. 'I just call him Stanford. The name has a certain crass elegance that suits him quite
well.' 'You're still young,' the man said.
'Is that surprising?' Stanford asked.
'I suppose not,' the man said with a grin. 'I just didn't expect it.' He waved his hand all around him. 'How do you like it?' he asked.
'A good place for a vacation,' Stanford said.
'That's what I thought,' the man said.
Epstein looked up at the hotel. 'Do we have to walk up?' he asked.
'No,' his friend said, indicating a dusty Volkswagen Beetle. 'I didn't think you'd make it that far, so I've brought my own transport.'
The other passengers were climbing into the small hotel bus that was sitting just beyond the Volkswagen. The car and the bus were both parked on a tract of flat earth that overlooked the shimmering azure sea. Beyond the bus, and across that broad expanse of clear blue water, was St Thomas and the capital, Charlotte Amalie.
'I come here every year,' Professor Gerhardt said. 'I come because there's nothing to do and that suits me just fine... At least it did until this year.'
He opened the door of the Volkswagen and then pulled the front seat forward. Stanford scrambled into the back, placing his small suitcase on his knees, and sat there, bunched up in the cramped space, feeling highly uncomfortable. Gerhardt got in behind the steering wheel and Epstein sat beside him, slamming the door as the car roared into life and started up

the steep hill. The road snaked around the islet, climbing to-ward the hotel, passing coco palms and divi-divi trees and tracts of parched, windblown grass. Stanford looked out the window. The sea was spread out far below him. He saw the cays and scattered islets, the sea blue and sun-reflecting, motor launches racing around coral reefs, helicopters above them. Then the car reached the hotel, spluttering angrily be-fore falling silent, stopping between dazzling white walls and high, white-washed arches.

'Home sweet home,' Gerhardt said.

He opened the door and climbed out, pulled the seat up for Stanford, and Stanford, pushing his suitcase out ahead of him, emerged gratefully onto the patio. Epstein got out the other side, stretched himself and glanced around him, gently nodding his head in appreciation and then smiling at Stanford.

'The one advantage about this job,' he said quietly, 'is that a man gets to travel.'

'It's damned hot,' Stanford said.

'It'll soon get cooler,' Gerhardt said. The sun will be gone in half an hour, and then you'll feel a lot better.'

'We better sign in,' Epstein said.

'I've already done that,' Gerhardt said. 'I did it as soon as I got your cablegram. Now do you want to go to your rooms for a rest or would you rather we talked?'

'I'd like a drink,' Stanford said.

'We better talk now,' Epstein said. We're hoping to leave in the morning, so let's go to the bar.'

'Have you eaten?'

'No.'

'Then let's eat,' Gerhardt said. 'I'll tell you the whole story over dinner, and then you can sleep on it.'

They left their suitcases at the reception desk, felt the breeze from the spinning fans, then walked out and went along a cobbled courtyard and emerged into the gardens. Gerhardt led them up some steps, across a cool, covered patio, then guided them into the open-air restaurant overlooking the sea. The restaurant looked like a large terrace, its white

walls strewn with flowers; lanterns hung from the ceiling, glowing red, green and blue, their light rendered obsolete by the sunlight pouring over the verandah wall. Gerhardt sat them on the verandah, at a table against the wall, and Stanford looked down and saw the parched earth falling to a large, crowded swimming pool. There was a small bar by the pool. Girls in bikinis sucked on straws. Beyond their distant, shadowed figures was the sea and the red, sinking sun.

'Apart from fish,' Gerhardt said, 'I couldn't recommend the menu. Most of the food in the Caribbean comes in cans. The fruit and fish are both fresh.'

'I'll have lobster,' Epstein said.

'I fancy crayfish,' Stanford said. 'And I'll start with a very tall rum and Coke to make myself feel at home.'

They spent some time perusing the menu, enjoying their brief role as tourists; Gerhardt ordered and he and Epstein talked of old times until the food came. Stanford studied Gerhardt carefully. He liked the man a lot. Gerhardt had a sense of humor, a natural openness and ebullience, but beneath his spontaneity was a tension that was finely suppressed. He discussed old times with Epstein, told them both about the Caribbean; he didn't mention what he had brought them both here for until they had all finished eating. The sun was going down by then. The sea looked like flowing lava. The islets dotting the crimson water were casting shadows that undulated and deepened. Gerhardt sat back in his chair. A yellow lantern shone in his eyes. He sipped his wine and glanced uneasily around him and then stared straight at Epstein.

'All right,' he said. 'As you know I'm still working for NORAD in the Cheyenne Mountain Complex. Now for the past year things have been going wrong there: computers malfunctioning, data cards disappearing, the printouts from our worldwide network of radar stations coming in either erratically or not at all. Even worse: we have quite a few spy satellites whose sole purpose for being is to photograph the Semipalitinsk laboratory in Russia, where we think they're

creating some extraordinary pulse beam weapons. So, what happens? Our damned satellites start malfunctioning. A cou-ple get knocked out of the sky - we don't even know where they went - and the rest take their turn at malfunctioning in inexplicable ways. We don't know what's happening. We just can't pin it down. We've checked that whole complex from top to bottom, but we can't find a fault.

'Okay, so I'm in trouble. I'm supposed to be in charge of the data imput Eyes are pointed suspiciously in my direction and my nerves start to twitch... I should know what's caus-ing it - it's my field; my speciality - but I'm sitting in the Operations Center, just chewing my nails off. I haven't a goddamned clue, I can't find a single reason, and now I'm being checked out by the CIA and my credit is zero.'

'This all started a year ago?'

'That's right, Epstein: a year ago.'

'Have you taken on any new staff since then?'

'Not a one. They're all old hands.'

'Okay. Go on.'

'Right Now listen to this. For the past three months this has all been getting on top of me - my nerves playing up, too many sleepless nights, sweating and trying to work out my problems and then just sweating more. Then I get a phone call. It's from a guy named James Whitmore. He tells me that he works for ACASS, that they've heard I'm having a bad time, and that they want me to work for them in Europe and will pay me a lot I tell him to put it in writing. He says he can't do that. He says that I'm to meet him in a hotel for a drink and a chat. I tell him I'm not interested. He becomes very insistent I get angry and tell him to shove off, but that just makes him laugh. Things won't get better, he says. Tilings will get worse at NORAD. He then says that he'll get me sooner or later, then he laughs and hangs up.'

Gerhardt poured himself more wine, picked the glass up, set it down, sighed and looked over the low white wall at the sun's dying rays.

'I started worrying about that call,' he said. 'It seemed an

odd way to approach a scientist. I also wondered how ACASS, a European-based commercial company, could know about the problems we were having in our top-secret establishments. So, I called ACASS. I rang their personnel manager. He said he hadn't heard about me, that he hadn't planned to offer me a job, that they didn't have a Whitmore on their staff and that I'd just had my leg pulled.'

Gerhardt picked up his glass, sipped some wine and then shrugged, set the glass back on the table and started drumming his fingers.

'I couldn't forget that guy,' he said. 'I wondered who he might be. If he knew about my problems, he either worked right there with me or had a friend planted in NORAD, passing back information. I told this to the FBI. They ran a check and came up with nothing. They thought it might be a practical joke - a silly and dangerous practical joke - and they told me to keep my eyes on my own staff and then report my suspicions. I just couldn't accept that None of my staff are that dumb. I then thought of what that guy had said - that he would get me sooner or later - and I couldn't shake that statement from my head, and my nightmares increased.'

'Do you mean nightmares literally?'

'I mean a nightmare is a nightmare is a nightmare - and that's what I was having.' Gerhardt sat forward in his chair, his face ghostly in the yellow light, the lanterns growing brighter in the falling darkness, the restaurant filling. 'What happened next was very strange,' he said. 'First, my wife's at home on her own one day when she hears a knock on the door. She opens it to find these three guys on the porch, all dressed in dark suits, businesslike, all extremely polite. These guys then start taking turns at asking my wife various questions - Is she the wife of Professor Gerhardt? Is Professor Gerhardt at home? When would be the best time to come and see him? - and so on and so forth. My wife is unnerved. She asks the men who they are. They say they're from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, but that's all they can tell her. Then my wife gets angry and demands to know what

they're after. The men just nod politely, back away to a wait-ing limousine, climb in and then drive off down the street... My wife tells me about all this and I start wondering what's going on. I have a friend in the FBI, he's a hundred percent loyal, so I ring him and ask him to check it out and he tells me he will. He rings me back the next day. He says the CIA are worried about the foul-ups in NORAD, but that neither they, nor the Federal Bureau of Investigation, sent men around to my house. This turns out to be true. We get a visit from the FBI. They spend a couple of hours grilling my wife, trying to find out who those men were...'

Darkness had fallen. The stars were glittering like diamonds. The restaurant was nearly full, the clientele elegantly dressed, and the lanterns glowed green, blue and yellow on blond hair and bronzed shoulders.

That was the first thing,' Gerhardt said. 'It wasn't to be the last... Three days later I get a phone call. It's Mr Whitmore again. He asks me if I'm willing to reconsider his previous offer. I don't mention ringing ACASS. I'm too confused to think about it I ask him if he knows about the men who dropped in on my wife. The bastard just laughs. I demand to know who he is. He replies that hell get me pretty soon, and then he laughs and hangs up ... The next night it's even worse. I'm on my way home from work. The car suddenly cuts out, its headlights go off, and I'm stranded in the middle of the desert wondering what the hell's happened. Then I see three men. They're walking along the road toward me. It's so dark I can't make out what they look like, but they're definitely moving. I look beyond them and see nothing. I'm trying to work out where they came from. They come closer and they're wearing coveralls, but I can't see their faces. Then I get frightened. I suddenly start to panic. I try to start the car and nothing happens and I just don't believe it I look at the men again. They're very close to the car. I look behind me and see another car coming out of the distance. There's a sudden strange noise. I turn back to the front The men are gone and then the other car passes and my own car starts up

again... I didn't touch the ignition. I didn't touch a damned thing. The car just started and I put my foot down and then drove home like crazy.'
Gerhardt sat back in his seat The shadows fell across his face. Epstein and Stanford stared at him, neither saying a word. The darkness was now complete. The stars glittered in lonely splendor. The restaurant was noisier, a steel band played calypso, and the lanterns glowed green, blue and yellow on the flushed, happy faces.
'I was frightened,' Gerhardt said. 'I still can't forget that night. Shortly after, the nightmares began - one nightmare each week. That's how they came. They were as regular as clockwork. Every Wednesday, the same night every week, I would have this same nightmare. The car broke down on a Wednesday. Every Wednesday I'd relive that. The dream would always end just as the men were about to reach me, and my wife would have to shake me awake to cut short my screaming.'
Gerhardt shrugged and glanced around him, his face bathed in the yellow light, a gleaming white arch beyond his head, the black sea beyond that.
That's why I came here alone,' he said. 'I just had to get away. I was hoping that if I came here I'd relax and the nightmares would stop.'
'But they didn't,' Epstein said.
'No,' Gerhardt said. They suddenly started coming every night and then something else happened.'
'Three days ago?'
'That's right.'
'That was Wednesday.'
'That's right. It happened at midnight on Wednesday and it scared the shit out of me.'
Stanford glanced over the wall, looking down on the swim-ming pool, saw the water reflecting the string of lanterns that were strung up around it. The bar down there was closed. There was only one person in the pool. It was a girl in a red bikini, swimming slowly up and down, her long blonde hair

trailing out behind her like ribbons of gold. Stanford turned back to Gerhardt He was leaning across the table. His green eyes were slightly hazed in the yellow light that glowed out of the lantern.
'I couldn't sleep that night. I was just lying on top of the bed. It was hot and the room was pretty bright because of the moonlight. Then the moonlight disappeared. It just seemed to blink out The room was plunged into darkness and I looked through the window and I couldn't see a star in the sky. That sky was pitch-black. I couldn't see a thing out there I couldn't see the walls of the room, and then it suddenly went cold. Then the fear came. I remembered the nightmare. The fear increased and I tried to sit up, but I just couldn't move. That really terrified me. I was completely paralyzed. I tried to scream, but I couldn't make a sound and I seemed to be freezing. Then there was a sudden light. It poured in from the balcony. The doors opened and two figures came in and walked straight to the bed. I couldn't see them very well. They were silhouetted in the blinding light They were wearing one-piece suits, were no taller than five feet, and their heads were tilted toward me, looking at me, neither saying a word. I just lay there, paralyzed. I'd never known such fear before. I just lay there and watched them as they walked up to the bed, as one started to lean over toward me, his right hand reaching out for me. He pressed something against my neck. It was cold and then it burned. I tried to scream, but I couldn't make a sound, and then the pain went away. I stared up at the two men. I couldn't think through my fear. Both men made a little bow, a sort of curtsy, and then they walked from the room. "Saturday," I thought I thought one of them said, "Saturday." I don't think they said anything at all, but that word filled my head. Then they were gone. There was a strange vibrating sound. The light from the balcony blinked out and the moonlight returned. I remember the moonlight. I remember wanting to sit up. I fell asleep and I didn't have dreams and I awakened refreshed. Then I went to the mirror. I examined myself. There was an ugly red scar on my neck where that

man had placed something. That scar has gone already. Maybe it was never really there. But I don't feel any fear anymore... I feel a strange, calm elation.'
Stanford looked at Gerhardt's eyes, thought of the girl on the porch, shivered and then turned away and looked down at the swimming pool. The blue water reflected the lanterns. The golden girl had disappeared. The pool was a rectangle of light in a vast, sweeping darkness. Stanford turned to glance at Epstein. The old man scratched his beard. Stanford returned his gaze to Gerhardt, saw the green eyes in yellow light, and he thought of the girl on the porch and felt the mystery deepening.
'This is Saturday,' Stanford said.
'That's right, Dr Stanford. This is Saturday and I'm talking to you and I don't feel a thing.'
'Anything else?' Epstein asked.
'Yes, there's something else. I think that something's going to happen tonight, and I think it concerns you.'
Epstein scratched his beard, glanced thoughtfully around him, saw the diners at the tables, the couples dancing on the floor, the silk shirts and snap brims of the Trinidadian band members, the colored lanterns swaying in the breeze that trickled through the large restaurant
'Why call us? he asked. There must be more than that.'
'There is,' Gerhardt said. There's something else... and it's right up your street.' He leaned further across the table, his chin propped up in his hands, his green eyes diffused in yellow light the gleaming white arch behind him. There's a Limey film crew here,' he said. They're making a movie about Captain Cook. Now the morning after the incident I was talking to their stills photographer, a young guy who was looking pretty stunned. He knew I worked for the government, that I was some kind of scientist so he thought I was the best man to talk to. Apparently, the night before - about the same time I was having my little experience in my room - he had been down on the beach trying to take some low-speed shots in the moonlight. He was taking some pictures of the movie's

replica of the Endeavour and he managed to shoot one roll in color. Now, the next morning, when he developed that film in his room, he was startled to see what appeared to be a very large, blurred, milky-white, disc-shaped object hovering in the night sky above the boat What really stunned him about this was his conviction that at no time during the shooting of those pictures had he seen anything but stars in that sky. He was absolutely convinced of this. He was willing to swear to it. And yet that disc was in nine of his thirty-six photos, a little higher up in each single picture, finally cut off by the top of the frame in the very last one.'

Stanford looked over the wall, saw the dark sea and sky, the stars glittering above the gliding moon, a few clouds drifting silently. He then looked at Gerhardt's eyes, thought of the girl on the porch, remembered the lights in the sky and felt a chill passing through him.

'Any estimation of size?' Epstein asked.

'Pretty rough,' Gerhardt said. 'Judging by the land behind it, and by the boat just below it, we both thought it was at least a hundred feet wide - but we couldn't be sure of that.'

'What was the duration between each of the pictures?'

'I've no idea.'

'Anything else on the photographs?'

'No. There was just a sort of glowing around the disc. The disc itself was quite blurred.'

Stanford knew what was coming. He looked directly at Epstein. The restaurant behind Epstein was crowded and romantically lit. The lanterns glowed with different colors, candles flickered on all the tables, and the musicians on the stage were very excited, sweating over their instruments. The whole scene was enchanting, was too good to be true, and Stanford turned his gaze back toward Epstein, knowing what he would say.

'We'll have to stay,' Epstein said. 'I think we should hang around for a while. I seriously doubt that anything else will happen, but we can't be too sure of that I also want to talk to that photographer. I want copies of all his photographs. I want

the photographer to take me down to the beach and show me just where it happened. I guess we'll just have to stay.'
Gerhardt slumped into his chair, spread his hands and shook his head, then leaned forward again and looked right at Epstein, his green eyes very bright.
'That's the whole point,' he said quietly. The photographer's vanished.'
The rain started just before midnight, splashing in large drops on the verandah outside Stanford's room and making him open his eyes. There was a distant clap of thunder. The verandah doors rattled. Stanford cursed and glanced around the silent room and saw the white walls in darkness.
The thunder rumbled again. The rain fell more heavily. The doors rattled and Stanford stared at them, feeling strangely uneasy. The doors were still closed. The shutters revealed no moonlight The thunder rumbled and the doors shook and rattled, and the rain poured down heavily. Stanford thought he heard the sea, a muffled noise far below, the waves rushing in and washing over the rocks and then pouring back out again. It was an unexpected sound; he hadn't anticipated such weather. Stanford closed his eyes and tried to fall asleep and thought again of the girl.
Stanford groaned aloud. He opened his eyes and saw the ceiling. There was a wooden fan spinning above his bed, blowing cool air upon him. He heard the rain on the verandah, falling very heavily now. The thunder rumbled and the double doors rattled as if being pushed open. Stanford felt strangely nervous, unreal, disorientated, trying to sleep and thinking often of the girl... and of Gerhardt's green eyes.
'Goddammit,' he muttered.
He closed his eyes and saw the girl. Her luminous eyes drew him in. He saw the thumb between her lips, the breasts thrusting against her dress, the triangle of her thighs and shadowed crotch, her belly pressed to the windowsill. Stanford felt himself hardening. He reached down and touched himself. He saw Gerhardt's green eyes, filled with

fear and strange elation, and he cursed and sat up on the bed and shook his head in despair.
The room was very dark. No moonlight came through the shutters. Stanford wondered what was happening, thought of Gerhardt's fearful calm, then thought of the girl on the porch and of her empty, revealing eyes. She and Gerhardt had something in common: an unnatural calm, a sheltered secret; they had both seemed like people not quite real couched in awed expectation. What had they both experienced? What dreams did their eyes conceal? Stanford sat up very straight and gazed around him, seeing white walls in darkness.
He suddenly felt frightened. He hadn't felt that before. The thunder rumbled and the double doors rattled as if being pushed open. Stanford shook his head disgustedly, rubbed his face, glanced around him, then reached out and switched on the light and sat back with a sigh.
Then he heard the footsteps. They were coming toward the door. He sat up as if he had been stung, and just looked straight ahead. The footsteps stopped outside the door. He felt his throat drying. He held his breath and stared straight at the door and tried to hold his fear down.
'Stanford?' Knuckles hammered on the door. 'Are you still awake?'
Stanford exhaled his breath, took it in again and sighed, leaning his head back on the pillow and felt very relieved.
'Yes, Epstein, I'm awake.'
'Can I come in?'
'Why not?'
The door opened and Epstein entered.
'I saw the light under the door,' he said. 'I couldn't sleep either.'
He was wearing an old dressing gown, a bit frayed at the edges, obviously purchased in 1955 and now much too tight for him.
'I brought a bottle,' he said.
'So I see,' Stanford said.

'I thought you could do with a drink... keep the rain from your doors.'
Stanford grinned at that, swung his legs off the bed, rubbed his eyes, and then looked at the rattling doors.
'That's some storm,' he said.
'It certainly is,' Epstein replied. 'I'm wondering if there's any connection. Where are the glasses?'
'Why a connection?'
'I can't drink without a glass.'
'You'll find a couple of glasses in the bathroom. Now why a connection?'
Epstein went into the bathroom, reappeared with two glasses, unscrewed the bottle of Scotch and poured two stiff shots.
'Here,' he said, passing one to Stanford. 'It'll settle your nerves.'
Stanford took the glass. 'What makes you think I'm nervous.'
'Aren't you?'
'Yes.'
'So am I. That's why I'm here.'
They both sipped their whiskey. Epstein sat down in a chair. Stanford remained on the edge of the bed, observing the rattling doors.
'You think there's a connection?'
'There might be,' Epstein said. That storm just blew up out of nowhere - and it's unusually violent.'
'You're thinking of Galveston.'
'We're both thinking of Galveston.'
Stanford had another sip of whiskey. 'I feel weird,' he said quietly.
The thunder rumbled again. They heard the crackling of lightning. The rain poured down on the verandah, whipped across by the groaning wind, the wind making the double doors rattle, trying to force them both open.
'How's Gerhardt?' Stanford asked. 'I think he's sleeping,' Epstein said. 'I had a look before I

came here. His room lights were off.'
'There's something strange there,' Stanford said.
'You think so? I hadn't noticed.'
'I'm thinking of his conversation. He said the experience terrified him. A minute later he said he felt nothing, then he said he felt elated. Those are contradictory words. His face was also contradictory. His eyes were very bright, very eager and excited, yet the rest of his face was tense with fear... it doesn't really add up.'
'Is that what you saw?'
'That's what I think I saw.'
'He seemed calm when he went into his bedroom.'
'He seemed unnaturally calm.'
Epstein sighed. He put his glass to his lips and sipped some whiskey, his gray eyes roaming restlessly.
'Maybe you're right,' he said. 'I did think he was a bit odd. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but that might have been it. It's a pretty strange story. He mentioned Saturday night Given the nature of his experience, he should be more frightened than he is.'
Epstein drank some more whiskey. He splashed a little on his wrist 'I would love to have seen those photos,' he said. 'I wonder where that man went'
'It's interesting,' Stanford said. 'I was thinking about it later. The photographer said he didn't see a thing when he was taking the pictures. I got to thinking of Gardner. That guy mentioned a similar case. I think he was talking about the Lubbock lights and the photographs taken then.'
'That's right,' Epstein said. 'It was definitely the Lubbock photographs. He said that what the photographer picked up was an exceptionally bright light source which had a color at the most distant red end of the spectrum. That means it was infrared - or something similar to infrared. That in turn means that the object would seem dim to the human eye, but be very bright and clear on a photograph. If s an interesting possibility. That's what we could have here. That disc could have been solid, giving off infrared light and thus would have been invisible to the photographer while coming out on his photographs.'

'Take it further,' Stanford said. 'Go beyond the known spectrum. If these objects could produce such light, if they could produce it at will, that would explain why they could materialize and disappear in the wink of an eye.'
'It's possible,' Epstein said. 'It's within the bounds of probability. The UFOs are usually described as being surrounded by glowing colors: blue, green, yellow, orange, red. Assuming that we're dealing with a metal composed of already known elements - possibly of unusual purity and radical mixtures, but known elements nevertheless - then we can also assume that what we are not dealing with is a magical metal that can actually transmit light.'
'I'll buy that'
'Thank you.' Epstein sipped his whiskey, cocked an ear to the rumbling thunder, and shivered when the double doors rattled. 'So,' he said. 'Electrical discharges of unusual strength will sometimes lead to a soft white glow, a corona, near high-voltage transmission lines. This leads one to assume that our UFO may have either some sort of negative potential that causes electrons to leak into the atmosphere surrounding it, an alternating potential that agitates gas atoms in the surrounding atmosphere to their ionization potential, or even an alternating current within its own shell which draws radiate energy from that same surrounding atmosphere.'
'A neat theory,' Stanford said. 'But that only accounts for a white glow.'
Epstein smiled. 'Very true,' he said. 'However, what we're now assuming is that the UFO's luminosity is not caused by its own unique composition, but by the natural air closely surrounding it. Let us now bear in mind the fact that if atoms are sufficiently agitated by the absorption of electromagnetic radiation, a few of their electrons will be elevated out of their normal orbits or possibly removed from the atom completely; then, as further electrons fall back into these empty spaces, a certain amount of energy will be released and radiated away as photons. That being said, I need only point out that within

the visible region a stream of such photons having the same wavelength and frequency will be seen by the human eye as an unusual, glowing color, ranging all the way from violet to red.'
'Electromagnetic radiation?'
'It fits in with our trace cases. We have often found unu-sual traces of electromagnetic radiation upon examination of reported landing sites.'
'Right. And assuming that such craft were made of some exceptionally pure composition of white metals - say aluminum, magnesium, titanium or strontium - and that this unusually pure metal was electromagnetically charged, that would account for the fact that our UFO often appears to be white or silvery up close, a dull or dark gray when viewed through atmospheric haze, or is just as often surrounded by a glowing halo of various colors.'
'Precisely. And of course, as you've just said, should it be able to create a color source beyond the known spectrum -and turn that source on and off at will - it could be invisible to the human eye, show up on normal film, and yet materialize in our visible spectrum whenever it wishes.'
Stanford shook his head and whistled. 'That would explain a lot,' he said.
'The whole subject is a mystery,' Epstein said. 'And it's driving me crazy.'
The thunder roared outside and was followed by crackling lightning. The doors rattled and Epstein glanced up, then stared down at the floor. His own words were meaningless to him. They were words to bridge the silence. He was frightened and he didn't know why, and that made him more frightened. He glanced up at Stanford. His young friend obviously felt the same. They were both very frightened at this moment, neither knowing the reason. Epstein thought of Professor Gerhardt, thought of what Stanford had said; Professor Gerhardt had changed in a subtle manner, and was hiding some secret. Epstein sighed and sipped his whiskey, heard the beating of the rain. He thought of the night at Galveston,

of the strange girl on the porch, of her smile and her ambiguous gaze, her eyes fixed on the sky. He wondered what the girl had experienced, wondered how it had affected her; wondered if Gerhardt had been affected, and if so, to what extent Epstein glanced across at Stanford. His young friend was very pale. He had never seen Stanford so tense before, and he cursed the whole mystery.

'We should go to sleep,' he said.

'I can't sleep,' Stanford said.

'What on earth do you think is going to happen?'

'I don't know,' Stanford said.

Epstein stared at the shuttered doors. They were rattling dementedly. The thunder roared and lightning flashed through the shutters and the doors shook again. Epstein suddenly shivered. The storm seemed to be unnatural. He saw Stanford rising slowly to his feet and then putting his glass down. Epstein couldn't think straight He saw Stanford turning around. The lights suddenly went out, plunging the room into darkness, then the locks on the shuttered doors snapped and the doors were blown open.

The wind howled and rushed in, sweeping Epstein from his chair, filling the air with flying sheets and pillowcases and papers and bottles. Epstein rolled across the floor, heard the sound of exploding glass. A fierce light filled the room, very warm, almost blinding, and he gasped and then rolled into Stanford and they both hit the wall. Stanford cursed and grabbed the bed. A bottle exploded above his head. The wind roared and pressed Epstein to the wall with debris flying around him. The heat. The white light He covered his eyes with his hands. The heat receded and he opened his eyes and saw a black, streaming darkness.

'Gerhardt!' Epstein screamed.

He crawled toward the front door. A spinning sheet coiled around him. He cursed and clawed wildly at the sheet while the wind roared about him. Then it hissed and receded. He looked up, disbelieving. The wind still swept the rain across the porch, but the storm seemed more natural. Lightning

flashed across the sky, briefly illuminating the room; he saw Stanford rolling away from the bed and clambering back tp his feet. 'Jesus Christ!' Stanford said. He glanced dazedly around him. Epstein clambered to his feet and shook his head and then rushed for the front door.

'It's Gerhardtr he bawled.

Epstein pulled the door open. The whole corridor was in darkness. He and Stanford both raced along the corridor till they reached Gerhardt's room. The room door was open. There was no one inside. Epstein cursed and looked wildly at Stanford and then they both started running.

The whole hotel was in darkness, doors opening and clos-ing, people shouting and hurrying back and forth, a few carrying torches. Stanford and Epstein rushed outside. The wind howled along the terraces. The coco palms were bent low and groaning, silhouetted in faint light.

'The beach!' Stanford shouted.

They both ran along the terrace, passed Reception, crossed the patio, the wind howling and sweeping the rain about them, almost bowling them sideways. Stanford reached out for Epstein. They held on to each other. They stumbled through the rain and beating wind and found themselves in the gardens. Stanford pointed a finger. '— down there! Somewhere there!' He moved forward and then pulled Epstein with him, the thunder rolling above them.

The storm was demoniac, lightning ripping through the sky. They leaned forward and headed into the wind, circling around the hotel. Torches shone and winked out. The gleaming white walls receded. They found the track at the back of the hotel and headed off toward the beach. Epstein kept his head down. The thunder roared in his ears. He glanced up as the lightning ripped through the night, a giant skeleton hand. Stanford was shouting at him. Epstein couldn't hear what he said. The wind howled beneath the roaring of the thunder and the rain poured down brutally.

'—there he is! - over there!'

Lightning flashed across the sky, briefly illuminated the

ground below. Epstein looked ahead and saw Professor Gerhardt, a white ghost in the distance. The professor was wearing his pajamas. He was not looking back. He was hurry-ing toward a grove of coco palms that led down to the beach, his pajamas flapping wildly about him, both his hands on his head. The lightning flashed across the sky. A fierce glare flared up and died. The winding track and the surrounding earth and trees materialized and then vanished.

'-what the hell is he after?'

Stanford shouted against the wind, the rain hissing and sweeping across him. The lightning lit up the night and the distant palm trees. Professor Gerhardt had vanished. Stanford cursed and raced head. The lightning passed and he saw a strange glow fanning out in the sky.

'-over there! That's the path!'

Stanford pulled Epstein forward. They stumbled toward the palm trees. The thunder roared and the lightning ripped the sky in jagged fingers of yellow flame. Then the darkness returned. They saw the glow above the sea. Stanford cursed again and Epstein groaned. The wind whiplashed the rain. The thunder roared and the wind howled through the trees and the mud made a squelching sound. It all seemed like a nightmare. The land flared up and vanished. They were blinded by lightning and lost in the darkness, and they stumbled through the howling wind and rain as if running in circles.

Then they reached the palm trees, which were quivering, pouring rain. The lightning flashed and they saw a stretch of sea, a black sheet streaked with silver. Then it was dark again. Thunder rolled above their heads. Stanford pointed to the left and stepped forward and pulled Epstein with him. They passed between the creaking trees. The branches shivered and drenched them. They left the shelter of the trees and found the path that ran down to the beach. Lightning burst suddenly and disappeared. They had not seen the beach. To their right, between them and the beach, was a high bank of earth.

'—we're going down! Watch your step!'
The steep track was running mud. They both slipped and tripped on stones. The track curved to the right, broadened out and then narrowed, climbed a little and then plunged on down and started leveling out again. The thunder rumbled above them, the wind howled and then receded, the rain lashed them in a final bout of rage and then suddenly eased.
Epstein looked up, surprised, saw a dark cloud drifting by, saw the stars and then gazed down sloping earth and saw a white stretch of beach. Epstein couldn't believe it. There was no wind there at all. Stanford jerked on his wrist and pulled him forward and they both raced downhill.
'There he is!' Stanford hissed.
They both stopped on the instant, saw a broader expanse of beach, Professor Gerhardt hurrying across the sand, his pajamas windblown. The moonlight fell upon him, elongating his shadow; he was drenched and his hands were by his sides and he seemed very fragile. Then he stopped walking. He was near the coco palms. Another man came into view, unusually small, very slim, wearing a one-piece suit of silvery material, a strange cap on his head.
Stanford and Epstein were both stunned. They stood in silence, staring down. The banked earth limited their vision to a triangular stretch of beach, the long line of trees forming one side, the other formed by the moonlit sea. Professor Gerhardt was near the trees. The small man had stopped in front of him. Epstein blinked and felt a pressure in his head, an imperceptible vibrating. The small man stepped up to Gerhardt, his suit gleaming in the moonlight. He reached out with his left hand, touched Gerhardt on the neck, then they both walked to the right and disappeared behind the high, muddy bank.
'Jesus Christ,' Stanford said. 'Did you see that? Gerhardt didn't resist!'
They both started running again, slipping and sliding down the track, the mud squelching beneath their bare feet, the branches shivering and dripping rain. Epstein felt cold and

frightened, his head tight and vibrating. He thought he heard a very deep humming sound, but he couldn't be sure. They both stumbled down the track, passed through moonlight and shadow, gasping as the branches dripped rain, further soaking their domes. Stanford cursed and then fell, tumbled down the last of the hill. He rolled over and then climbed to his feet and they both raced to the beach.

'Oh my God!' Epstein murmured.

They both slithered to a halt. The beach was stretched out before them. It was fringed with coco palms and those trees formed a wall that stretched in a semicircle toward the sea. They both looked out at the sea, saw a seventeenth-century ship. Its huge white sails were billowing in the breeze, illuminated in white haze. The great disc was above the ship, was twice as long as the ship. It just sat there in the sky, about two hundred feet up, a dark mass in a plasmalike glow, the stars winking around it.

Stanford and Epstein just stood there. They were stunned by this vision. They saw the past and the future before their eyes and were dazed by its beauty. The white sails of the ship billowed. The great disc glowed and pulsated. The air hummed and vibrated and seemed alive with some mysterious force. Epstein rubbed his stinging eyes. Stanford shook his head in wonder. The great disc hovered over the ship and they were both bathed in silvery haze.

'It's the Endeavour,' Stanford murmured.

'What?' Epstein said.

'It's a replica of Captain Cook's ship.'

'What the hell's that above it?'

Stanford didn't reply, merely stood there, gazing up. The great disc was a dark mass in glowing light, its details obscured. The wind ruffled Stanford's hair. He glanced briefly at Epstein. They stared at one another, both speechless, wondering what they could do. The beach vibrated beneath them. They both heard the humming sound. The sound was all around them and above them and had no fixed direction. They both stared at the Endeavour. Its huge white sails billowed

out. They raised their eyes and saw the great disc above it, its glow hazing the stars.

Then Epstein remembered Gerhardt. He turned around and surveyed the beach. The sand stretched out to the curved wall of a cove at the end of the beach.

'Gerhardt must have gone there,' he said. There's no-where else they could have gone. That creature must have taken him over there. I think we better go look.'

He started running along the beach, heard Stanford run-ning behind him. The light falling on the beach wasn't moonlight it came from the hovering disc. Epstein gasped but kept running, his heart pounding uncomfortably. The sil-very haze fell across the surrounding trees and made them look artificial. Epstein heard the lapping water, a rhythmic, timeless sound. He kept running, feeling hollow and unreal, his head vibrating and tightening. He wondered what that was. He knew it came from the enormous disc. Stanford raced up to his side and then passed him and rushed on ahead. They were nearing the wall of the cove. Epstein felt a great fear. He saw a curved line of trees, a wall of stone, and then a roar split his eardrums.

The ground shook beneath him, sand swirling, sky tilting, and he felt the ground under his back and then rolled toward the trees. A fierce light swept across him. He covered his eyes with his hands. The sand hissed and then rained down upon him and his ears started ringing. Epstein cursed and smacked his forehead, blinked his eyes and looked up, saw Stanford scrambling back to his feet, bathed in light. Epstein pushed himself up, fell weakly against a tree. The tree shivered and poured rain down upon him and then he stepped forward. Stanford's eyes were very bright, looking stunned and confused. The air around him was red, blue and yellow, the colors flickering and merging.

They both looked out to sea and saw the stately Endeavour, moon-bathed in a ghostly rainbow haze, the light flickering crazily. They both looked at the disc above it. The surrounding haze had disappeared. What they saw was an

immense, silvery disc rimmed with windows and flashing lights. The windows were long and narrow, curving strips of fierce bright light, broken up by imperceptible black dots that moved backward and forward. The colored lights were below the windows, running around the enormous base, flashing from left to right, right to left, with incredible speed. The lights formed a dazzling kaleidoscope, flickering on and off brilliantly, turning the dark sea into blood and yellow lava and streaming green, changing the ship's sails into billowing rainbows, obliterating the black sky.

Stanford gasped and turned away, shook his head and stared at Epstein. His friend looked like a translucent ghost, materializing and vanishing. Then they ran between the palm trees, scrambled over the wall of earth, slithered down to the cove on the other side and saw the flat, empty sand.

'We're too late,' Stanford said.

Epstein closed his eyes and sighed, his head vibrating painfully. The humming sound was all around him and above him and it seemed to dissolve him. He opened his eyes again. The shadows rippled with numerous colors. He moved forward and saw a large sunken circle, the sand curled at its edges. Epstein looked up at the sky and saw a globe of white light. It was shooting obliquely toward the great disc, moving slowly and gracefully.

'Oh, God,' he said. They've got him.'

Then the great disc disappeared. The night was plunged into starlight. The large sails of the Endeavour were gleaming white in the moonlight. Epstein didn't remove his gaze. His tight head was still vibrating. He kept looking and he saw an enormous black patch where the stars should have been. Then he saw two squares of light. They were three hundred feet apart. They were windows of vivid white light floating there in the sky. Then one of them disappeared. The glowing orb flew toward its partner. The glowing orb became a black silhouette in that square frame of blazing light. Then the light went out, became a black hole in the sky, and the great disc materialized, filled up the black hole, and the colored lights

flickered on and off and then became a white haze.
The humming grew louder. The beach vibrated with some violence. The great disc became a dark mass within a pulsat-ing glow, rising vertically toward the drifting clouds with serene, stately grace. The ship below it was untouched. Its sails billowed in the breeze. The white glow illuminated the blue sea and hazed the stars nearest to it The great disc con-tinued rising. There was a faint humming sound. The ground vibrated and then settled down and the silence was total. The great disc rose and shrank, eventually became a glowing ball; it reached the clouds and then it suddenly winked out and the stars reappeared.
Stanford and Epstein were speechless. They stayed close to the lapping water. They stood there a long time, looking up, breathing deeply, bathed in the warm, silky moonlight, the stars sweeping over them. The sea washed on the sand, splashing lazily around their feet They lowered their eyes and looked across at the Endeavour. There was no one on the boat. Its rigging shook in the breeze. Its wooden hull was rolling from side to side, the boards creaking in protest Stanford and Epstein stared at it The white sails were bathed in moonlight They looked up and saw the stars in the sky, and then they both walked away.

'Okay, Stanford, I want you to understand one thing: I'm going to give you the information, I won't ever do it again, and if you breathe my name even in your sleep I'll have your head in a doggie bag. It's a very dangerous subject. I like to think it's all behind me. So when we're finished, when you walk out that door, make sure it's the last time.'

O'Hara looked very prosperous, his tie straight, his cuff links gleaming, his face lined to match the graying of his hair, his blue eyes as cold as ice. He was framed by a plate glass window, his backdrop Manhattan, and his broad frame seemed strangely out of place in the neat, paneled office.

'Okay,' Stanford said, 'that's fine with me. First the Robertson Panel.'

'According to my notes the panel met from 14 January, 1953 to 17 January, in Washington, DC, and the meeting at the time was top secret The seriousness with which the subject was to be treated may best be illustrated not only by the credentials of the men involved - all specialists in the physical sciences, with particular emphasis on atomic research and advanced weaponry - but also by the fact that the group's written verdict was to be given to the National Security Council and then - if the decision was that the UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin - to the President himself.'

'That sounds like a heavy number,' Stanford said.

'It was,' O'Hara said. 'And what later intrigued me about

the panel was that - at least according to the concrete evidence that I was seeing and hearing - the extraterrestrial hypothesis was in fact a grim reality and that the existence of the UFOs had been proven. Nevertheless, and pretty much to my amazement, the panel rejected the findings.'

'What findings?'

'I'll just give you a few,' O'Hara said. They'll be enough to convince you.' He opened a box on the desk, took out a fat cigar, clipped the end off and put a match to it, then sat back and smoked. Tor the first two days Ruppelt reviewed the Blue Book findings for the scientists, and what he said was pretty damned impressive. First, he pointed out that Blue Book received reports of only ten percent of the UFO sightings made in the United States, which meant that in five and a half years about forty-four thousand sightings had been made. He then broke the sightings down into the percentage that was composed of balloons, aircraft, astronomical bodies, and other misinterpretations such as birds, blowing paper, noctilucent clouds, temperature inversions, reflections and so forth, and pointed out that this still left four hundred and twenty-nine as definite "unknowns." Of those unknowns, it was clear that the most reported shape was elliptical, that the most often reported color was white or metallic, that the same number of UFOs was reported as being seen in daylight as at night, and that the direction of travel equally covered the sixteen cardinal points of the compass. Seventy percent of those unknowns had been seen visually from the air - in other words, by experienced pilots and navigators; twelve percent had been seen visually from the ground, ten percent had been picked up by airborne and ground radar, and eight percent were combination visual-radar sightings. Ruppelt then disturbed us all greatly by confirming that the UFOs were frequently reported from areas around places like our atomic energy installations, harbors and manufacturing areas. Finally, he begged us to take note of the fact that according to radar readings there were recorded flight speeds of up to fifty thousand miles an hour.'

'You were right,' Stanford said. 'It sounds impressive.'
'Indeed,' O'Hara said, puffing smoke. 'And even more impressive was the fact that Ruppelt and Major Dewey Fournet had completed an analysis of the motions of the reported unknowns as a means of determining if they were intelligently controlled. Regarding this, Major Fournet who had an exemplary reputation, told us of how - by eliminating every possibility of balloons, airplanes, astronomical bodies and so forth from the hundreds of reports studied, and by then analyzing the motions of the UFOs in the remaining unknown category - his study group had been forced to conclude that the UFOs were, in the words of the group report: "intelligently controlled by persons with brains equal to or far surpassing ours." The next step in the study, the major explained, had been to find out where those beings came from; and, since it would seem unlikely that their machines could have been built in secret, the answer was that the beings were from outer space. Surprised, Dr Stanford? So were we... And we were even more surprised when, the next morning, we were shown four strips of movie film that had been assessed as falling into the definite unknown category.'
'You mean the cinetheodolite movies taken by scientists at the White Sands Proving Ground in 1950?'
'Bright boy. Those plus the Montana Movie taken on 15 August, 1950, by the manager of the Great Falls baseball team and the Tremonton Movie, taken on 2 July, 1952, by Navy Chief Photographer, Warrant Officer Delbert C. Newhouse.'
'And?'
'The Montana Movie showed two large, bright lights flying across the blue sky in an echelon formation; the lights didn't show any detail, but they certainly appeared to be large, circular objects. The Tremonton Movie showed about a dozen shiny, disclike objects fading in and out constantly, performing rather extraordinary aerial maneuvers, and dart-ing in and out and circling one another in a cloudless blue sky. Any possibility that the objects might have been astronomical phenomena was dispelled when the film clearly

showed them heading in the same tight cluster toward the western horizon, and, more specifically, when one of them left the main group and shot off to the east.'

'Anything more positive than that?'

'Yep. The Montana Movie had been subjected to thou-sands of hours of analysis in the Air Force lab at Wright Field, and their analysis proved conclusively that the objects weren't birds, balloons, airplanes, meteors or reflections - in short, they were unknowns. As for the Tremonton Movie, it had been studied for two solid months by the Navy lab in Anacostia, Maryland, and their conclusion was that the unidentifieds were not birds or airplanes, were probably traveling at several thousands of miles an hour, and were judging by their extraordinary maneuvers, intelligently controlled vehicles.'

Stanford gave a low whistle and sat forward in his seat, thinking back on what had happened in St Thomas and of how it had affected him. It had left him in a state of wonder, overawed and disbelieving, but now, as he listened to O'Hara talking, he began to accept it.

'That was the evidence,' O'Hara said, 'and it seemed pretty damned conclusive, but the Robertson Panel still managed to reject it The panel members duly spent two days going over the evidence, but the results of their ponderings were preordained. Guided by myself and my fellow CIA members, the panel simply concluded in their report that the evidence was not substantial, that the continued emphasis on the reporting of the phenomenon was resulting in, quote, "a threat to the orderly functioning of the protective organs of the body politic," and that the reports clogged military channels, could possibly precipitate mass hysteria, and might encourage defense personnel to misidentify or ignore actual enemy aircraft. In short the real problem wasn't the UFOs - it was the UFO reports.'

Stanford stared past O'Hara, saw the skyscrapers of Manhattan, raised his eyes and surveyed the blue sky and the drifting white clouds. The sky revealed nothing. Stanford

sighed and dropped his gaze. His friend O'Hara, a private detective, once a CIA officer, was sitting forward with his elbows on the desk, blowing smoke through his nostrils. 'So,' he said, 'we made some recommendations. First, we recommended that the two major private UFO organizations - the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization and the Civil-ian Saucer Intelligence - be watched because of what we described as their "potentially great influence on mass think-ing" in the event of widespread sightings. Regarding this, I believe we also inserted the sentence: "The apparent irresponsibility and the possible use of such groups for subversive purposes should be kept in mind." Next, we recommended that national security agencies take immediate steps to strip the UFO phenomenon of its importance and eliminate the aura of mystery it had acquired, the means being a public education program. Finally, we outlined a program of public education with two purposes: training and debunking. The former would help people identify known objects and thus reduce the mass of reports caused by misidentification; the latter would reduce public interest in UFOs and thereby decrease or eliminate UFO reports.'

'The liberal conscience,' Stanford said, 'would call that brainwashing.'

'The liberal conscience,' O'Hara said, 'would be right' He smiled coolly at Stanford, leaned back in his chair, gazed up at the ceiling and kept talking, still puffing blue smoke. 'As a means of pursuing this education - or in the vernacular, brainwashing - program, the panel suggested that the government hire psychologists familiar with mass psychology, military training film companies, Walt Disney Productions and personalities such as Arthur Godfrey to subtly convey this new thinking to the masses. They also - contrary to what we were later to tell Ruppelt - decided not to declassify the sighting reports, and implied - again, contrary to what we were to tell poor Ruppelt - that the Air Force should further tighten secu-rity and continue to deny nonmilitary personnel access to UFO files. In other words: Kill it.'

Stanford sat back in his chair, thinking of Gardner in Albuquerque, realizing that Gardner, though a drunkard, had been telling the truth.

'I think it was shortly after that,' O'Hara continued, 'that I began to wonder what the hell was going on. As you can judge for yourself, the whole point of the Robertson Panel was to enable the Air Force to state for the next decade or so that an impartial scientific body had examined the UFO data and found no evidence of anything unusual in the skies. While this was an obvious distortion of fact, it did mean that the Air Force could now avoid discussing the nature of the objects and instead concentrate on the public relations campaign to eliminate the UFO reports totally. And given the nature of the panel's recommendations, there's no doubt that they were directly responsible for the policy of ridicule and denial that has inhibited an effective study of the phenomenon ever since, and that has had - to put it mildly - some unfortunate effects on the lives of a lot of perfectly responsible civilians and Armed Forces personnel.'

'You mean, humiliation of UFO witnesses was fairly standard.'

'More or less,' O'Hara said. 'Anyway, given our brief about national security - we were still fighting the war in Korea, the Soviets had exploded their first hydrogen bomb, and the Cold War was still at its chilliest phase - I could understand the need for such a charade. However, what I couldn't figure out was why our superiors wanted us to lie to Ruppelt - wanted us to tell him that Blue Book was being expanded instead of run down, that UFO info was going to be freed of restrictions instead of being further restricted - and why they wanted him to believe that he could carry on with his plans when in fact we intended stopping him in his tracks.'

'Did you ever find out?'

'I'm not sure, but let me tell you what happened. As you've already indicated, you know what happened to Project Blue Book: it was practically wiped out Also, by that time, the recommendations of the Robertson Panel were in full swing -

and the most credible UFO witnesses, namely aircrews and radar operatives, had been successfully frightened out of submitting their UFO reports. Worse was to come. In August 1953 - the same month Ruppelt left the Air Force - the Pentagon issued Air Force Regulation 200-2. AFR 200-2 was drafted purely as a public relations weapon in that it prohibited the release of any information about a sighting to the public or media, except when the sighting was positively identified as natural phenomena. In addition, while AFR 200-5, the previous regulation, had stated that sightings should not be classified higher than restricted, the new regulation insured that all sightings would be classified as restricted. Then, much worse, in December 1953 the Joint Chiefs of Staff followed 200-2 with Joint Army-Navy-Air Force Publication 146, and this made the releasing of any information to the public a crime under the Espionage Act, punishable by a one to ten year prison term or a fine of ten thousand dollars. And the most ominous aspect of JANAP 146 was that it applied to anyone who knew it existed - including commercial airline pilots. Needless to say that regulation effectively put a stop to the flow of information to the public. To all intents and purposes, and contrary to public Air Force pronouncements, the UFO project had been plunged into secrecy.'

Stanford thought of Albuquerque, of what Gardner had told him, of himself at the top of the stairs, dazed by incomprehension. That feeling was with him now, a growing fear that had no shape, and he began to understand that the facts were never what they appeared to be. He stared at O'Hara, his old CIA friend, wondering how such men managed to flourish without guilt or pain.

'Wait a minute,' Stanford said. 'I'm getting a bit confused. You say that the CIA virtually directed the Robertson Panel, but that their main concern was national security - not a belief in the UFOs.'

'No,' O'Hara said. 'I'm saying that our superiors hoodwinked us.'

'I don't understand,' Stanford said.

'listen,' O'Hara said. 'According to our superiors, the rea-son they wanted the interest in UFOs killed off was that the UFO reports were a threat to national security: first, because a deliberately confused American public might think attack-ing enemy bombers were merely UFOs; second, because a foreign power could exploit the UFO craze to make the pub-lic doubt official Air Force statements about UFOs and thereby undermine public confidence in the military; and, third, because in terms of psychological warfare, particularly in 1952, the communications lines of the whole country could be saturated by a few hundred phone calls, and such calls -which always came after a rush of UFO sightings - were putting the defense network in jeopardy. Those were the reasons they gave us for the need for suppression.'

'But you thought it was bullshit,' Stanford said.

'Right,' O'Hara said. 'If national security was the issue, then the suppression had a certain amount of logic. However, if national security was the only concern, why were we humiliating so many UFO witnesses and harassing our own ground and air crews into keeping their mouths shut? The only logical explanation was that the higher echelons of the Air Force were more concerned about the phenomenon than they were willing to admit, that they possibly knew more about it than they were willing to admit, and that for reasons of their own they were actively discouraging their most competent personnel from investigating the subject.'

'Ruppelt seems to be the perfect example of all this.'

'Right,' O'Hara said. 'It seemed to me that the more proven unknowns Ruppelt came up with - and most of his unknowns were unknowns - the more nervous the Air Force became. I first realized this when the CIA told us to lie to him about the recommendations of the Robertson Panel. I was even more convinced when they neglected to replace him when he went to Denver, and when they stripped Blue Book of its staff in his absence.'

'Still,' Stanford said, 'that doesn't necessarily mean too much. As you said, if they were genuinely worried about the

sheer number of UFO reports clogging their communications network, they would have wanted those reports reduced to the minimum.'

'Let me give you a better example,' O'Hara said. 'Shortly after scaring the hell out of the Air Force with the evidence presented to the Robertson Panel, Ruppelt came up with a couple of cases that virtually confirmed that the UFOs were intelligently controlled. The first was a sighting that occurred over Haneda AFB, now Tokyo International Airport, in Japan. This UFO was first observed by two control tower operators who saw a large, brilliant light in the northeast over Tokyo Bay. The light, which was moving, was observed through seven by fifty binoculars; it had a constant brilliance, was circular in shape, and appeared to be the upper portion of a large, round, dark shape which was about four times the diameter of the light itself. Then, when it moved, the tower operators saw a second and dimmer light on the lower edge of the dark, shadowy portion. This particular UFO was simultaneously tracked by radar and observed by intelligence officers as it flew back and forth across the central part of Tokyo Bay, sometimes almost hovering, then abruptly accelerating to three hundred miles an hour. It was pursued by, and deliberately eluded, an F-94 plane.'

'Deliberately?'

'So it seemed,' O'Hara said. 'That sighting was thoroughly investigated by the FEAF intelligence officers in the area, then later investigated just as thoroughly by Ruppelt Both agreed that it was definitely not a weather target, that it definitely wasn't a star, that both visual and radar lock-ons had proved that it was solid and moving. They also proved that each turn the UFO made was constant, and that the straight "legs" between the turns were about the same length. Indeed, Ruppelt later wrote that the sketch of the UFO's flight path reminded him very much of the crisscross patterns he used to fly during World War Two - and that the only time the UFO had seriously deviated from this pattern was when the F-94 tried to pursue it.'

'And the second sighting?'
The second sighting was one that had occurred on the night of 29 July, 1952, when an F-94 attempted to intercept a UFO over eastern Michigan. This sighting was even more interesting in that there was a definite reason for every move the UFO made. First, it made a one hundred and eighty-degree turn because the F-94 was closing in on it. Next, it alternately increased and decreased its speed - but only in-creased its speed when the airplane was closing in on it, and always slowed down when it was just out of range of the airplane's radar. Then, adding weight to his argument that such movements could not have been random, Ruppelt submitted a third report - the one he called the best unknown ever - of an F-84 pilot who chased a visually and radar located object right across Rapid City. According to the pilot and the radar operatives, that target accelerated and decelerated so that there was always precisely three miles between it and the F-84 - and it kept this up until the F-84 ran out of fuel. Later, both the pilot and the tower controller told Ruppelt that the UFO seemed to have some kind of automatic warning radar linked to its power supply.'
'Okay,' Stanford said, 'let's assume the UFOs were intelligently controlled... but what's this got to do with the CIA?'
Think,' O'Hara said, studying his dwindling cigar, forming his lips into an O and blowing smoke, his blue eyes clear and mocking. 'If, as the CIA claimed, national security was their only concern, such sightings should have scared the hell out of them and made them want to know more. That, however, was not remotely the case. Instead of encouraging Ruppelt or utilizing his information, they went all out to stop him in his tracks - and they put a watch on him.'
'So,' Stanford said. 'What you're saying is that they claimed to be concerned with national defense, yet they didn't want people watching the skies - a contradiction in terms.'
'That's right,' O'Hara said.
Stanford signed and rubbed his eyes, feeling weary and a bit unnerved, convinced that he was getting out of his depth

and approaching a danger zone. The contradictions were now obvious: national security did not explain them. It was clear that the Pentagon, the CIA and the Air Force were more concerned with the UFOs than they admitted and were still trying to hide that fact He sighed again and studied O'Hara. His old friend's blue eyes were clear. Stanford shook his head wea-rily from side to side and wondered if he was dreaming.

'Keep going,' he said.

'Okay,' O'Hara said. 'I'll stick to Ruppelt for the moment. Because what Ruppelt did, and how the Air Force reacted, are representative of the whole shady story and might tell you a lot' He stubbed his cigar out, put his hands behind his head, then leaned very far back in the chair, the sun flashing around him. 'I had in fact been watching Ruppelt from about August the previous year, 1952 - and the order to report his movements simply intrigued me. Bear in mind that at that particular time there was a sudden rash of UFO sightings. Now, those sightings were mainly the build up to the beginning of September, when every morning for about two weeks there were half a dozen or so new reports from the southeastern United States, notably Georgia and Alabama, a lot of them from the vicinity of the new, top secret Atomic Energy Commission complex at Savannah River, many more over Brookley Air Force Base near Mobile, Alabama. That same month the NATO naval forces were holding maneuvers off the coast of Europe, namely, Operation Mainbrace. On 20 September, an American newspaper reporter and a group of pilots and flight deck crew on board an aircraft carrier in the North Sea watched a perfectly clear, silvery sphere moving across the sky just behind the fleet of ships. The object was large and appeared to be moving rapidly, and the reporter shot several pictures of it. The pictures were developed straight away and immediately studied by the intelligence officers aboard the carrier. The pictures were excellent and the object looked like a large balloon - but no balloons were in the area and an analysis of all the photos proved conclusively that the object had been moving very fast Then, the

following day, six Limey Air Force pilots flying a formation of jet fighters over the North Sea saw a shiny, spherical object coming from the direction of the NATO fleet. They took after it and lost it, but when they neared their base one of the pilots noticed that the UFO was following them. He turned back toward it, but the UFO also turned away and outdistanced the RAF plane in a matter of minutes. Finally, on the third day, a UFO was observed near the fleet, this time over the Topcliffe Aerodrome in England. A pilot in a British jet was sent in pursuit and managed to get close enough to describe the object as "round, silvery and white" and to note that it "seemed to rotate around its vertical axis and sort of wobble." Then when he tried to get closer, the UFO shot off...'

O'Hara sat forward again, removed his hands from behind his head, propped his elbows firmly on the desk and cupped his chin in his hands.

'Naturally those sightings disturbed NATO,' he said. 'In fact, according to an RAF intelligence officer in the Pentagon, it was the Mainbrace sightings that finally forced the RAF to recognize the UFO phenomenon - a fact they have denied to this day. However, Ruppelt investigated the case and assessed all those sightings as unknowns. Unfortunately, this encouraged him to think that he could now pin down the UFOs for good... and it was this very enthusiasm that led to the destruction of the most important system ever devised for UFO research.'

'Don't look so pleased,' Stanford said. 'Just tell me what happened.'

'Okay. For a long time Ruppelt and Brigadier General Garland, then chief at ATIC, had been looking for a way of getting concrete information about the UFOs. What they finally came up with was a plan for visual spotting stations to be established all over northern New Mexico - an area that had consistently produced more UFO reports than any other area in America. The visual spotting stations would be equipped with specially designed sighting devices, all of which would be linked with an instantaneous interphone system: any two

stations could then track the same object and, from their sepa-rate readings, compute the UFO's altitude and speed. Also at each visual spotting station would be instruments to measure the passage of any body that was giving off heat, any disturbance in the earth's magnetic field, and any increase in nuclear radiation at the time of the sighting.'
'I never even heard of it,' Stanford said, 'but it sounds pretty impressive.'
'Well, it was,' O'Hara said. 'In fact, it was the first time that a proper, scientific system had been designed and submitted to the Air Force. It was virtually foolproof and if it had been adopted, we could have tracked, photographed and measured UFOs with unprecedented precision.'
'And you're going to say the Air Force killed it off.'
'Right.'
'Why?'
O'Hara shrugged. 'I'm not sure. All I know is that in December of that year - when Ruppelt's plans went to Washington for approval - the US Navy was going to shoot the first H-bomb during Project Ivy, and some folks in the Pentagon, remembering the unidentifieds over Operation Mainbrace, directed Ruppelt to fly out to the test area and organize a UFO reporting team.' O'Hara grinned laconically, spread his hands out in the air, then gently kicked his chair back again, his legs lazily outstretched. 'As it is with the CIA, so it is with the Pentagon: there are wheels within wheels and somewhere there's a wheel you can't reach. What I mean by this is that the order for Ruppelt to fly to Project Ivy came down in November, but by December his plans for the visual radar sighting network were received in Washington... and shortly after that I received a phone call from the Pentagon, suggesting that I axe Ruppelt's trip - which naturally I did.'
'So what you're suggesting is that certain people in the Pentagon are genuinely concerned with the UFOs, but that others, for some unknown reason, don't want the UFOs to be investigated.'
'What a bright boy you are.'

Stanford stared past O'Hara's head and saw the tops of the skyscrapers, the sun a silvery ball in the clear sky, the white clouds drifting languidly.
'So,' he said eventually, 'were UFOs seen over Project Ivy during the shooting of the H-bomb?'
'I don't know,' O'Hara said, 'and neither did Ruppelt. Shortly after that came the Robertson Report and its consequences, and a few months later, in August '53, Ruppelt, doubtless feeling bitter, left the Air Force for good. By the end of that year, Project Blue Book had a mere three staff members left, its investigating authority had been handed over to the 4602d - the inexperienced Air Intelligence Service Squadron - and most of its projects had been strangled systematically through a reduction of funds. Ruppelt, Fournet and Chops were no longer involved, and General Garland, once a strong Ruppelt supporter, never again raised his voice in defense of any UFO investigation.'
Stanford sat there, saying nothing, not knowing what to say. He thought of Ruppelt and Gardner, of the deception and suppression, then he thought of Irving Jacobs in the desert and wondered what it all meant The Air Force was covering up. The Pentagon was involved. The whole of Washington was concerned with the UFOs, but didn't want them investigated. Stanford didn't understand it Nothing seemed to add up. The mystery deepened and swirled there before him like a black hole in space.
'It just doesn't make sense,' he finally said. 'What was the purpose of all that?'
'I'm not sure,' O'Hara said. 'I kept asking myself that question. The only thing I came up with was the thought that maybe there was something in the UFO phenomenon - and, more intriguing, that maybe the Air Force actually knew what the UFOs were and therefore wanted to keep the lid tight on the matter.'
'That could make sense,' Stanford said. 'Why else would they set out to ridicule their own pilots and ground crew? Why else would they encourage officers like Ruppelt to in-

vestigate the matter and then, when they came up with firm evidence, harass them out of the scene?'
'Right,' O'Hara said. 'And bear in mind how the defense forces operate. The Navy, the Army and the Air Force all run research projects independently of one another - and they usually keep their secrets to themselves. Likewise, in the pentagon, there are departments so secret that even the President doesn't know what they're up to. The same could be said for the FBI and the CIA: behind the names there are numbers and those numbers can't be checked - those numbers represent the nameless men who create their own laws.'
'So,' Stanford said, 'there are always rumors.'
'Right,' O'Hara said. 'For instance, just before I left the CIA there were rumors going around that there had been actual UFO landings on Air Force bases, one at Cannon AFB, New Mexico, on 18 May, 1954, another at Deerwood Nike Base on 9 September, 1957, and a third at Blaine AFB on 12 June, 1965. Now the automatic response to such stories is to say that they couldn't be true - that such events couldn't possibly be kept secret, not only from the public, but from the vast majority of FBI, CIA and Pentagon staff.'
'Not true,' Stanford said. 'Some of our most startling scientific discoveries have been kept under wraps with incredible efficiency for as long as fifty years. Antibiotics were discovered as far back as 1910, but weren't truly applied until 1940. Likewise, nuclear energy was discovered in 1919, but not generally announced until 1965. In short, no matter how big the secret, we can make sure it stays that way.'
'Right,' O'Hara said. 'So... could the fact that UFOs have landed on at least three different Air Force bases be kept a secret for almost a decade? I think it could. I think so because the Air Force, the Navy, the Army, the CIA or the higher echelons of the Pentagon could, if not totally suppressing such a fact, reduce that fact to a mishmash of vague speculation and rumor... And a very good example of that is the renowned Flying Flapjack.' 'That,' Stanford said, 'sounds familiar.'

'It should be,' O'Hara said. The most interesting thing about the Flying Flapjack is that no one in the CIA had ever mentioned it until 1950, yet it had been designed back in 1942. The Flapjack, originally known as the Navy Flounder, was a circular aircraft being built by the US Navy during the Second World War. At that time what the Navy desperately needed was an airplane that would not require long airfields could rise almost vertically from an aircraft carrier, and could be used from any cleared area just behind frontline troops. What they came up with was a combination of helicopter and jet plane, a saucer-shaped machine powered by two piston engines and driven by twin propellers. The prototype, designed by Charles H. Zimmermann of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics and constructed by Chance-Voight, had a maximum speed of four hundred to five hundred miles an hour, could rise almost vertically, and could practically hover at thirty-five miles an hour. Apparently, because the aircraft was wingless, the lessened stability presented problems, but a later model - the one since reported to be the XF-5-U-1 - solved that problem and was rumored to be circular in shape, over a hundred feet in diameter, and with jet nozzles - which resembled the glowing windows observed on so many UFOs - arranged right around its outer rim. Further, it was built in three layers, with the central layer slightly larger than the other two; and, since the saucer's velocity and maneuvering capabilities were controlled by the power and tilt of the separate jet nozzles, there were no ailerons, rudders or other protruding surfaces.'

'A genuine flying saucer,' Stanford said.

'Right,' O'Hara said. 'Now, as I've already stated, no one in the CIA - at least no one I dealt with - knew a damned thing about that machine until early 1950 when the Air Force, in a bid to legitimize their December 1949 termination of Project Grudge, released photographs and vague technical information about the Navy Flounder and Flying Flapjack, adding in their press release that they had dropped the project back in

1942 when they had generously passed it over to the US Navy, who had more interest in it.'
'Christ,' Stanford said.
'Okay,' O'Hara said. 'Information about the Flounder and Flapjack was released to the public in April 1950 via the US News and World Report, and it touched off some interesting speculations. The first of these arose from the retrospective knowledge that the US Navy had always expressed more interest in a vertically rising aircraft than the Air Force, that it had, up to 1950, spent twice as much money as the Air Force on secret guided missile research, that their highly secret missile-research bases were located around the White Sands proving Ground - where the majority of the military UFO sightings had occurred - and that, because they were not involved officially in UFO investigations, they could conduct their own research in a secrecy unruffled by the attentions of the public or the media. The next interesting point was that the measurements taken by Navy Commander R. B. McLaughlin and his team of Navy scientists of the UFO they tracked over the White Sands Proving Ground in early 1950 corresponded very closely, except for the speed, with the details of the legendary XF-5-U-1, that those details were more or less made known to the general public through McLaughlin's published article of that year, and that the US Navy, while refusing to make any comment about the Flying Flapjack project, promptly shipped Commander McLaughlin back to sea.'
'Christ,' Stanford said.
'Okay, Stanford, let's look at what we have here. First question: Were the rumors that passed around the CIA about flying saucers having landed on at least three Air Force bases based on fact? Second question: Could it be that the same machines which either landed on, or possibly were being tested on, those Air Force bases were the same objects that were frequently being observed over the White Sands Proving Ground area? In short, do we have here a scenario which says that the so-called unidentified flying objects are just what

they appear to be - and that rather than being of extraterres-trial origin, they are in fact the products of the US Navy's secret research activities since the Second World War?'
Stanford tried to control himself. He felt a cold, hard ex-citement The facts tumbled like ball bearings in his head with confusing rapidity.
'Was anyone else involved in this?' he asked.
'I don't know,' O'Hara said. 'What I do know is that in 1954 the Canadian government announced publicly - after having examined the Project Blue Book evidence on the Lubbock sightings of 1951 - that the UFO observed over Albuquerque was exactly like a flying saucer they were then trying to construct but had since, due to lack of know-how and facilities, passed over to the US Air Force. The US Air Force naturally claimed that they'd eventually dropped this project as being unworkable.'
Stanford bent forward and put his face in his hands, rubbed his eyes and then sat up again and stared straight at O'Hara.
'This all sounds impossible,' he said.
'Impossible?' O'Hara responded. Then let's review the facts, Stanford. We have the fact that the majority of the proven unknowns are observed either over desolate countryside or over top-secret military and civilian establishments. We have the fact that crude flying saucers were once constructed by the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics, that they were one of the US Navy's research projects from at least 1942 to 1947, that similar machines were rumored to have landed on military bases around the White Sands Proving Ground area, and finally, that the Canadian government claimed to have worked on a flying saucer that was eventually passed on to the US Air Force. And last but not least, we have the fact that when a US Navy commander and his Navy scientists tracked and measured an unidentified flying object over the White Sands Proving Ground - and when that object turned out to correspond very closely to the Navy's Flying Flapjack - that Navy commander was removed from White Sands and transferred back to sea.

'Now let's look at how the Air Force reacted to the most successful UFO investigations. We had, during that time, only three scientifically sound methods of analyzing the speed and dimensions of the UFOs, and, more important, of ascertaining whether or not they were intelligently controlled. The first was Major Fournet's maneuver study of 1952, the second was the Project Blue Book compilation of official unknowns, and the third was Ruppelt's planned visual-radar sighting network. Regarding these, the Air Force denied that Fournet's maneuver study ever existed, secreted Project Blue Book's findings behind the Espionage Act, and killed off Captain Ruppelt's visual-radar sighting plan.

'What else did we have? We had an Air Force that insisted that UFOs did not exist, yet made the release of information on that subject to the public a crime under the same Espionage Act. We also had, in that regulation, a threat not only to military personnel, but to civilian airline pilots and any civilian who happened to know that the regulation existed. We had, more mysteriously, an Air Force which claimed that national security was its only concern, yet insured that its own air crews and ground crews would not report unidentified objects in the sky... What do you think it means?'

He stared straight at Stanford, his eyes blue and unblinking, as Stanford sat up straight in his chair, feeling strangely unreal.

'That still begs the question,' Stanford said. 'Is all this possible?'

'And the answer must be yes,' O'Hara said. 'All things are possible. As you yourself said: in this context we only have to think of the extraordinary innovations in today's science and technology - and then remember that such miracles are only the tip of the iceberg, and that what goes on behind the guarded fences of our top-secret establishments is probably decades ahead of what we officially know about. Given this, the speed and capability of the unidentified flying objects are not beyond the bounds of possibility. Also, given this, it is not beyond reason that the UFOs rumored to have landed on

various Air Force bases are the products of a military pro-gram so secret that only the personnel on those bases know what's going on.'

O'Hara looked at his watch, pressed a button on the desk The door of the office opened and a secretary walked in, moving over to stand beside Stanford, very sleek and efficient Stanford stood up, feeling dazed. He also felt a growing rage. He glanced at the girl, at the paneled walls of the room, at the clear sky beyond O'Hara's head, at O'Hara's broad outline. The facts were amazing. The possibilities were frightening. Stanford looked at O'Hara's blue eyes and let the rage be-come part of him.

'There the case rests,' O'Hara said. 'Don't come back, Doctor Stanford.'

The New Order was planned and executed with the sort of ferocious drive that only the mystically inclined can possess. Albert Speer was the architect; he created the environment for their vision. In the works of Albert Speer and the other Nazi architects, I could see the realization of Lebensraum in its most concrete form. Lebensraum - space - German conquest and expansionism: the great buildings and the underground factories were signposts to my future.

Himmler showed me Hitler's teahouse. It was on top of the Kehlestein Mountain. The five-mile road that ran up from the Berghof had been hacked out of the side of the mountain by the sweat of slave labor. In the peak of the mountain was an underground passage; at the end of the passage was a copper-lined elevator, its shaft, about four hundred feet deep, hacked out of the solid rock. That elevator dropped down to an immense, high-walled gallery, supported by baroque Roman pillars. At the end of the gallery, also hacked out of the mountain, was a dazzling, glassed-in, circular hall. And standing in that great hall, looking out through the windows, I saw nothing but the other mountains and the sky - an overwhelming experience.

The impossible made possible - such was constantly accomplished. If the dreams were grandiose, the actual achievements were more so: the achievements of men who could make the impossible quite commonplace.

The German genius was for organization. In that area it had

no peer. Add to this the fact that their well of slave labor was bottomless, and what one had was the dream as a reality. Who built the mighty pyramids? The thousands of Egyptian slaves The Third Reich had the genius and seven and a half million slaves, and given the combination of these two, all things became possible.

Seven and a half million slaves. Slaves who worked an endless day. Slaves who hacked out the mountains and dug tunnels through the earth and moved rocks and equipment and stores and never complained. Such were my resources. I could have made Egypt envious. And given that, plus my own grandiose ambitions, there was little I couldn't do.

I was very close to Himmler. He unveiled his great dream. It was a dream of Atlantis reborn from the ashes of war. No Jews or subhumans. A blond SS would rule. In a society of masters and slaves there would be no dissension. Great cities of steel and glass. The pure Aryan predominant Himmler told me of his dream of a wilderness populated by supermen.

'How do you build Atlantis? You need masters and slaves. The masters will be the elite of my Death's Head SS, and the slaves will be the Poles and the Czechs and all the other low races. And how do we do it? It is easy, mein freund. We keep building the camps, we ship the Jews there by their thousands, and when the wires of the camps begin to bulge we build more crematoriums. Gas the schweine and burn them; let them turn to smoke and ash. When the camps have been cleared of the Jews we bring the subhumans in. The subhumans are the workers. They exist as mere slaves. They live just to work and that work is for the glory of the Reich - the slaves will build the new temples.'

The new temples would be the factories, the laboratories and universities; the new religion would be knowledge and conquest, the return of the Superman. How grandiose the dream! How impressive the rehearsal! Himmler wanted cities under the earth and set out to create them. He drove me all around Germany. He showed me what could be achieved. I saw the great underground factories and I learned what was possible.

I remember Nordhausen well. It had been hacked out of the

Kohnstein Mountain. Thirteen thousand slaves from Buchenwald had done it with muscle and sweat. It was empty when I saw it. The V-2 complex had yet to come. It had tunnels eighteen hundred meters long, and nearly fifty side chambers. I gazed around me in wonder. Himmler scratched his nose and smiled. The work area was one hundred and twenty-five thousand meters square, buried deep in the mountain. Himmler showed me around. His voice echoed in the silence. There were twelve ventilation shafts, huge generators supplied the light, and special heating ensured a constant temperature, day in and day out.

'Here thousands will work. The slaves will live in a separate camp. That camp, which now exists, is hidden deep in a mountain valley, less than a kilometer from the entrance to one of the tunnels. It has every facility. Lots of barracks, a brothel. It has a sports ground and a hospital, a kitchen and a laundry, a psychological and vocational selection unit, a crematorium and prison. There is also the town of Bleicherode. It's twenty kilometers from here. There, the new tunnels, sixteen kilometers deep, will house several more missile factories and living quarters for thousands. What else are mountains for? How else do we use the slaves? The new temples will be underground cities that are virtually impregnable.'

I still remember his every word. His voice echoed in that vast silence. I knew that the whole area, from the Harz Mountains to Thuringia, south of Prague and across to Mahren, was littered with similar tunnels and underground factories. Only a few were known to Hitler. Himmler controlled them all. They were cloaked in the strictest of secrecy and ruled by the SS. The work went on night and day. All slackers were shot or hung. The underground factories were totally insular colonies, worked by masters and slaves, unrestricted by moral laws, and yet very few Germans knew about them or would ever set eyes on them. Thus were my problems solved. I saw what could be achieved. Standing there beside Himmler, in that enormous, silent cave, I thought of all the thousands who would work there, and knew where my future lay. Himmler dreamed of ice and fire. He

dreamed of cities beneath the earth. He saw the sun flashing off the frozen peaks that showed nothing but emptiness. I would take what Himmler offered. I would hide in glass and stone. I turned around and stared at Himmler's modest eyes and saw his madness as sanity.

The New Order needs its masters and they have to be Aryan. blond-haired and blue-eyed and strong - and absolutely obedient. Such are found in the Jungvolk - the boys often to fourteen - and they are formed in the Hitler Youth, given the Blood and Honor dagger, retrained to worship the Fuhrer and the Nation, and then join my SS. Once there, they are mine. I do with them what I will. They no longer belong to Hitler, but to me - and they worship me slavishly.'

Himmler dreamed it and did it: he gave birth to his acolytes. The mild chicken farmer blinked his modest eyes and saw a world of godmen. The SS was Himmler's church, his bed and his altar; it was an Order run on Jesuit principles and run with an iron fist. All its members were racially pure. They were bound together by sacred oaths. They were stripped of their history, given numbers instead of names, indoctrinated with the myths of the Volk and emerged as disciples. No questions would be asked. No order would be ignored. Their blind obedience would let them wade through hell without shame or revulsion.

I believed in this approach. Without discipline there is dissension. Himmler's ultimate aims struck me as religious, but his methods were sound. We cannot progress with freedom. Free men are a curse. Such men resist change because it leaves them exposed as superfluous. Himmler understood that much. He feared individuals. Himmler felt that individuals were a threat to his great masterplan. And what was his plan? He wanted gods, not normal men. He believed in obedience, in controlled breeding and vivisection, believed in biological mutation and its product, the Superman. Such a dream is not uncommon. Modern science still pursues it. Out there, in the world beyond the ice, primitive surgeons hack bone for it. As for myself, I ac-cepted it: men were meat to be used. I believed in biological mutation and used all that was offered.

The New Order will be purified. The subhumans will be slaves. All dissenters will be stripped of their resistance until they, too, obey. Failing that, they will be removed by gas, gun or blade - and even then, we will insure that they contribute to the good of the Order. Gouge the gold from their teeth. Use their skin for lampshades. We will turn their bones to ashes and dust in the great crematoriums. It is necessary to do so. We must affirm that we are serious. We must let them know that discipline is all, and that their ash can be useful. The New Order will be strict. Its one goal will be progress. It will be dedicated to experiment and research, to the advancement of knowledge. Most laboratories have limitations; in the New Order this won't be so. The subhumans, who are useful as slaves, will also serve us as specimens.'

Not all aeronautics. That went on at Kummersdorft West. In the hangars of Kummersdorft West my other dream took fruition. I worked with Schriever and Bellonzo. Perhaps Miethe and Habemohl. I remember the names, not the faces, and I feel no affection. Nonetheless, I worked with them. My restless genius drove me. The vicissitudes of the war did not touch me and my project expanded. How many nights did I go sleepless? I think back on that with pride. I was in my early sixties at the time, but I drove them relentlessly. The first disc took shape slowly. There were many imperfections. I traveled north and south, east and west, stealing men and ideas. Factories hidden in the Schwarzwald. The R-Laboratory in Volkenrode. Heated discussions about electrostatic fields and gyroscopic controls. The great disc filled the hangar. Schriever's eyes were filled with greed. The four legs that housed the gas turbine rotors reflected the bright lights. Schriever studied it with wonder. This very memory makes me smile. What Schriever gazed upon with such greed and wonder was a primitive toy. The real achievements were in my files. What Schriever saw was nothing. In the hangar in Kummersdorft West I was building a useless thing.

The deceit was necessary. There was no one I could trust. The Third Reich was filled with frightened, ambitious men who wished to make an impression. I did not trust Rudolph

Schriever. I saw the death in Himmler's eyes. I remembered my past, the great hangars in Iowa, all the businessmen and cowardly politicians who had smothered my life's work. The same thing could happen again. The war would not last forever. Already, in 1941, I saw the Reich's trickling wounds. Just how long would Himmler last? And how long could he keep his secret? I wanted to utilize his masterplan, but what guarantee had I? The Nazis devoured their own kind. They might well devour Himmler. Either that, or the Reichsfuhrer would turn on me, destroying all I had gained. Heinrich Himmler: the Reichsfuhrer. His mild eyes did not deceive me. His neat fingernails were polished with blood and his smile hid hysteria. No, I didn't trust him. There was no one I could trust. And so I gave him just a little, a prototype that would not work, kept explaining that I needed more time and that the problems were many.

A delicate maneuver. A great cunning was required. The disc had to fool the other engineers while still lacking in something. I used obsolete technologies. I gave the engineers their head. Gas turbines and liquid-fuel rockets were the fruits of their labors. Such creations kept them happy. Schriever's eyes shone with triumph. Young and lean, he showed his drawings to Himmler while I went my own way. Their great disc had been surpassed. The real achievement was in my files. I gave a little and took a great deal and listened always to Himmler.

'We have our underground factories. We have our chosen location. We have our masters, the SS, and our slaves and your own crystal genius. But that isn't enough. We need more than normal men. What we need is a biological mutation that will lead to true greatness. We must learn to control the workers. Not with whips and not with guns. What we need is automatic control of their minds and their bodies. The human brain must be examined. The body's secrets must be explored. We must try to steal their will and their strength and leave them just what they need. The democracies cannot do this. Regressive morals would forbid it. But here, at the dawn of the new era, there is nothing to hinder us. We must use the Ahnenerbe. We must use the Lebensborn. We must study racial characteristics and breed

only the purest. This will solve the first problem. In this way, we will find the Superman. Nevertheless, that leaves the problem of the workers, and we must solve that also. Control of mind and body. We must find a whole new method. I think of medical and psychological experiments of the most extreme kind. The camps are yours to command. The schweine there are useless meat. The New Order needs a wealth of mindless muscle and your genius must find it.'

The concentration camps were the laboratories. The camp inmates were the guinea pigs. The whole mystery of human life was explored as it writhed on the tables... What are the limits of human pain? How long before the lungs collapse? Will scorched flesh, if left unattended, renew itself or turn gangrenous? Inject this woman with jaundice. Inject that child with typhoid. Shoot this creature with poison bullets, graft a bone, transfer a limb, remove testicles and ovaries and intestines, but don't use anesthetics. Was it the surgery that led to death? Was it death through shock or pain? Put that frozen man between those two whores and then check his responses. More work. (It rarely stopped.) The Ahnenerbe needs human heads. The Institute for Research into Heredity needs anthropological measurements. Take these filthy Jews and Poles. Strip them naked and measure them. If suitable, put them into the gas chamber and then chop off their heads. Ship the heads off in cannisters. Use extreme care when packing. Peel the flesh from the bones of the corpse, dissolve the bones, use the healthy flesh. This strip decomposed already. A good piece of material there. These tattoos would make a nice lampshade in Frau Koch's bedroom ... But such was Nazi frivolity. My true research never stopped. The concentration camps, with their abatoirs and crematoria, were extraordinary laboratories.

'Do you understand at last? The New Order is very real. It will be broken into colonies, each separate, each with its work, all divided into masters and slaves, existing just for the future. What's a colony in our wilderness? It's just another Nordhausen. You ship the subhumans in to build your underground complex, you control them with your implants and the

Death's Head SS, you then move in your scientists and technicians and administrators, and you bind them all together with fear of the all-seeing masters. And once there, where can they go? There is no way in or out. They will live underground, cowed by fear, seduced by power, the masters bound by their oaths, by their religious convictions, the subhumans by torture and death and the lack of all exits. Yes, American, it is possible. We are halfway there already. You must work, you must complete your great disc, before we settle the matter.'

So I listened to Himmler. So his droning words encouraged me. Not for long did I think he would survive, but his ideas were valuable. I used him and his facilities. We filled the trains with nameless thousands. The slaves were shipped to the harbor of Kiel and then they just disappeared.

Yet I had to be careful. I couldn't hold back too much. Himmler pressed me for a test flight of the disc, and I had to oblige. It was 1941. I am certain it was June. The great doors of the hangar were pulled open and the sunlight poured in. That much I remember. The disc flashed in the sunlight. Schriever climbed into the dome-shaped pilot's cabin, his eyes bright with excitement. The engineers all retreated. They all shielded their eyes. Himmler joined me behind the sandbags, his glasses high on his nose. The disc looked like a metallic mushroom. It perhaps looked like a spider. Its four legs housed the gas turbine rotors and ran down obliquely. Himmler rubbed at his nose. The sun flashed off his spectacles. There was a roar as the hollow legs spewed fire and filled the air with dark smoke. Yellow flame spat from the tarmac. The roaring changed and became a numbing sibilance as the disc left the ground. Himmler covered his ears. His body seemed to be shrinking. The disc shuddered and shrieked, lifted gently from the ground, hovered briefly and swayed from side to side and was obscured by the swirling smoke. Himmler turned and stared at me. His mild eyes were like the sun. The disc roared and hovered just above the ground as Himmler reached for my hand.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Richard licked his forefinger and ran it around the rim of his glass. The cigarette smoke curled about him, stinging his bleary, bloodshot eyes, and the noise in the crowded, lunch-time pub was too much for his ears. He kept his gaze on the glass, on the ice cubes in the Coke, but glanced occasionally, with a twisted, bitter smile, at Jenny's unfinished lager.

'Just one drink,' he said.

'No,' Jenny said.

'Just let me have half a pint of bitter. It won't affect me a bit'

Jenny sighed and shook her head, her brown eyes devoid of humor, abstractly tugging at a lock of her curly hair and gently biting her lower lip.

'No,' she repeated. 'You're not supposed to drink anything. And once you start, you won't know how to stop - you never do anymore.'

'A half pint,' Richard said.

'No. Go to hell.'

'Just give me a sip of yours, for chrissake.'

'Drink your Coke and shut up.'

Richard rolled his eyes despairingly, picked his glass up and saw it shaking, held it to his lips with great care, had a drink, put it down again.

'You're still shaking,' Jenny said. 'What do you expect?' Richard replied. 'I haven't had a

drink for five days. I'm going out of my skull.'
You're already out of your skull. You've been that way for a year now. I couldn't take another year like that, so just keep your mouth shut.'
Richard didn't reply to that There was little he could say. He had drowned the past year in a sea of liquor, trying to kill off the nightmares. Now he glanced around the pub, the smoke stinging his eyes, taking in the pinstripe suits, the black shoes and umbrellas, the pretty secretaries with their hair trailing loosely down their backs, their cheeks flushed with gin and Campari, their breasts thrusting ambitiously. They all seemed remote to him, superfluous, unreal, their beauty and vigor redundant diffused behind frosted glass. Then he looked at Jenny: brown eyes in a moon face. She was wearing her shabby parka and faded blue jeans, her blouse unbuttoned just above her breasts, the skin creamy and smooth. She seemed slightly more real, a bit closer, part of him, and the fact that she was still trying to help him filled him with shame.
'A hypnotist!' he exclaimed. 'Jesus Christ, I don't believe it!'
'He's not a crackpot' Jenny said. 'He's a psychiatrist and neurologist a Harley Street specialist and since he can't possibly make you feel worse, you've nothing to lose.'
'A psychiatrist?'
'Don't look mortified.'
You think I need a psychiatrist?' Richard said. You think I've gone crazy?'
'And what would you call it?'
'I'm not crazy,' Richard said.
'All right' Jenny said, 'you're not crazy... but you're not healthy either.'
'Ah,' Richard said, touching his temple with a finger and turning the finger around like a screwdriver. 'I am sick in the head!'
'Very funny.'
'Yes, very.'

'Listen, Richard, you're not going to see a witch doctor. He won't beat on his jungle drums.' She reached into her shoulder bag, pulled out a pack of cigarettes, used her lighter with a quick, suppressed anger and threw it back in her bag. 'What's bugging you?' she said. The man's just a fucking doctor. This is 1975, for God's sake: it's a normal occurrence.'

Richard flushed and looked away and studied the glasses above the bar, hurt and embarrassed by her statement, recognizing the truth in it. The past year had been a horror, a gradual dissolving into madness, the days viewed through the filter of liquor, the nights strung out on nightmares. The police interview hadn't helped, had in fact made it worse, their disbelief filling him with shame and deepening confusion. Now the wheel had turned full circle: he was himself loath to accept it; more and more he was resisting the idea it had actually happened.

'Listen,' Jenny said, 'I don't happen to think you're crazy. I just happen to think you're pretty sick and you have to be cured. You used to drink like a normal person. I mean, you had the odd wild night. But you never needed to drink like you need it now - and you need it too much. You just can't go on like this. It won't do you any good. You've already given up art school, you're living off unemployment, and you haven't seen your family or friends in close to a year. What kind of life's that? You're only nineteen, for God's sake! You've been seeing your doctor for mysterious rashes and headaches, and you're washing the pills down with red wine... you've got to sort yourself out, kid.'

Richard sipped his iced Coke, ran his finger around the glass, looked up and shrugged his shoulders in defeat, his smile modest and painful.

'I suppose you're right,' he said.

'No bloody question about it.'

'I haven't seen too much of you either.'

'Don't blame that on me.'

Richard glanced around the pub, saw the beer glinting golden, the flushed faces of the men and the women lined

along the packed bar. Their conversation was noisy, a meaningless lunchtime repartee, and he felt a sudden sweeping isolation, as if no longer part of them. Had it ever happened at all? Had he dreamed the whole damned thing? The instant he thought of this he felt a fear that made his heart start to pound. He returned his gaze to Jenny, saw her stubbing the cigarette out. She glanced up at him and smiled, her brown eyes large as spoons, and again he felt that secret, gnawing shame that had now become part of him.

'I'm getting better,' he said.

'Don't talk shit,' Jenny said.

'No, really,' he said. Tm getting better. I don't think I need this.'

'Richard, he's a psychiatrist.'

'I don't care. I feel stupid.'

'Damn it, he's used to crazy people... you'll probably seem halfway normal.'

'It's all bullshit,' Richard said.

'What's bullshit?'

'This hypnosis.'

'You ever tried it?'

'No, I haven't tried it.'

'Then how the hell do you know?'

Richard shrugged and gazed around him, saw the upper class brigade, the men with pinstriped suits and umbrellas, the women cleansed with deodorants. What was he doing here? He didn't want to be here. He felt a slowly uncoiling desperation that threatened to strangle him.

'What good will it do me?'

'You won't know until you try.'

Jenny pushed her chair back and stood up with a determined movement, brushing the dark hair from her forehead and avoiding his gaze. Richard sighed and raised his hands, an indecisive, weak gesture, but Jenny, ignoring him, turned away and walked out of the pub. He cursed quietly and followed her out, found her standing on the pavement, exhaling cigarette smoke, her lips pouting attractively, her parka fall-

ing below her thighs, around the faded blue jeans.
She flounced off along the street, shaking her head in an angry gesture, turning the corner at Baker Street station as if no longer caring. Richard cursed and hurried after her, pushing his way through the lunchtime crowds, caught up with her as she passed the Planetarium and Madame Tussaud's.
'Okay!' he said, spreading his hands. 'I apologize. Okay?'
'Don't bother,' she said. 'I don't want your fucking apology. I just want you to visit that psychiatrist Thaf s all I ask.'
'You ask? I surrender.'
She stopped at York Gardens, the wind blowing her hair, her face pale and her lips a tight line, the brown eyes large and luminous. 'Okay,' she said. 'Fine.'
They crossed Marylebone Road, passing a wall of waiting traffic, then walked silently along the opposite pavement, neither touching the other. Richard stayed a little behind, feeling nervous and confused, glancing along the gray streets, the stately rows of Georgian buildings, his throat dry and crying out for a drink, for the soothing oblivion. He needed that oblivion. He didn't want to go back. What had happened was in the past and should remain there, buried deep and forgotten. He didn't want to relive it, didn't think he could stand it, and yet walking behind Jenny, following her into Harley Street, he knew that she was right, that he had to face the problem, that he had to tear away the veil of mystery that kept him in terror.
'This is it,' Jenny said.
She had stopped before a tall, flat-fronted Georgian house with a black door and polished brass handle. Richard stared at the door, at the names on a brass plate, and a tremor of dread rippled through him and congealed in his throat.
'Oh, well,' he said.
'Are you going in?' Jenny asked.
'Yes,' he said. 'I guess I'm going in. Jesus Christ, I feel dumb.'
Jenny pressed the bell, her face close to a small speaker, and a voice, indistinct and distorted, lazily drawled the word,

'Yes?' Jenny gave Richard's name, the tinny voice said, 'Come up,' then the door made an irritating buzzing sound that sig-nified they could open it. Richard pushed the door open, letting Jenny pass through first, then he stepped in and closed the door behind him and the buzzing noise ceased.

'The third floor,' Jenny mumbled.

They stood together in the hall, its walls paneled and darkly varnished, a lavish velvet carpet on the floor, a potted plant near the front door. Richard stared at the elevator, at its polished metal door, and experienced a fleeting claustrophobia that made him shake slightly. He glanced uneasily at Jenny, at the high, ornate ceiling, at the stairs that curved behind the elevator and climbed past faded paintings. The fear crept up over him, devoured him and made him numb, and he felt himself dissolving where he stood, drifting free from his body. He didn't want to go up there, didn't want to relive it; he wanted to turn around and walk out, but he just couldn't do it

'We'll use the stairs,' Jenny said.

Richard nodded his head, a dumb gesture of agreement, saw her brown eyes through a film of panic, her head turning away from him. Then he followed her up the stairs, moving slowly and reluctantly, his eyes fixed on her blue-jeaned legs, on the high heels of her boots, on the wrinkles where the parka curved out around her broad, swaying hips. It was coming back to him already, the white haze, the silhouettes, the woman with red hair and green eyes - the whole nightmarish catalogue, Richard felt himself shaking, felt ashamed and confused, glancing down and seeing his feet on the carpet, his heart pounding dramatically. Then they reached the third floor, an elevator gate gleaming, a stricken silence surrounding them. Jenny stopped at a door, raised her hand, let it hang there, then turned around and took a step toward him and gently embraced him.

It was a sad, instinctive gesture, a sudden confession of tension, the first time she had actually held him in months: her confession of need. Richard stood there, confused, his

hands hanging down by his sides, feeling the warmth of her body, her love, and wondering what he could do with it. Then he slid his arms around her, felt her shoulder blades, her spine, spread his fingers and pressed her closer to him and laid his cheek on her head.

'It's all right,' he whispered.

She clung to him for another moment, her fingers scratch-jug his back, her thighs and firm breasts molded to him before moving away. Then she glanced at him quickly, her smile hesitant, eyes shadowed, and nodded and disappeared down the stairs, leaving scent in the air.

Richard stood there for some time, feeling shaken, reawakened, closed his eyes and covered his face with his hands and took a deep, painful breath. He then put his head back, studied the ceiling's moldings, shrugged and knocked lightly on the door and heard a voice bid him enter.

He stepped inside, closed the door quietly behind him, saw walls of pale green, a glass table, comfortable armchairs, a middle-aged lady behind the desk, looking up, smiling pleasantly.

'Mr Watson?'

'That's right.'

'You're a very punctual patient,' she said. 'Dr Campbell's expecting you.'

She pressed a buzzer on the desk, her hand milky white and elegant, and announced Richard's presence to the speaker, her voice soft but precise. Richard glanced around the office, not listening, not really present, still aware of Jenny's warmth in his clothes, touched again with emotion. Then the woman stood up, a white blouse, a neat gray skirt, and quietly opened the door to another office and motioned him in. Richard coughed into his fist, trying to orientate himself, then he walked past the woman, smiling at her, avoiding her eyes, and heard the door closing behind him with a sharp, clicking sound.

'Ah! Mr Watson!'

'Yes,' Richard said.

'Do you mind if I call you Richard?'
'No.'
'Good. Please sit down.'
The man wore a gray-striped suit, a white shirt, a bright tie, his hands spread out on the desk, cuff links glittering, a large ring on one finger. His hair was dark and rather long, tumbling carelessly on his forehead, lines of humor around bright blue eyes, his teeth obviously capped. He was in his late thirties, looked suntanned and healthy, a white handkerchief protruding from one pocket, neatly folded and pressed.
'Please,' he said. 'Sit down.'
Richard did as he was told, sitting in front of the desk, crossing his legs and then uncrossing them again and putting his hands in his lap. He glanced quickly around the office. saw the same pale green walls, some reproductions of Turner, a few diplomas, the doctor framed by the window.
'Have you ever been to a psychiatrist before?'
'No,' Richard said.
'Have you ever been hypnotized before?'
'No,' Richard said.
'And does any of this bother you?'
Tes,' Richard said.
'Why?'
'I don't know. It just seems stupid. I don't think it will work.'
Tou don't think you can be hypnotized?'
'No,' Richard said.
'Why not?'
'I just don't think so,' Richard said. 'I just don't believe in it.'
Dr Campbell smiled. 'You don't believe in it,' he said. 'And is that why you think you can't be hypnotized?'
'Yes.'
'Well, we'll see.'
The doctor looked down at his desk, at a gray manila folder, opened the folder and pulled out some papers and studied them carefully. Richard just sat there, feeling nervous and slightly vague, trying to seem a lot more casual than

he was, wanting to get up and run.
'An interesting case,' the doctor said, glancing up and smiling brightly. 'You've obviously had a rather bad year. How do you feel now?'
'Okay,' Richard said.
'Are you nervous?'
'Yes.'
'Well, that's normal. It means you're still human.' The doctor smiled at Richard, raised his hand and studied his ring, glanced down at the papers again and then looked back up. 'It gays here you've been drinking a lot'
'Yes,' Richard said.
'And you still have to drink?'
'Yes.'
'Why?'
'I don't know.'
'And the nightmares?'
'What about them?'
'According to these notes, all your nightmares are exactly the same.'
'So?'
'So you're not just dreaming - you're reliving that exact same incident.'
'You mean, you think it happened?'
'Not necessarily,' the doctor said. 'It could be a case of auto-suggestion brought on by great stress.'
'You think I'm crazy, is that it?'
'Not remotely. I'm just saying that whatever happened during your period of amnesia could have led to this particularly vivid hallucination.'
'Okay, I'll accept that. That's fine. Now how do you cure me?'
'You really accept that statement?'
'Yeah. Sure.'
'Rubbish. Of course you don't. You're just saying that because you want to get out of here and go for a drink.'
Richard shrugged and put his hands out 'Okay, Doc, have

it your way. Just tell me what you want me to say and I'll gladly oblige.'
'I just want you to say what you believe.'
'I don't believe anything. I don't know what to believe. The whole business happened a year ago, and that's a very long time. I told the cops about it They laughed me out of the office. When I tried to tell anyone else, they just thought I was crazy - and I think they were right It couldn't have happened. Things like that just don't happen. So I really think you're right - that I had a sort of blackout, and that during that time I hallucinated and then thought it was real. I don't care what it was. I just want to forget it I want to get rid of those nightmares and sleep good again,'
'I didn't say it was hallucination; I said it might be.'
'I hallucinated. Believe me, that's what happened. Now how will you cure me?'
'You said you felt okay.'
'I was lying. I feel rotten.'
'You mean physically?'
'I mean mentally... I mean, I have trouble sleeping, I have the nightmares when I do sleep. And I keep breaking out in rashes and getting very bad headaches, and I think it's all part of the same thing.'
'Yes,' the doctor said. 'I have your medical records here. You never had such ailments before the incident... and they are quite peculiar.'
'Peculiar? What do you mean?'
They're not caused by anything physical. The rashes and the headaches are psychosomatic: brought on psychologically.'
That's ridiculous,' Richard said.
'No, Richard, it's not ridiculous. People can will headaches and fevers and ulcers and heartburn and stomach upsets and skin diseases... in fact just about anything.'
'I'm not a hypochondriac.'
'I wasn't suggesting that at all.'
'That's what it sounded like to me.'
'No. Not hypochondria.'

The doctor sat back in his chair, placed his hands behind his head, put his feet up on the desk and smiled pleasantly.
'Let me tell you about the human brain,' he said. The first thing to note is that the human brain, while being a remarkable instrument, is rarely used at even a tenth of its full potential. Now, most of our bodily functions are actually controlled by the brain - the brain tells us what to do, when to do it and how to do it - so what we see, hear, smell and feel are merely the colors, sounds, smells and sensations that the brain has selected as being most necessary. This selection is not arbitrary - the brain selects what it thinks we need - but there are other sensations which, though being actual, are beyond the limited range of our immediate senses. However, by awakening certain dormant areas of the brain, either electrically, by the use of drugs or through hypnotic suggestion, the scope of both our senses and our capabilities can be dramatically expanded.'
'I can't see what that's got to do with me.'
'Well, I'll tell you. Would you agree that drugs or electrical stimulation of the brain can change human behavior?'
'Yes.'
'Fine. Now did you know that these methods of affecting the brain can also induce pain and similar experiences?'
'Yes, I knew that.'
'Okay. Well, regarding hypnotherapy we can apply the same principles, the only difference being that the sensations are induced - or recalled - by a process of suggestion rather than physical means. In other words, just as through hypnotism a patient can be directed to go to sleep or awaken, feel a nonexistent pain or ignore applied pain, turn as rigid as a plank or relive long forgotten experiences, and generally do things that he would not normally contemplate - so, too, can the average human being actually will himself into pain, into depression or serious illness, not believing for the slightest moment that he's doing it, convinced that it's physical.'
'I don't believe that,' Richard said.
'Don't you?' the doctor said. 'Do you know that a perfectly

normal person, if told under a hypnotic trance that he has just been scalded, will actually come out in blisters? Do you know, further, that that same person, still in the hypnotic trance, can be burned or pierced with needles, experience no pain at all, and not be marked by the burning or piercing when snapped out of the trance state?'

'No, I don't believe that.'

'Believe me, Richard, if I hypnotized you and told you that you were a wooden plank, you would turn as stiff as a plank could be stretched out across two supports, and wouldn't budge if a couple of people used your groin as a spring. board... you would simply become a plank.'

'Bullshit,' Richard said.

'No, lad, not bullshit. These are the realities of autosuggestion, tested and verified; so when I tell you that your ailments might be psychosomatic, I'm not suggesting for a moment that you're a hypochondriac... I'm merely saying that the ailments are symptoms of a deeper disturbance.'

Richard crossed his legs, uncrossed them, scratched his knee, then looked down at the floor for a moment and looked up again.

'So,' he said, 'what are you going to do about it?'

'I'm going to try to take you back to when you suffered the amnesia, find out just what happened during that missing three days, record what you tell me while you're in the trance state, and then play that recording back to you.'

'I don't want to know,' Richard said.

'You have to,' the doctor said.

'I don't give a fuck,' Richard said. 'I don't want to know.'

He was shocked by his own vehemence, sitting upright in the chair, flushed, his heart pounding dramatically, his throat suddenly constricting. The doctor looked at him thoughtfully, not very surprised, then placed his feet back on the floor and propped his chin in his hands.

'What frightens you?'

'I just don't want to do it.'

'Why?'

'I'm not dumb enough to be hypnotized. I don't believe it. It won't work.'
The doctor smiled patiently. 'Well, now,' he said, 'I think you're antagonistic because you feel that being hypnotized is degrading. Let me therefore assure you, Richard, that any intelligent adult and most children over the age of seven can be hypnotized, that only the mentally retarded and the psy-chotic can resist being hypnotized, and that hypnotizability is in no way a sign of weak will. Indeed, the more intelligent and imaginative the individual, the better a subject hell be. You therefore needn't be ashamed. There's nothing wrong in being hypnotized. Just think of it as another branch of medicine, and try to accept it.'
Richard crossed his legs, uncrossed them, scratched his knee, licked his lips and glanced vaguely around the office and then studied the floor. He thought of the past year, of the nightmares and the drinking, of the loss of his friends, of Jenny's rage, of his own failing health. He couldn't live like that much longer; it just didn't make sense. He wanted to kill it off, to be cured, but the fear held him back. He glanced across at the doctor, tried to speak and did not succeed, finally stood up and scratched his left ear and then shrugged in defeat.
'What do I do?' he asked.
The doctor smiled and stood up. 'Excellent,' he said. 'I just want to try a few of your reactions and see if you're suitable.' He walked around the desk and stood just in front of Richard, gazed in his eyes then stepped away and said, 'Look at your watch.' Richard did as he was told. The time was three thirty. 'Keep your hands by your sides,' the doctor said, 'and just relax, just hang loose.' Richard did as he was told. He thought the doctor was pretty foolish. He felt sorry for the doctor and decided to humor him to save him embarrassment The doctor kept talking. He kept telling Richard to relax. He said, 'Clasp your hands together,' and Richard did so, still wanting to humor him. The doctor kept on talking. He told Richard to relax more. He said, Tour hands are clasped together and you won't be able to open them no matter how hard you try.'

Richard didn't bother trying. He wanted to humor the doctor. The doctor told him he could pull his hands apart, so Richard pulled them apart The doctor told him to raise his right arm. Richard did as he was told. The doctor pinched his right arm and Richard didn't feel a thing because he didn't want the doctor to be embarrassed. The doctor told him to lie down. Richard lay down on the couch. The doctor told him to relax and Richard lay there and felt a bit amused. The doctor told him to close his eyes. Richard grinned and closed his eyes. The doctor told him to open his eyes again and look at his watch. Richard opened his eyes. He raised his hand and studied his watch. He blinked and then looked at his watch again and just couldn't believe it The time was four thirty. A whole hour had passed. Richard shook his head and sat up on the couch, feeling vague but refreshed.
'How do you feel?' the doctor asked.
'Fine,' Richard said.
'How long do you think you've been asleep?'
'I haven't been sleeping.'
Richard looked at his watch again. It was definitely four thirty. He shrugged and grinned foolishly, stood up and stretched himself, then walked behind the desk and sat down and scribbled his name on the notepad.
'Why did you do that?' the doctor asked.
'I don't know,' Richard said. He stood up and walked back around the desk and stopped in front of the doctor. 'Did you tell me to do it?'
'Yes,' the doctor said. 'You've been asleep for an hour. You were obedient and you talked an awful lot and it's all down on tape.'
'Can I hear it?'
'No.'
'Why not?'
'You're not ready yet' The doctor went to his desk, switched the tape recorder off, then sat down and scribbled something on the notepad and then looked up at Richard. 'I want you to go home now,' he said. 'You should go to bed

early. With a bit of luck, you won't have any nightmares and you'll get a good sleep. I want you to come back here next week. My secretary will give you an appointment. When you return, I'll say something that will put you to sleep immedi-ately, and the experience will be as painless as it was today. I'm taking you back gradually. I can't do it too quickly. That means you'll be coming here on a regular basis, for quite a few months. I don't think this will bother you. In fact, you'll probably want to come. At the end of the sessions, when all the pieces are together, you can hear what happened during those missing days. Okay? See you next week.'

The doctor smiled and Richard left. The secretary gave him another appointment He took the elevator down and walked out into the street and headed straight for Baker Street station, melting into the jostling crowds. The journey home was uneventful. He changed trains at King's Cross. The train was crowded and the light stung his eyes and he felt very calm. He got out at Finsbury Park, feeling bright and exhilarated. There were drunks in the long, tunneled exits that led up to the buses. Richard boarded the W7, bought his ticket and sat down, looked outside and saw the darkness falling, the street lights flickering on. The bus took him to Crouch Hill. He stepped out and felt the cold. He walked along the dusty pavement, turned into a driveway, passed the parked cars and entered the apartment blocks, feeling strangely light-headed. He opened the front door and closed it quietly behind him, then he walked along the corridor and stopped when he came to the bedroom. Jenny was stretched out on the bed, fully dressed, her eyes open. Richard walked up to the bed and stood there, saying nothing, just smiling. Jenny reached up for his hand. Their fingers locked and she Pulled him down. Their tears mingled as they undressed one another and melted together. Richard poured himself into her. His remaining fear was drained away. He was surrounded by her arms, by the cradle of her thighs, and there, °n that bed of flesh and bone, he slept the sleep of a child.

James S. Campbell, BA, MA, MD,
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Kingsway, Hove
Sussex, England
February 14,1976

Dr Frederick Epstein,
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Massachusetts Avenue,
Washington, DC,
USA

Dear Frederick,
Further to our telephone conversation of this morning, I am enclosing a transcript of the most recent taped hypnotic session with young Richard Watson.
I should remind you again that there have been a total of eighteen hypnotic sessions over a period of approximately six months, that the editing of the transcripts has been undertaken as a means of eliminating repetitions and verbal ambiguities, and that the complete tapes of all the sessions can be heard in my Harley Street office upon your arrival in London. In the meantime, here is the background you requested.

Richard Watson first presented himself at my office on 9 September, 1975, at the recommendation of a profes-sional colleague (the father of the young man's girl friend) and with the approval of his personal physician. The pa-tient had been suffering from persistent nightmares, insomnia and acute anxiety, all originating in a three-day period of amnesia which apparently began on the evening of 7 March, 1974, when the young man, and the unknown lady who was driving him, experienced what he believed was a close encounter with extraterrestrials. The alleged incident took place on the A30 on Bodmin Moor in Cornwall.

According to the young man's original story to both his doctor and the Tottenham Court Road police (the medical records and a photocopy of the police interview are enclosed), the incident began when the car, being driven by the female owner, cut out and rolled to a standstill in a desolate area between Bodmin and Bolventor. Almost immediately, a strange aircraft described by the patient as 'enormous' descended and released two three-feet diameter flying discs. These discs circled the car, appeared to be examining it by remote control, then shot 'beams of light' into it, allegedly stunning the woman, and then flew away to re-enter the 'mother' ship.

Shortly after this, two larger flying discs emerged from the mother ship and also circled the car. According to the patient, these discs were piloted by strange creatures, they also shone beams of light into the car, and those beams of light appeared to pull on the car and draw it toward the mother ship. At this point the mother ship descended almost to ground level, appeared to split along the bottom, and then the car, by mysterious means, was drawn up into it.

The period of amnesia appears to have started at this moment, ending three days later when the patient awakened and found himself on a hill in Dartmoor -approximately thirty miles from the scene of the alleged

incident. Neither the woman nor her car were to be seen.
According to the medical report, the patient could remember nothing of his 'missing' three days, but was suffering numerous nightmares, all of which were obviously related to the period immediately prior to the beginning of amnesia. As a consequence of the amnesia, or of the alleged incident itself, the patient became alcoholic, suffered either insomnia or nightmares, developed severe headaches and skin inflammations (usually around the face and neck) and also succumbed to acute depression and anxiety.
Regarding this, it is to be noted that the young man's physician described him as being, prior to the incident, highly intelligent, emotionally stable, and imaginative.
The patient was, at the time of the incident, a student at the Hornsey College of Art in North London, where he was studying to be a graphic designer, but he dropped out shortly after the incident and is now living off what you Americans call Welfare.
According to the police report, young Richard reported the incident about a week after it allegedly occurred. According to Richard himself (a story repeated under hypnosis), he was held in the police station all night and then interviewed, the following morning, by two men in plain clothes who claimed they were from a government data department. Also, according to Richard's conscious and unconscious statements, the men who interviewed him told him that they had already located the female driver of the car, that she had denied the whole incident, and that she described Richard as being extremely drunk when she dropped him off near Bodmin. Richard was, in fact, drunk at the time, but insisted, even under hypnosis, that the incident had actually occurred and that the woman had been a witness to it
It was shortly after his interviews with the police and government officials that Richard, obviously depressed and less confident about the reality of his experience,

began to develop the headaches and skin inflammations. As you can judge from the transcripts, the skin inflammations might well be psychosomatic manifestations of the 'burn mark' on his neck which he believes was caused by one of the so-called extraterrestrials.

For the following sixteen months Richard continued suffering the nightmares and attendant insomnia, and sub-sequently his drinking increased. During this period he was regularly seeing his doctor for unsuccessful treatment of the headaches and skin inflammations. Dissatisfied with Richard's progress, his doctor recommended psychiatric treatment, which Richard was reluctant to undertake. Then, in late August, 1975, his girl friend's father, my friend and colleague Dr Robert C. Parker, recommended that he come to me for hypnotherapy. The first session was, as I have stated, on 9 September, 1975, and there were eighteen further sessions, the most recent being on February 10 this year.

The reality or nonreality of UFOs is hardly my province; I therefore centered my treatment on the patient's anxiety reaction to the amnesia which formed part of the alleged experience. Since Richard had obviously developed a strong aversion to the thought of reliving the experience, I was forced to attempt a penetration of the amnesia by taking him gradually through the three prime stages of hypnotism: light, medium and heavy, the latter being a state of somnambulism.

The treatment has so far been successful only to a limited degree. As you will notice when you read the transcript of the most recent hypnotic session, there is a point beyond which the patient simply refuses to go - and to try to force him to do so could be dangerous.

Whether the amnesia is a means of obliterating a real experience or an extremely painful fantasy is, in a certain sense, immaterial; what matters is that the memory appears to be real to the patient and that the climax of the experience, or hallucination, was obviously traumatic. It is

therefore to be noted that in the period between the last two hypnotic sessions - during which I attempted by suggestion to break down the patient's resistance to a total recall - his mental and physical condition have degenerated, with a full return of the headaches and skin inflammations. These symptoms have naturally led to a return of the patient's former acute anxiety.

This regression, brought about by the patient's fear of a total recall, has so far made me reluctant to use Sodium Amytal or Pentothal to facilitate the breakthrough. However, should such a breakthrough fail to occur during the forthcoming hypnotic session, which is tomorrow, I feel that these alternatives will have to be risked.

Since the events leading up to the period of amnesia are detailed in the enclosed police and doctor's reports - and since these events have been corroborated by the patient's recall under hypnosis - the attached transcript covers only the most recent hypnotic session, during which the patient finally discussed what happened during part of the period of amnesia. As you will note, there is a point beyond which the patient still refuses to go.

I look forward to seeing you on your arrival,

Yours fondly,

James S. Campbell

PATIENT: Richard Alexander Watson AGE: 19 yrs. 7 mths. SYMPTOMS: Nightmares, attendant insomnia and acute anxiety centered around a three-day period of amnesia. HISTORY: See attached police and medical reports. DOCTOR: James S. Campbell.

SESSION 18/February 10, 1976

DOCTOR

You are relaxing, relaxing, you are very relaxed. You are sleeping, deep sleep, sleeping deeper, very deep. You

are sleeping, very comfortable, relaxed, very relaxed, you are deeper and deeper in sleep, very comfortable, deeper. You are relaxed and comfortable. You are deep, deep in sleep. You are relaxed and you will remember everything and you will answer my questions.

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

All right, Richard. You are going back to the evening of March 7, 1974. You are going back now.

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

Do you know where you are?

RICHARD

I am in the car. The woman is beside me. The car has stopped... a roaring sound... a humming, I don't know... and the light... Oh my God, it's all white! The whole sky is exploding!

DOCTOR

It's all right It won't harm you. Calm down. Relax. You can see it Are you all right? Can you see it?

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

All right, Richard, we've already discussed how you were given a lift by the woman in the Audi, how the car stalled in the middle of Bodmin Moor, how the sky became bright and how the car was eventually drawn into the large saucer. Before discussing what happened inside the saucer—

RICHARD

I don't want to remember that.

DOCTOR

Before discussing what happened inside the saucer, I would like to clarify some points about the previous period. I want us to do this, Richard.

RICHARD
Yes.

DOCTOR
I want to start with the emergence of the two smaller, three-foot diameter discs from the larger craft.
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
You said that the two smaller discs flew around the car as if they were examining it
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
Why did you think they were examining the car?

RICHARD
They were humming. They made some whistling sounds... not whistling: strange, high-pitched beeps, almost like Morse code. They made me think of computers. I was thinking of computers. I had the feeling they were examining the car, photographing it, making some sort of calculations.
DOCTOR
That's a strange thing to think. Why did you think that?
RICHARD
Because of the way they circled the car. Because of the sounds they were making. Because they shone lights into the car and the car began to shake and a beam of light fell on the woman's eyes and made her act strange. DOCTOR
She changed when the beam of light hit her?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
How?
RICHARD
She was very frightened at first. She was almost paralyzed with fear. Then the beam of light caught her in

the eyes and she changed almost instantly. I remember this clearly. I was fascinated by it. The woman gasped and then shuddered, closed her eyes and settled back, then, when she opened her eyes again, she was incredibly calm. She told me not to be frightened. She kept saying, 'It's all right.' She stared at me as if I didn't exist, and she seemed almost happy. I thought that was strange.

DOCTOR

And why didn't the light affect you that way?

RICHARD

It didn't get near my eyes. I fell down on the seat The light passed over the back of my head and just burned my neck.

DOCTOR

I see. Please continue.

RICHARD

Then the small discs flew away. They returned to the large object Each disc went into a separate opening. Then the panels at each end of the large object winked out leaving darkness.

DOCTOR

Describe the large saucer again.

RICHARD

It was dark, but it grew bigger. It was surrounded by a glowing haze. The colored lights along the bottom started flashing on and off, and I could see the object itself very clearly. It was definitely solid. It seemed to be made of white metal. It had long, narrow windows running right along the front, curving back on either side as if running right around the whole object. There were people at those windows. I couldn't see them - they were silhouettes. They were moving back and forth across the windows, very small, faraway. The large saucer was immense. It wasn't large - it was enormous. It was three or four hundred feet wide, two or three stories high.

DOCTOR

Fine, Richard. Then the two panels opened again and two more ships emerged.

RICHARD Yes.
DOCTOR
Describe them, please.
RICHARD
They flew straight toward the car. They hovered just above the ground. There was one at either side of the car, and they were different from the previous ones. They were an awful lot bigger. They were thirty-five feet in diameter. Their perimeters swept up to form a dome made of something like glass. There were people inside. DOCTOR
That's right You mentioned two people.

RICHARD
Two people in each saucer. DOCTOR How far away was the saucer nearest to you?

RICHARD
The part of the perimeter closest to me was about three feet from the car; and the glass dome, about fifteen feet away, was just a little above me.
DOCTOR
You more or less looked directly at the pilots?
RICHARD
Yes. I looked directly at the pilots.
DOCTOR
You are relaxed. You are very relaxed. You have nothing to fear. I want you to remember. I want you to remember it clearly. I want you to tell me what the pilots looked like.
(The patient does not immediately respond.) DOCTOR
There is nothing to fear. You are relaxed. Tell me what the pilot looked like. RICHARD
Strange. They look strange. They look strange and I'm scared.

DOCTOR
There is nothing to fear. You are relaxed. What do they took like?

RICHARD
No lips. A mask. It must be a mask. The glass has a rippling effect, so it must be a mask.
DOCTOR
What else?
RICHARD
It has to be a mask. The nose is metallic. The nose is made of metal - if s covered in metal - so it must be a mask.
DOCTOR
Go on.
RICHARD
The eyes are just slits. They seem a bit Oriental. I think they're slits, but this could be the rippling effect They seem Oriental.
DOCTOR
And their faces?
RICHARD
White. Very wrinkled. Sort of gray.
DOCTOR
White or gray? Be specific.
RICHARD
Sort of gray. Verv wrinkled. It looks like dead skin. It doesn't look like human skin at all. I have the feeling it's dead skin.
DOCTOR
Dead skin?
RICHARD
I don't know. It made me think of a corpse.
DOCTOR
Think very hard. Is there anything else you can tell me about the pilots?

RICHARD
Oh Jesus, he lifted up his hand. He's lifting it up now!

Oh, Jesus, the hand is a metal claw!

DOCTOR

Easy, relax, deep deep sleep, very deep sleep, very deep, you are very relaxed, you have nothing to fear ... Now can you tell me anything else about the pilot?

RICHARD

He raised his hand. No hand. A metal claw. A sort of metal replacement. DOCTOR

A prosthetic hand?

RICHARD

I don't know what that is. DOCTOR

Never mind. He raised his hand and you looked at him. Then what?

RICHARD

I woke up.

DOCTOR

What do you mean, you woke up?

RICHARD

I woke up.

DOCTOR

You weren't asleep.

RICHARD

I must have fallen asleep. He raised his hand and a beam of light hit me and then I blanked out.

DOCTOR

All right, let's assume you blanked out. How long do you think you were unconscious?

RICHARD

Not long. Just a few seconds.

DOCTOR

How did you know that?

RICHARD

The saucers were still outside the car. They were still in the same position. The woman was still in the same position. She seemed in a trance.

DOCTOR
Fine. What happened next?
RICHARD
Oh God, it's coming down! The big mother ship's com-ing down! Its colored lights are all flashing and it doesn't make a sound and if s dropping down slowly, very slowly not making a sound. Oh God, there it is! DOCTOR
Where is it?
RICHARD
Oh God! Oh my God!
DOCTOR
Relax, relaxed, you are relaxed, you are comfortable you have nothing to fear, you are relaxed, you can tell me.
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
Where is the mother ship, Richard?
RICHARD
It's settled down above the ground. It's sitting just above the road. It's close to the road, but not on it - it's just sitting above it
DOCTOR
It's now in front of the car?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
It's straddling the road?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
How far away is it?
RICHARD
It goes right across the road. It's resting just above the road. It's about fifty yards from the car and if s really enormous ... Oh, God, the car's shaking again!

DOCTOR
It's all right, it's all right, the car's shaking. Why is it shaking?

RICHARD
Everything's shaking. The whole car is going wild. Everything's flying about inside the car and sticking itself to the windshield... I can't breathe, I'm almost choking, all this stuff is flying around me, the car's shaking and moving forward, no sound, just moving forward, being pulled by the saucers at both sides, being drawn toward the mother ship. DOCTOR
What's pulling the car forward, Richard?

RICHARD
The saucers. The saucers on both sides. They're pulling us forward. DOCTOR
How are they pulling you forward?

RICHARD
I don't know. I think it's the beam of light The beams of light come from the saucers, they're shining on both sides of the car, and the saucers are moving toward the mother ship and pulling us with them.
DOCTOR
Beams of light or cables?
RICHARD
Not cables. Not rope. Nothing. Just beams of light
DOCTOR
Do you believe that, Richard?
RICHARD
Yes, I believe it The beams of light are pulling us forward and ... Oh, Jesus, it's opening up! DOCTOR
The mother ship is opening up?

RICHARD
Yes, the mother ship is opening up. It's splitting along the bottom, just above the flashing lights... It's not split-

ting open, it's forming a ramp - the bottom's forming a ramp leading up into the mother ship and the car is being pulled up inside... Oh, my God, it's all white in there! All those people... Oh, Jesus!

DOCTOR

All right, you are very relaxed, very rested, deep deep in sleep, very relaxed, very comfortable, very peaceful, you have nothing to fear. You are being pulled up into the mother ship. You have nothing to fear. You are relaxed and can remember everything. You are being drawn up into the mother ship. What happened next? (The patient does not immediately respond.)

DOCTOR

What happened next, Richard?

RICHARD

I am on the hill. I am cold. I don't know where I am. I -

DOCTOR

You are not on the hill, Richard. You are jumping ahead. You are in the car with the woman and you are being drawn into the mother ship. Now what happened next? (The patient does not immediately respond.)

DOCTOR

Can you hear me, Richard?

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

What happened next, Richard?

RICHARD

I am on the hill. I am cold. I don't know where I am. I—

DOCTOR

You're skipping ahead, Richard. You are three days ahead. Go back to when you were pulled into the mother ship. What happened then?

RICHARD

Oh, God, it's all white! It's all white, it's so bright! All the people! Silhouettes! This is crazy! Oh, Jesus, oh God, I don't want to! I don't want to! I don't want to!

DOCTOR
Relax, you will relax, you are relaxed, you have nothing to fear. You are sleeping, deep sleep, sleeping deeper, very deep. You are deep, deep in sleep. You are relaxed and comfortable. You are relaxed and you will remember everything and you will answer my questions.
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
I want you to tell me what you think happened during the missing three days.
RICHARD
I don't know. DOCTOR But you think about it a lot?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
Would you like to know what happened?
RICHARD
Yes. No. I don't want to know.
DOCTOR
You just said you would like to know.
RICHARD
I want to know. I don't want to know. It frightens me.
DOCTOR
It won't frighten you if you discuss it It won't frighten you anymore. You can remember without feeling any fear. You will remember. You are remembering.
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
You are in the car. You are in the car with the woman. The car is being drawn into the mother ship and you see the white light. Do you see the white light?
RICHARD
Yes.

DOCTOR
The car is being drawn into the mother ship and you see the white light and silhouettes. Do you see the white light and silhouettes?
RICHARD
Oh Jesus!
DOCTOR
Do you see the white light and silhouettes?
RICHARD
Oh Jesus! Oh no!
DOCTOR
You are relaxed, very relaxed, deeply relaxed. There is nothing to fear. You are deep, deep in sleep, you are relaxed, and nothing can harm you. You are all right. You can answer my questions. Do you see the white light and silhouettes? (The patient does not immediately respond.)
DOCTOR
Can you hear me, Richard?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
The car is being drawn into the mother ship. You can see the white light and silhouettes. Now I want you to recall everything that happened. Tell me what happened.
RICHARD
All white.
DOCTOR
White?
RICHARD
Everything.
DOCTOR
Please explain that, Richard.
RICHARD
The walls are all white and the place is filled with light and the light is so bright it nearly blinds me. That's all I can see. The white walls, the bright haze. The silhouettes

are moving all around me, moving in toward the car.
DOCTOR
Go on.
RICHARD
I'm beginning to see better. The place is really very bright The silhouettes are men in coveralls, moving in around the car. Most of the men seem very small. They all seem about five feet tall. They're wearing one-piece coveralls, some black, some a silvery gray, and they have this sort of gray, wrinkled skin, metal noses, no lips. DOCTOR
All right You are very comfortable. You have nothing to fear. You say they had metal noses, no lips. Just what do you mean by that?
RICHARD
Metal noses. No lips. DOCTOR They were wearing masks like the pilots?
RICHARD
I don't know. I'm not sure. They looked like masks, but they seemed permanent The masks covered their nose and the lower half of the chin and seemed to be molded out of one piece of very thin metal. That's why there were no lips. The metal covered their lips. I could see the wrinkled skin on their foreheads and around their strange eyes.
DOCTOR
Strange eyes?
RICHARD
Oriental.
DOCTOR
You mentioned that before. Anything else?
RICHARD
The eyes were like the skin - they seemed dead. DOCTOR They were blind?
RICHARD
No. The eyes were looking at me, but they seemed dead.

DOCTOR
All right So these men surrounded the car.
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
What happened then?
RICHARD
They opened the car doors and pulled us out
DOCTOR
They had to pull you out?
RICHARD
I don't understand.
DOCTOR
Did they pull you out because you were frightened?
RICHARD
They didn't actually pull us out This man opened the door and took me by the arm and just sort of assisted me.
DOCTOR
You didn't resist?
RICHARD
No.
DOCTOR
I thought you were frightened.
RICHARD
I was just numb. I think I was numb with fear. I was dazed and felt weak. I got out automatically.
DOCTOR
And the woman did the same?
RICHARD
I don't know. I wasn't looking. I assume she did the same. I saw her standing beside me, fascinated, looking around her, smiling with that strange gleam in her eyes.
DOCTOR
Could she have been in a trance?
RICHARD
She could have been. Not quite. She was wide-awake.

DOCTOR
posthypnotic suggestion?
RICHARD
I don't know what that means.
DOCTOR
It doesn't matter. The men pulled you out of the car. Where was the car?
RICHARD
The car was inside the mother ship. DOCTOR You're sure of that?
RICHARD
Yes. I looked around me and saw the ramp swinging up and forming part of the wall. The ramp swung from the floor. It closed and formed part of the wall. It didn't make a sound when it closed, and then I saw the wall. The wall was white. It was very slightly curved. It curved horizontally and vertically and formed part of a dome. It was only part of a dome. It was shaped like a slice of orange. It was very large, very white, very bright, like part of an aircraft hangar.
DOCTOR
What made you think of an aircraft hangar?
RICHARD
I was in an aircraft hangar once. I remember that hollow ringing noise. The car was on the sort of ramp that you see in a garage, and the whole place looked like a hangar, a sort of large workshop.
DOCTOR
You saw machinery?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
What sort of machinery?
RICHARD
I don't know. I don't know much about machinery. It just seemed like an aircraft hangar because it had all this ma-

chinery and because it was big and sort of echoing. Also, all the men were wearing the coveralls.

DOCTOR

And the curved wall. What did you think that was?

RICHARD

It was just a curved wall. It was the inside of the outer wall of the mother ship, where the ramp had come down.

DOCTOR

All right, so the car was drawn up the ramp into the mother ship, the ramp was drawn up and became part of the wall, and the car came to rest on a sort of platform close to the inner wall.

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

Fine. Now you and the woman are standing beside the car, surrounded by the men in coveralls.

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

What happened next?

RICHARD

I looked at the men around me, wondering if they were wearing masks, and my fear got worse and I started to shake. Then one of the men walked up to me. Oh Jesus, those dead eyes! He stared at me and passed his hand across my face and then I felt a lot better.

DOCTOR

You weren't frightened anymore?

RICHARD

I went sort of limp. I mean, I went limp inside. I just emptied out, felt drained and light-headed, felt a bit removed from it all - it became like a dream.

DOCTOR

Yet you still felt awake?

RICHARD

I was aware of where I was. It just seemed more

 distant and unreal, as if I was dreaming.

DOCTOR

Were there any distinct sounds in the hangar?

RICHARD

A humming. A sort of humming vibration. All the time. It was constant DOCTOR

Was this similar to what you had experienced inside the car?

RICHARD

Similar, but almost imperceptible. I hardly heard it at all.

DOCTOR

Heard it or felt it?

RICHARD

Both.

DOCTOR

Did the men talk to you?

RICHARD.

No. No lips.

DOCTOR

They made no sound?

RICHARD

No.

DOCTOR

Go on.

RICHARD

There was an escalator near the car. They made us go up the escalator. One man walked ahead of us, another stayed behind us, and a third took my elbow and helped me to walk to the escalator. DOCTOR

What did the others do?

RICHARD

They surrounded the car. DOCTOR Why did they surround the car?

RICHARD I don't know. I didn't look back.

DOCTOR
All right. The man led you and the woman up the escala-tor.

RICHARD
Yes. The escalator took us up past plain bright white walls to a corridor that curved out of sight.

DOCTOR
Was the corridor curved to the wall of the mother ship?

RICHARD
Yes, I think so. I think it ran around the rim of the whole ship.

DOCTOR
Any windows?

RICHARD
No windows on the outside wall of the corridor. There were doors on the left. These doors were the kind that slide in and out - they didn't swing back on hinges.

DOCTOR
Go on.

RICHARD
We stood for a moment at the top of the escalator, and then one of the men told us to keep walking. We all walked along the corridor, past a lot of closed doors, and then, when we reached a certain door, the leading man made us stop.

DOCTOR
Just a moment, Richard. You just said that one of the men told you to keep walking.

RICHARD
He told us both to keep walking.

DOCTOR
But you said that these men never spoke.

RICHARD
They never spoke. They had no lips. The metal covered their lips.

DOCTOR
Yet you say one of the men spoke to you.

RICHARD
He told us to keep walking.

DOCTOR
How did he tell you? Did he speak to you?

RICHARD
He didn't talk. He just told us. I just knew.
DOCTOR
Did you actually hear him?
RICHARD
He told us to keep walking. I must have heard him.

DOCTOR
You think you heard him? You heard a voice in your head?

RICHARD
I don't know. I just heard him. DOCTOR But you're convinced that this man didn't actually speak?
RICHARD
He didn't talk. I just heard him.
DOCTOR
All right. You are standing at one of the doors.
RICHARD
The door opens. It seems to open automatically. It slides open, disappearing into the wall, and we walk through the doorway. The door makes me think of ships. It's like the hatchway of a ship. We walk through and the door closes behind us and we're all in a dimly lit room, a circular room, the walls white ... Oh, my God... I don't want to!

DOCTOR
It's all right you are relaxed, you are very relaxed, deep, deep in sleep and relaxed, you can see it and tell me.

RICHARD
It's eerie. DOCTOR Yes. The room is circular and dimly lit.

RICHARD
The wall is white and completely circular. The beds form a circle around us. There are people on the beds, there are men, women and children, and they're all wrapped in surgical gowns and have wires running out of them.
DOCTOR
Wires?
RICHARD
The wires are taped to them. There are wires and rubber tubes. All these things run back to the wall behind the beds and are fixed to machines. The machines have colored screens. Not colored, a sort of monochrome. I thought they were colored because I saw the lines of bright light jumping up and down.
DOCTOR
Have you ever seen an ECG machine?
RICHARD
I think so. In the movies.
DOCTOR
Is that what these machines looked like?
RICHARD
Yes. The room looked like a hospital ward - except for its shape.
DOCTOR
The circular shape.
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
All right Go on.
RICHARD
We were led to the far side of the room and taken through another door, and we entered another circular room, much bigger, very bright. There were a couple of surgical beds - no, like operating tables. There are people around the beds, and the walls are all lined with long glass cabinets... Oh please God, I don't want to!

DOCTOR
It's all right, you are relaxed, you are deep, deep in sleep, you are very relaxed and you can tell me, you have nothing to fear. What is it that you don't want to do?
RICHARD
I don't want to look at them.
DOCTOR
At what?
RICHARD
I don't want to look at the glass cabinets. DOCTOR
Why don't you want to look? What do you see in the glass cabinets?

RICHARD
People. Naked people. There are naked people in the glass cabinets. The glass cabinets are like coffins, the glass seems to be lightly frosted, and the naked people are lying in the cabinets with tubes running out of them. Oh God, I can't look at them!

DOCTOR
All right, Richard, it's all right, you're relaxed, you don't have to look at them. Relax, Richard. I just want to go over something I might have missed. In the room you've just come from, where the people were lying on the beds, did any of those people actually talk to you?
RICHARD
No. They couldn't They were unconscious.
DOCTOR
And the people in the glass cabinets?
RICHARD
I don't want to look at them! DOCTOR
It's all right. You don't have to look at them again. Just tell me: Were they unconscious?

RICHARD
They were unconscious or dead.

DOCTOR
Did you see anything that looked like an ECG machine?
RICHARD
Yes. There were machines like that above and between the glass cabinets.
DOCTOR
Were the lights on the screens jumping up and down?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
Fine. That means they were alive.
RICHARD
They were alive. They were unconscious.
DOCTOR
Fine, Richard. Now tell me about the people in the room.
RICHARD
They were ordinary.
DOCTOR
They looked like normal human beings?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
All right Go on. You are facing the people in the room.
RICHARD
They are both pleasant They are smiling at me and the woman. One is tall and slim, white hair, suntanned, I think in his fifties or late forties, but his forehead unlined.
DOCTOR
That was the only odd thing you noticed?
RICHARD
He was normal, but his forehead was unlined.
DOCTOR
And the other man?
RICHARD
He has no hair on his head. He looks normal, but he's bald. He seems older than the other man - not much, but a

bit older - and the skin on his face seems unreal, as if he's had plastic surgery. DOCTOR Do you know what plastic surgery looks like?

RICHARD
Yes. I had a friend who got burned. DOCTOR Were there any other men in the room?

RICHARD
Yes. There were three or four other men, all wearing white smocks and trousers, very young, adolescents, quite small, a bit foreign looking.

DOCTOR
Explain that, please.

RICHARD
They looked like Vietnamese. Something like that I'm not sure. They had strange eyes, narrow, Oriental ... I'm not sure. It seemed unreal.
DOCTOR
You still felt as if you were dreaming?
RICHARD
I never felt I was dreaming. It was just different I didn't feel frightened anymore. I felt nothing. Removed from it
DOCTOR
Did any of these men talk to you?
RICHARD
They talked to the men who had brought us there. They made them all leave. The men in white stood all around us, but they never said anything. The two normal men spoke to us.
DOCTOR
The same as before?
RICHARD
Pardon?
DOCTOR
Did you just hear their voices in your head or did they speak to you orally?

RICHARD
They were normal. They spoke to us. They spoke to me and the woman. They were pleasant and they asked us how we felt and I said I felt fine.
DOCTOR
Did you feel fine?
RICHARD
No. I felt weak. I felt very removed. I was confused and I felt half asleep, as if not really there.
DOCTOR
Why did you say you felt fine?
RICHARD
I just said it I didn't want to upset them.
DOCTOR
What did the woman say?
RICHARD
She didn't say anything. She just smiled.
DOCTOR
What did the men sound like when they talked?
RICHARD
They sounded normal. They were both speaking English. The younger man, the tall one, had a normal English accent - a sort of everyday American accent - and the older man spoke English like a foreigner. His English was very good, very good, but he had a strange accent
DOCTOR
What sort of accent?
RICHARD
I don't know. It sounded a bit European. I think it might have been German.
DOCTOR
What else did they talk about?
RICHARD
They talked quite a bit They wanted to know all about us. Our names, our ages - things like that - and they were very polite. The older man was very distant He watched more than he talked. I had the feeling he was older than he

looked, and he seemed very cold. The younger man was more informal. I think he said his name was Wilson. He kept asking us how we felt, if we were frightened, and he seemed very pleasant. The woman didn't say anything. I said I felt very tired. The man asked me if I knew where I was, and I just shook my head. He asked me if I'd like to know. I said that I would. He walked over to the wall and pressed a button and two white panels parted. There was a very large window there. I walked over and looked out I thought at first that I was looking at a painted screen, and then I really got scared. DOCTOR
It's all right. There's no need to be scared. Now what did you see?

RICHARD
Stars.
DOCTOR
Pardon?
RICHARD
Stars. Lots of stars. No real sky - just the stars. No up nor down, left nor right, just the stars in a blackness. Then the stars moved. The earth suddenly filled the window. The curved edge of the earth, wreathed in cloud, blue and white - like those movies the astronauts sent back... It all seemed like a dream.
DOCTOR
You were above the atmosphere?
RICHARD
Yes. I could see Brazil and the Argentine. We were way up in space.
DOCTOR
Are you sure this wasn't some kind of an illusion?
RICHARD
Illusion?
DOCTOR
You said that at first you thought it was a painted screen.

RICHARD
At first I thought it had to be. I think I was hoping that. I wanted it to be a painting or a film, because the other thing. frightened me.
DOCTOR
What other thing?
RICHARD
Actually being up there.
DOCTOR
Did the man at the window say anything at this point?
RICHARD
I asked him where we were. He said we were up in space. He said we were landing briefly on Paraguay and then flying on.
DOCTOR
Flying on to where?
RICHARD
He didn't say. I didn't ask him.
DOCTOR
Didn't you want to know?
RICHARD
I didn't think of asking. I was frightened. I think I was frightened.
DOCTOR
You said before that you weren't frightened anymore.
RICHARD
I can't explain it I wasn't as frightened as I should have been. I felt a bit unreal. I felt drugged... But there was fear. A sort of fear in the background. The fear was just there, very distant... I just wanted to please them.
DOCTOR
You say you felt drugged. Did you feel that they had some control over you?
RICHARD
I felt that I didn't control myself. I felt very strange.
DOCTOR
You were looking down at the earth. What happened next

RICHARD
The man, the younger man, pressed a button and the two panels closed again. Then they took the woman away. I mean, the bald man took her away. I think I must have looked a bit worried because the younger man reassured me.

DOCTOR
The one called Wilson.

RICHARD
Yes. He told me they wanted to examine the woman and that she wouldn't be harmed. He said that the bald man was going to examine her and that he - I mean Wilson -wanted to examine me. He said it wouldn't hurt. He said it was just routine. I don't know why, but that really reassured me. It seemed a natural thing to do. DOCTOR
You didn't wonder why he wanted to examine you?

RICHARD
I think I might have. I don't think I did much. I can't remember it clearly. DOCTOR
Why can't you remember it clearly?

RICHARD
I just can't I'm trying to think. I'm more tired. I'm suddenly feeling very tired and I just go and lie down on the bed.
DOCTOR
Are you still inside the spaceship, Richard?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
Has the man told you to lie down on the bed?
RICHARD
It's more like an operating table. DOCTOR Has the man told you to lie down on it?

RICHARD
I think he must have. I can't remember. He passed his hand over my face and I lay down. I felt very tired.

DOCTOR
Go on. (The patient does not respond.)
DOCTOR
I said, continue. (The patient does not respond.)
DOCTOR
Can you hear me, Richard?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
You are lying on the operating table. What happened next?
RICHARD
I woke up.
DOCTOR
You were asleep?
RICHARD
I woke up. I must have been asleep. I am in another room and the man, the one called Wilson, is waking me up. This room is very small. It is relatively small. There are only two beds and the woman is on the other bed. She's unconscious. She's wearing a metal cap. There are wires running out of it.
DOCTOR
How long were you sleeping?
RICHARD
No time. There is no sense of time. I just feel very drowsy.
DOCTOR
So, the man shakes you awake.
RICHARD
No. He is there. I wake up. The man doesn't touch me.
DOCTOR
Yes?
RICHARD
He is very pleasant. He smiles at me. I am frightened

because he is pleasant. It doesn't seem natural that he's pleasant, and I feel very frightened.

DOCTOR

Did he say anything?

RICHARD

He smiled and then asked me how I felt I said I felt very tired. He said that was all right, that it was natural to feel tired, and that I had a very strong will, great resistance, and would have to come back. I didn't know what he meant I said I didn't understand. He told me that I didn't have to worry, that I was going home soon. I said I didn't understand. I asked him where I was. I felt drugged and I asked this automatically, not thinking about it I asked him where I was. He said if I got up he would show me. I got up and we walked out of the room and passed through a laboratory.

DOCTOR

A laboratory?

RICHARD

A laboratory. It looked like a laboratory. It frightened me because of what was in there and I tried not to look.

DOCTOR

What frightened you?

RICHARD

The big jars. The things in cages. All the things in the big jars. The big jars were filled with a clear liquid and these things were just floating there. I felt a bit sick. I started to feel really scared. I didn't recognize half of these things, but I still felt upset.

DOCTOR

You didn't recognize half of the things. What did you recognize?

RICHARD

Eyeballs. Tongues. Maybe brains - I'm not sure. Things that looked like liver and intestines... things that made me feel ill.

DOCTOR

Were these items from humans or animals?

RICHARD
I don't know. I didn't look much... There was a corpse on a table, a human corpse, but its head was all gone.

DOCTOR
Anything else? (The patient does not respond.)
DOCTOR
Can you hear me, Richard?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
You mentioned cages. What was in the cages? (The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR
It's all right, Richard. You have nothing to fear. You are asleep, deep, deep in sleep, you are relaxed, you will be calm. You have nothing to fear, you will be calm, relaxed, you are calm. You are relaxed. Can you hear me?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
What was in the cages?
RICHARD
Heads... Human heads!
DOCTOR
It's all right, forget it, forget it, you have forgotten it. You are very calm, very relaxed, you are just passing through. Remember. I want you to remember. Are you in the laboratory?

RICHARD
We passed through a laboratory. We went along a curving corridor. The man was telling me that I would come back some day and that I should at least see it.
DOCTOR
See what, Richard?
RICHARD
Where we were.

DOCTOR You mean you were still in the mother ship?

RICHARD
No, I don't think I was in the mother ship. DOCTOR What made you think that?

RICHARD
The walls of the corridor were solid rock. They had been carved out of the rock. The corridor led into a large workshop with walls of sheer stone. The workshop wasn't large. It was really enormous. Not a workshop - a sort of factory or machine shop, filled with men and machines. DOCTOR
What sort of machines, Richard?

RICHARD
I don't know. Large machines. DOCTOR You are in the machine shop. What else did you see?

RICHARD
The walls were stone or rock. The roof was stone or rock. I think it was under the ground. In the ground. In a mountain. DOCTOR
Anything else?

RICHARD
I can't really remember. I can't remember it clearly. There were lots of machines, lots of people, hundreds of people, and there were catwalks running around the stone walls, catwalks above one another, running past what looked like giant computers, past brightly lit rooms. It looked like a factory. An underground factory. The people all worked like automatons. Hundreds of people.
DOCTOR
These people looked like normal human beings?
RICHARD
All the people looked normal. DOCTOR What else did you see?

RICHARD
Nothing. He showed me where we were. He took me up some steps to a platform and then pressed a button. There were steel panels on the wall. The steel panels slid apart. There was a really huge window, like a CinemaScope screen, and the panels slid away to expose it, and I saw where we were.
DOCTOR
Where were you?
RICHARD
I don't know. He wouldn't tell me.
DOCTOR
All right, Richard, what did you see?
RICHARD
Ice.
DOCTOR
I'll repeat the question: What did you see?
RICHARD
Ice. All ice. Hills and valleys of ice. The sun was shining and it flashed off the ice and the light nearly blinded me.
DOCTOR
Nothing but ice?
RICHARD
No. There was nothing but ice. Ice, maybe snow, a bright sky, very blue, the sun beating down and flashing off the ice and turning the ice into prisms. It was incredibly beautiful. It nearly took my breath away. There was nothing out there but the ice and the bright, flashing light The ice went out to the horizon. The sky was very blue. I looked up at the sky and saw a green valley surrounded by more ice. The ice was everywhere - down below, in the sky - and I stared at it and thought it was beautiful and that really frightened me.
DOCTOR
Why did it frighten you?
RICHARD
Because I knew that it must be another world, that I was far, far away.

DOCTOR It looked like another world?

RICHARD
It had to be another world. There was nothing like that on Earth. It was simply incredible.

DOCTOR
Did you ask the man where you were?

RICHARD
I asked him. I had to ask him. He wouldn't tell me.

DOCTOR
What did he say?

RICHARD
He said I would find out soon enough. He said we had to go back now.

DOCTOR
Back where?

RICHARD
I thought he meant back to the spaceship. I couldn't be sure.

DOCTOR
All right What next?

RICHARD
He pressed the button and closed the panels. He said he thought I had seen enough. He said that I wouldn't remember this, that I might remember some of it, but that whatever I remembered would be confused and wouldn't mean much. He said I had great resistance. He said that was interesting. He said that most people forget it, but that
I might be different He thought I was interesting. He wanted me to come back. He said that when I ceased my resistance I would be very useful. After that we went back along the corridor.

DOCTOR
Wait a minute, Richard. What do you think he meant by all that?

RICHARD
I don't know.

DOCTOR
You never thought about it?
RICHARD
I didn't remember it
DOCTOR
All right You went back along the corridor.
RICHARD
We went back along the corridor, through the laboratory, then into another room. There were a couple of surgical beds. The men in white smocks were there The leader, the man called Wilson - I think he was the leader - told me to lie down on a bed. It wasn't a bed: it was an operating table. I didn't want to lie down. I lay down and the men all stood around me and pulled the metal cap lower. I didn't want them to do that. I didn't want them to do that! I tried to refuse, but I can't move and they're putting it on me. I don't want them to do that! I don't want to I don't want to! I don't want them to put that on my head, oh please God... I don't want to I don't want to I don't want to!
DOCTOR
It's all right you are calm, you are relaxed, you are deep, deep in sleep, it's all right Are you calm now? (The patient does not respond.)
DOCTOR
Can you hear me, Richard?
RICHARD
Yes.
DOCTOR
What happened next, Richard? (The patient does not respond.)
DOCTOR
What happened next, Richard?
RICHARD
I am on the hill. I am cold. I don't know where I am. I—
DOCTOR
You are not on the hill, Richard. You are jumping ahead.

You are on the operating table and they are placing the metal cap on your head. Now tell me what happened. (The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR

There is nothing to fear, Richard, you can tell me, you will tell me what happened.

RICHARD

I am on the hill. I am cold. I don't know where I am. I—

DOCTOR

Deep deep sleep, you are deep, deep in sleep, you are relaxed, you have nothing to fear, you are very relaxed ... You are on the operating table. They are placing the metal cap on your head. You have nothing to fear, you are relaxed, you can tell me what happened. What happened, Richard?

(The patient does not respond.) DOCTOR

You can tell me, you have nothing to fear, you are relaxed, vou can tell me. What happened, Richard?

RICHARD

No.

DOCTOR

You can tell me, you have nothing to fear, you are relaxed, you will tell me. What happened, Richard?

RICHARD

I didn't want to lie down. I lay down. I didn't want to lie down. I lay down and the men all stood around me and pulled the metal cap lower. I didn't want them to do that I didn't want them to do that! I tried to refuse, but I can't move and they're putting it on me. I don't want them to do that! I don't want to I don't want to! I don't want them to put that on my head, oh please God... I don't want to I don't want to I don't want— DOCTOR

It's all right, you are calm, you are relaxed, you are deep, deep in sleep, it's all right, you can tell me ... What happened, Richard?

W. A. Harbinson (The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR

Can you hear me, Richard?

RICHARD

Yes.

DOCTOR

What happened next, Richard? (The patient does not respond.)

DOCTOR

What happened next, Richard?

RICHARD

I am on the hill. I am cold. I don't know where I am. I—

DOCTOR

All right, Richard, well leave it for now. You are in deep deep sleep, very deep, deep asleep, you are relaxed, you are very relaxed, you are sleeping, deep sleep. In a moment you can wake up. You will remember nothing that's been said between us. You will not remember until I ask you to remember, you are asleep, deep deep sleep. All right, Richard, you are wakening now, you are wakening, wakening slowly, you are very slowly wakening. You can wake up, Richard.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Looking out of the rear window of the large, comfortable London taxi, the first thing that struck Epstein with pleasure was the peculiar beauty of the pearly gray afternoon light, falling now, through a drifting layer of clouds, on the stately grandeur of Parliament Square, on the Guildhall and Big Ben, on the tourists who milled about on the pavements dominated by statues. Epstein loved the English light He had loved it since the war. There was something about that mild, misty gray that pacified the most fearful soul.

'How do you like being back?' Campbell asked. 'It's been an awfully long time.'

'How long?'

'About ten years,' Campbell said. 'You came over quite a lot in those days. You were a regular tourist.'

Epstein smiled and rubbed his eyes. The taxi was racing past the Cenotaph. He gazed at the Foreign Office, at Downing Street and the Treasury Buildings, saw the tourists around Horse Guards Parade, the soldiers stiff in red uniforms.

'There were a lot of conferences then,' he said. There isn't much happening now. The British are very secretive about UFOs, so there's no point in coming.'

'It's better in America?'

'For good and for ill. But once you sort the wheat from the chaff, then, yes, it's better.'

Campbell, sitting beside Epstein in the back of the taxi, wearing a pinstripe suit, black shoes and a flamboyant tie, studied the glittering ring on his finger and nodded judi-ciously.
'I know what you mean,' he said. 'We British are tight-lipped. The Official Secrets Act blankets all - we're not as free as we think we are.'
The taxi was pulling out of Whitehall into the massed traffic of Trafalgar Square, the four lions staring eternally, flocks of pigeons above the fountains, Nelson's Monument soaring up to the sky, the National Gallery beyond it. Epstein studied the scene with sadness, remembering other days, better days, the days when he had felt more assured, his youthful innocence shielding him. Those days were gone forever and would never return. They had slipped away quietly, stealing dreams and good health, leaving him more restless and defeated, overwhelmed by his future. He didn't want to think of the hospital. He didn't want to be that brave. He coughed into his fist and looked out and saw the steps of the church.
'St Martin in the Fields,' Campbell said.
'What are those people doing there?'
'Some sort of demonstration,' Campbell said. 'They always demonstrate there.'
The light was different here, darker, subtly tainted with carbon monoxide: the waste of the traffic that endlessly circled the square and caused chaos in the surrounding West End streets. Epstein rubbed his eyes wearily, slumping deeper into his seat, suffering the acute disappointment that comes to old men when they discover that the past has slipped away and cannot be recaptured.
'It's a pity about Stanford,' Campbell said. 'I'm really sorry he couldn't come. It's not like him to miss a trip to London. You must be keeping him busy.'
'He didn't want to come,' Epstein said.
'Stanford? You can't be serious.'
'I'm serious. He didn't want to come. He's been a bit obsessed lately.'

'Don't tell me he's in love.'
'It's not a woman,' Epstein said.
'With Stanford it's always a woman... and our young friend can pick them.'
Epstein smiled understanding. 'You sound disappointed,' he said. 'Anyway, it really isn't a woman. He's obsessed with his work.'
'You mean UFOs?'
'That's right.'
'That doesn't sound like Stanford.'
'Stanford's changed a lot,' Epstein said. 'He's not the man you remember.'
'You think the UFOs are real?'
'Yes, I think they're real. And now Stanford... he thinks they're real as well, and it's made him obsessed.'
The taxi slowed down at Cambridge Circus, inching carefully into the traffic, and Epstein looked out and saw the shuffling crowds, the gutters littered with rubbish. The city was dirtier, its buildings grim and unpainted, the pervading grayness no longer romantic, enshrining neglect Everything changed, decayed, came to nothing, and he pulled his eyes away and stared inward, ashamed of his dark thoughts.
'Those transcripts were extraordinary,' he said. 'What's your assessment?'
'I agree with you,' Campbell said. 'I think it's a rather amazing story. I've gone over the tapes time and time again, but can't reach a conclusion.'
'Why not?'
'I'm just confused. I don't know what to believe. It's the most incredible story I've ever heard under hypnosis, and I'm afraid it's just left me rather baffled.'
'Is it a true experience or isn't it?'
'It's a true experience to Richard.'
'But that doesn't necessarily mean that it actually happened?'
'No, I'm afraid it doesn't.'
Epstein sighed and stared out at Tottenham Court Road,

feeling weary after his flight from Kennedy to Heathrow, a slight nausea in his stomach, his head throbbing, a little dizzy from jet lag.
'It's a very elaborate story,' he said. 'He always returns to the exact same story. If the story isn't true, what does it mean? Why does he think it's true?'
'I don't know,' Campbell said. 'I'm not sure. Something trau-made obviously happened to him when he was hitchhiking to Cornwall, and it's possible that he's just trying to conceal it.'
'From himself?'
'Yes.'
'Even under hypnosis?'
'Yes, even under hypnosis. They can get rather tricky.'
Epstein sighed and glanced outside, saw the shops with plate glass windows, an abundance of tape recorders and televisions and stereo equipment, the audio and visual stimuli of a society increasingly divorced from its senses. There was input and output. The whole world was being programmed: plug in and turn on and forget that the real world exists... Yet what was the real world? Where did fact and fantasy join? Young Richard Watson's experience was very real - and yet may never have happened.
'All right,' Epstein said. 'Let's suppose he's hiding something. He's been shocked and he can't face up to it, so he creates a whole fantasy. Yet, if that's true, what would make him think of UFOs? He never thought about UFOs before, so why think of them now?'
'Not true,' Campbell said. 'He thought occasionally about UFOs. Like all of us, he'd read about them and discussed them now and then - not often, but he definitely did it, so they were there in his head.'
'Hardly enough to make him switch on to UFOs when he suffers amnesia.'
'Well, there is something else,' Campbell said. 'A few weeks back I had a quiet conversation with Richard's father, and he gave me some interesting information. It seems that his father - now an engineer with British Leyland - was a

Royal Air Force navigational pilot during World War II, and that when Richard was a child his father used to tell him about the mysterious "balls of fire" that were seen by a lot of pilots and have since gone down in UFO literature as the first genuine reports of contemporary UFO sightings. What we are told we remember - and Richard could have remembered
that. ‘Anything else?’
'Yes. According to Richard's father, he used to embellish these stories - just to scare the hell out of Richard - by telling him that the balls of fire were actually flying saucers, that they were piloted by extraterrestrials, and that the extraterrestrials had a secret base in the Antarctic, from where they made all their forays.'
'That's an old UFO myth,' Epstein said.
'Precisely.'
'So you think that this might account for the landscape of ice and snow that Richard mentions?'
'Yes. There is a pattern there. First he remembers the balls of fire, immediately thinks of them as extraterrestrial, and then associates them with a landscape of ice and snow. It could account for his story.'
'All right... But what would start it in the first place?'
Campbell shrugged. 'Who knows? That's the area he won't discuss. As you could judge from the transcripts, there's a point in his narrative beyond which he refuses to go. That point, obviously, is the actual incident that kicked him off, but he just doesn't want to face up to it.'
Epstein sat back, coughed again and rubbed his eyes, felt despair as they turned before Warren Street Station and headed for Harley Street. The fantasy and the fact The dream and the reality. He thought of the lights outside Galveston, of the enormous disc in the Caribbean, of the deaths and the disappearances and the contradictions in Air Force policy, and he realized that the dividing line was thin and could in truth be a mirage... And yet he had to know. His time was running out. He didn't want to take his last breath before the

truth was revealed to him. Epstein felt a growing rage. He wanted to smash down all the walls. He wanted to do it for Mary, for Irving and for himself, for all the people who had suffered or passed away while the mystery remained. The taxi turned into Harley Street, stopped in front of Campbell's office. Epstein climbed out, leaving Campbell to pay, and felt a rising impatience.
'Here we are,' Campbell said. The home of the brave.'
'How long before Richard's appointment?'
'Twenty minutes. After you, sir.'
Campbell opened the front door, ushered Epstein inside then led him to the ancient elevator with its polished brass gate. Epstein felt trapped in the elevator, silently cursed its creaking lethargy, was relieved when they stepped out into the corridor and entered the office. Campbell had the same secretary. She had been with him for fifteen years. Epstein noticed how she had aged, said You haven't changed a bit,' shook her hand then followed Campbell through the door that led into his office. Campbell closed the door behind him, pointed to a chair in front of the desk, and Epstein nodded and gratefully sat down, breathing heavily, coughing.
'That's a bad cough,' Campbell said.
'Yes,' Epstein replied.
'Did you eat on the plane?'
'Don't remind me,' Epstein said.
'Then a brandy won't do you too much harm. A large or a small?'
'Make it large,' Epstein said.
Campbell went behind his desk, opened a cupboard below it, and pulled out a bottle of Remy Martin and two empty glasses. He poured two stiff shots, slid a glass across to Epstein, then sat back and put his feet on the desk, his glass to his lips. Epstein slowly sipped his brandy, felt it burning down inside him, making his head light and bright, his eyes watering slightly. It did him some good, warmed him up, eased his panic, but it didn't stop the growth of his rage, his increasing frustration. He coughed again and cursed mildly.

remembering the hospital in New York: they had confirmed what he had known all along, but now the truth was pursuing him. One year, maybe two. The doctor who told him had actually smiled. Epstein thought again of what he had learned and then tried to forget it.

'You had another session with Richard,' he said. 'Did you menage to crack him?'

'No,' Campbell said. The same routine, the same results. The minute you try to fill in the gaps, he refuses to answer.'

'You tried to bully him into it?'

'Yes. He started panicking. He just won't face up to the missing period, and I can't push too hard.'

'He's coming in twenty minutes?'

'Fifteen minutes. He's very punctual.'

'I want to know,' Epstein said. 'I want you to give him the pentothal. Believe me, James, it's very important... we must get him to talk.'

'It could be dangerous,' Campbell said. 'He's not just frightened - he's terrified. I'm not sure what will happen if we force him, and that makes me nervous.'

'Listen.' Epstein leaned forward, placed his glass on the desk, clasped his hands together and spoke urgently, with a quiet, clipped precision. This is the most remarkable encounter case I have yet come across. It could be true, and if it's true, it's important. It's more than important - it's vital - and we've got to find out I'm not trying to invent UFOs. I actually know they exist. I don't know what they are or where they come from, but I know they're for real. I've seen one myself. Stanford and I saw it together. It was enormous and bright and very clear, and it was visible a long time. That UFO abducted a scientist Stanford and I were the last to see him. Now the CIA is breathing down our necks, and their breath doesn't smell nice. They don't believe our story - at least they say they don't believe it - but I have reason to think that they might believe it, and that their concern is caused by the fact that we actually saw it Don't ask me why just yet I'm beg-ging you, just believe me. Apart from that the CIA is

hounding us, they're calling our story rubbish, and so now, apart from natural curiosity, we have good cause to know. Richard might be what we need. He might unlock all the se-crets. We've got to take the chance - we've got to crack him -because we've got to find out.'

Campbell stared hard at Epstein, his eyes luminous and searching, then he let his feet fall to the floor and leaned over the desk.

'You've actually seen one?' he asked.

'Yes.'

'I don't believe that'

'Stanford and I saw it together - and we didn't imagine it It was there a long time. There was an old boat beneath it It cast light and shadow on the boat. It was there. It existed.'

Campbell shook his head. 'I can't believe this,' he said.

'I'm not lying,' Epstein said. 'I don't lie. You know I don't lie.'

Campbell sat up straight, cupped his hands beneath his chin, pursed his lips and shook his head wearily.

'It's too ridiculous,' he said. 'And I don't just mean the UFOs. Richard's whole story is like a dream - it's a typical dream.'

'Typical? How?'

'Because Richard was seeing it. He wasn't involved in it -he was watching it. He was on the outside, looking in, surveying his own dream. He's not active in that narrative. He has no volition or will at all. All his actions are dictated by the other characters, and he never resists. He's not really a participant He's merely an observer. At no point in the narrative does he display the slightest resistance to these men: what they will, he then does. It's a denial of responsibility, a repudiation of his own will. It's the classic dream of someone abdicating: the very heart of amnesia.'

'And that's all it is?'

'Probably.'

'All right, let's assume that it actually happened. Would his total lack of will be all that unusual?'

'I don't know what you mean.'
'James, one of the most common aspects of contactee cases is the apparent lack of will, or resistance, on the part of the contactee. Contactees frequently talk of how, though frightened, they felt drawn toward the aliens, felt they were obeying the aliens - even when the aliens appeared not to have actually spoken. Again, just as in Richard's case, the common denominator seems to be a feeling of remoteness, of divorce from the self, with the contactees invariably behaving like zombies. Now, with this particular case we have the same thing. The woman, for instance, is initially terrified, but then, as soon as the beam of light hits her, she becomes remarkably calm. Likewise with Richard. The beam of light that hits the woman misses Richard and therefore leaves him unaffected. However, when the alien raises his hand, another beam of light hits Richard and temporarily renders him unconscious - and this time, when Richard awakens, he still feels the fear, but he's also dazed and feels a bit removed, without much resistance. Thereafter, whenever Richard feels frightened, these men simply wave a hand across his eyes and he goes limp and feels remote again. Also, as with other contactees, Richard does what the men tell him, but believes that they're not actually speaking to him... Now is that so impossible?'
Campbell leaned on the desk again, one hand folded upon the other, his checks slightly flushed, his gaze serious, his interest increasing.
'You mean hypnotism?' he asked.
'Why not?' Epstein said. There's nothing particularly extraordinary about that - and you know its effects. As you yourself have told me, once a person has been conditioned to accept the hypnotic state, a simple phrase or a gesture can be used to put them into a trance immediately. Thus, the alien just has to pass his hand across Richard's eyes, and Richard will immediately go into an hypnotic trance - but still awake, his eyes open.'
'That's possible,' Campbell said. 'And you think the beam

of light was some sort of hypnotizing device?'
'It could be,' Epstein said. There need be nothing particu-larly magical about it Bear in mind that both light and sound can have extraordinary mental and physical effects on nor-mal people- For instance, a light flickering somewhere in the alpha-rhythm range, between eight and twelve cycles a sec-ond, can cause extremely violent reactions in the person exposed to it, including jerking limbs, faintness, lightness in the head, or unconsciousness. It is scientifically possible, therefore, that the beam of light described by Richard was some sort of laser beam that simply flickered on and off at the particular rate which affects the brain's basic rhythmic pat-terns and encourages hypnosis. As for the strange humming, or vibrating, sounds that also appear to affect the listener, it's a scientific fact that infrasounds, which are just below the limit of human hearing - hence Richard's uncertainty about whether he heard or felt the noise - can affect humans in the same way as flickering lights; indeed, certain low frequency sounds can lead not only to a change in the brain's rhythmic patterns, but to actual physical changes, such as the breaking of glass or the killing of human beings by crushing their in-sides with pure vibration. Given this, I'm not being particularly farfetched when I suggest that the beam of light, combined with the vibrating sounds, could have led to the initial state of hypnosis.'
'Yes, Frederick, that's feasible.'
'Good. Now while we're still on this subject, there is one thing that constantly crops up in contactee cases and could possibly tie in with all this. Time and time again we are told of how the so-called aliens pressed the contactee on the side of the neck - either by hand or with a metal device - and thereby rendered the contactee unconscious or temporarily without will. Could this be related to hypnotism?'
'My God, yes, it could... In fact, it's a standard form of hypnotism: the instantaneous technique, or the carotid procedure.'
'Which is?'

Campbell shrugged. 'It's simple biology. You merely apply pressure to a blood vessel near the ear, thus inhibiting the heart rate, interfering with the circulation of blood to the brain, and rendering the subject dazed and confused, susceptible to suggestion.' 'And is there such a thing as waking hypnosis?' 'Yes. The patient is wide-awake, knows where he is and what he is doing, but is actually doing what he has been told to do by his hypnotist. Incidentally, on the opposite end of the scale - and this could certainly apply in Richard's case - the subject can be hypnotized when sleeping quite normally. You simply attract the attention of the sleeping subject with some sort of physical contact, hypnotize him by repeatedly telling him that he can hear your voice, have him perform what it is you require of him, then very gently put him back to sleep. He will later wake up, as per normal, and know nothing about it.'

'That could have happened to Richard when he awakened on the strange bed and found the man called Wilson standing over him.'

'Precisely.'

'And what about posthypnotic suggestion?'

'What about it?'

'I just thought it interesting that according to Richard's narrative he was told that he would remember nothing that had occurred - or at least that he might remember some of it, but that the little he remembered would be confused and probably not make much sense. That seems to be what's happened: Richard still can't remember it - it only comes back under hypnosis; but even there, it's pretty vague and disconnected ... and there's something still missing.'

Well, sticking to our hypothesis, yes, that's also quite possible. Assuming that Richard was hypnotized, any instructions to forget what had occurred would certainly make him forget.'

'And there's nothing particularly mysterious about this type of hypnosis?'

'No. Quite routine.' Campbell picked up his glass and had another sip of brandy, then licked his lips and set the glass down and folded his hands again. 'You know, it is interesting,' he said. 'According to Richard, the man told him that he had a very strong will, great resistance, and that while most people forgot the experience, Richard himself might remember it.'
'So?'
'For a start, the remark confirms that the experience has been undergone by other people.'
'Yes. Richard's account certainly ties in with a lot of other such cases, most notably the Barney and Betty Hill affair of 1961 and the Pascagoula case of 1973.'
'A great similarity there, certainly. I remember both cases.'
'That was for a start. What else is there?'
'Well, dear boy, still leaning on our hypothesis, it is to be noted that when the woman was hypnotized bv the beam of light - assuming, of course, that she was hypnotized - she went into what appears to be a trance, a wide-awake trance, and apparently experienced no further fear. On the other hand, when Richard was likewise affected by the light, he became more remote but did not in fact lose his sense of fear. Now this could account for that strange man's assessment of Richard: that he had a very strong will and great resistance, Accepting this, it is then possible that the woman, even if hypnotized, might not remember what happened to her; whereas a certain kind of person - a person like our Richard - would remember a certain amount under hypnosis. In short, while your so-called aliens can apparently make people forget their experiences, their success in this field is rather limited.'
'And Richard?'
'Even with Richard, had he not come for hypnosis, he would never have remembered it at all.'
'Yet his dreams were a sort of recall.'
'Right,' Campbell said. 'Another clue to his resistance. Richard remembered some of the happenings in his dreams, but didn't know what they meant It's also worth noting that

his dream - and it was the same dream every time - involves a group of men standing around him while he's lying on a bed. From what he's told us, that can only be when he was forced to lie down on the bed and they put the metal cap on his head - the experience he refuses to detail further.' 'Refuses to detail or simply can't remember.' 'Okay,' Campbell said. 'Let's assume that his captors actually existed and that everything we've talked about actually happened. The man called Wilson was obviously intrigued by Richard's unusual strength of will and told him that he would have to come back. Let us suppose, then, that the metal cap was a stereotaxic skullcap, that it was used to implant a minute electrode in Richard's skull to reinforce his inability to remember... Now, when one tries to force Richard to recall that particular incident in detail, he not only displays considerable stress, but also clutches his head and shakes it with great violence - and later awakens with an extremely bad headache ... Is it therefore possible that Richard has been programmed to feel pain and fear when he tries to recall that event? And, further, that they want him to return in order to check out the relative success or failure of the implantation?'

Epstein rubbed his eyes and smiled. 'We've just come full circle,' he said. 'Now you're the one asking the questions. You must be a believer.'

Campbell grinned and put his hands up. 'I accept defeat,' he said. 'Now you've got me as curious as yourself, another obsessed man.' 'Good,' Epstein said. 'I like to hear that. So, is it possible?' Campbell shrugged. 'It's possible,' he said. 'Implantation of electrodes in the brain has been going on for years -overtly in animals, covertly in human beings, with the latter experiments kept rather secret. What is known is that electrodes implanted in the human brain have been used successfully to activate both paralyzed and artificial limbs, to control otherwise uncontrollable muscular spasms, such as in Parkinson's Disease, to pacify violent mental patients and

prisoners, and even to initiate "thought control" between a human controller and a computer. Now, given that any form of human brain manipulation can have frightening social and political possibilities, a lot of the experiments on human beings have been conducted behind closed doors, most notoriously in mental institutions and state prisons - and the results of these experiments are thus not widely known. Nevertheless, given what has already been accomplished, and what might have been accomplished in secret, it is safe to assume that the sort of programming we're talking about is well within the bounds of possibility.'

'How are the subjects controlled?'

'Well, it's on the record that the reflexes and appetites of various animals have been controlled at a reasonable distance by a controller sitting behind a computer-linked console. Such an animal can be made to stand up, sit down, eat or starve itself to death, play, fight, collapse in terror - just about anything. Regarding human beings, we have, to date, only been able to stimulate specific areas of the brain, and do it, reportedly, under immediate visual control. Regarding long-distance control, it is reasonable to assume that the particular response required would be programmed at the time of the implantation - fed into the brain via the computer - and would be limited to one or two responses only. To put it at its simplest - and taking Richard as our hypothetical case -yes, they could have implanted an electrode in his brain and programmed him to feel pain and terror each time he attempted to think of a particular incident In other words, it's quite possible that when I try to force Richard to recall the skullcap incident, the very thought of it might stimulate the terror and the crippling headaches - a terror and pain caused by the implanted electrode.'

'Another form of hypnosis,' Epstein said.

'No,' Campbell said. Total mind control.'

'You mean that by taking this technology to its ultimate limits we could very simply steal a man's mind?'

'That's right,' Campbell said.

Epstein sat up in his chair, suddenly excited and energetic, feeling that he was standing on the edge of a precipice, about to leap across to the unknown. The possibilities were bound-less, the implications awesome, and the truth was probably locked in Richard's mind. They had to pick the lock, had to force the door open. The risk would be great, but the rewards could be greater: the final unraveling of that mystery which now teased the whole world. Epstein shivered and felt feverish, his head light and very bright, no longer drained by fear and depression and thoughts of his future.

'We've got to!' Epstein snapped. 'We've got to use the Pentothal! We've got to use it during this session and find out what happened!'

'I'm not sure,' Campbell said.

'We've got to!' Epstein insisted.

'It might be too early for that. Too early. Too dangerous.'

'Damn you, James, it's important!'

'It's not that important, Frederick. You've been at this game for thirty years - you can wait a bit longer.'

'I can't,' Epstein said, and felt ashamed as soon as he said it. 'I've got cancer. I've got two years at the most I won't live beyond that.'

Campbell stared at him, shocked. Both of them: shocked. They stared at one another a long time, the silence enslaving them. Then Epstein looked away, kept his eyes on the floor. He suddenly seemed very old, very frail, his face lined with exhaustion.

'I've got to know,' he said eventually. 'I can't die without knowing. As you say, I've been at it for thirty years, but now I think I can solve it. It's the most important thing in my life. A lot of people have suffered for it. I can't get this close and let go,.. and every day it's more urgent. It's not just for me. It's not purely selfish. It's for Irving and Mary and all the others who were ruined trying to crack it. There's something going on, James. It's not an illusion; it's very real. Now my time is running out and I'm close, very close, and I can't sit back and hope that Richard remembers... I have to know now.'

Campbell sighed and stood up, turned away, stared out the window, looked once at his watch and frowned slightly, his back still turned to Epstein.
'All right,' he finally said. 'I'll give Richard Pentothal. After that, no matter what he tells us, I'll have his head X-rayed.'
He turned around and sat down. They stared silently at one another. The neat room was as quiet as a tomb and nei-ther knew what to say. They both sat there, feeling stricken. They both checked their watches regularly. They both sat there for a very long time, but Richard never showed up.

When did Kammler and Nebe die? It was a long time ago. They were gassed as they slept in their rooms, and then I had them cremated. I didn't really have a choice. My implants were not perfected. We were still using the Death's Head SS, and their obscene forms of discipline. It was shortly after the war. Kammler and Nebe showed much resentment. Power corrupts and they both had great power and started plotting against me. I could not let this happen. My life's work had reached fruition. Hidden deep in the immense, frozen wilderness, the colony functioned. Thus I had to get rid of them. Their room doors locked automatically. They never knew all the time they were there that the walls could spit gas. They died on their own beds. The room was aired and they were removed. They were taken to the crematorium in the base of the mountain, incinerated, turned to smoke and ash, leaving me independent.

How ironic was their death. It was a death befitting them both. For how many had they themselves sent to the gas chambers during those nightmare years? I think particularly of Kammler. SS General Hans Kammler. Kammler planned the concentration camps, supervised the plans for Birkenau, was responsible for its four great gas chambers and its vile cremato-ria. A handsome, ruthless man. Energetic and decisive. His gross ambition, and his total lack of scruples, made him someone worth knowing.

August 1943. Himmler then was at his peak. His lust for

power had increased every year and he was then almost godlike Yet that wasn't enough. Himmler wanted more and more. Most particularly, he wanted control of the V-2 rockets and all those who worked on them. He had tried for that and failed. Then Peenemiinde was bombed. Himmler suggested to Hitler that Peenemunde had been betrayed, and that his SS should take control immediately. Hitler agreed to this. Himmler now had full control. He immediately moved mass production of the rockets to the caves near Nordhausen. General Kammler was put in charge. He became Himmler's right-hand man. When that happened, I had to do something to protect my own project.

Those were dangerous years. The war was not going well. The Russian offensive was a disaster, Italy had fallen to the Allies, Hitler's physical and mental health was collapsing, and the Reich was in ruins. My own position was no better. As I remember, it was precarious. I now doubted Himmler's sanity and will, and this made me uneasy. The slaves were still being sent to Kiel. From there they went to the wilderness. The great caves were expanding under the ice, but they seemed far away. I wondered if I would ever get there. I no longer trusted Himmler. As disaster followed disaster for the Reich, I saw his brimming hysteria. I still wanted the wilderness. I knew I couldn't depend on Himmler. His hysteria was making him indecisive and that meant he was dangerous. I still wanted the wilderness, I didn't want Himmler there, and I met Kammler in 1943 and was drawn to his ruthlessness.

Kammler knew of my project. Himmler sent him to check it out. I was then at the BMW Platz near Prague, still working unceasingly. I knew the war would soon be lost. I was playing a double game. This game was very dangerous, very tricky, and I had to be careful. I still badly needed Himmler. His facilities were essential. Yet I knew that he now lived in fear of being found out by Hitler. After all, it was betrayal: Himmler was building his private empire. If the Fuhrer discovered his intentions, he would have Himmler executed. Thus Himmler became frightened. In his mild eyes there was frenzy. He had promised to give der Fuhrer great new weapons, and der Fuhrer was

restless. I didn't dare complete the saucer. Not until I reached the wilderness. I was frightened that Himmler's growing confu-sion might make him give it to Hitler. That would mean the end of everything. The Allies would take it over. As for myself, I would be classed as a war criminal, and probably hanged.

On top of this, there was Schriever. The Flugkapitan was ambitious. Yet another of Himmler's scientific pets, he had the need to impress him. Schriever's eyes devoured my saucer. He was in competition with me. I knew that if the saucer was completed, he would take all the credit. Already I had seen him do this. He had the slyness of a simple man. Himmler insisted that we share the whole project, and I knew what that meant. I was Himmler's secret. The Flugkapitan was not. Once the cause was completed I would simply disappear, and then Himmler could offer der Fuhrer the saucer as a German achievement. So, Schriever was a threat. He wanted credit for my achievements. Because of this, I withheld a great deal and understated my progress. Schriever worked from doctored drawings. I gave him enough to make it credible. The Schriever saucer could rise and hover briefly, but it didn't yet fly. I had to let it progress slowly. Not muck, but enough. Meanwhile, in the BMW plant, I quietly finished the real work.

My one thought was for the wilderness. The hangers increased beneath the snow. Sooner or later I would have to escape and join the vast, hidden colony. I could not depend on Himmler. His rising panic had made him treacherous. I could tee, in his fear and indecision, that he might never leave. I needed another ally. Another man of gross ambition. I met Kammler in the BMW Platz and felt that here was my man.

Kammler was an organizer. He was ruthless and decisive. More important: his ambition was boundless, his selfishness total. I worked on him very slowly. It took months, but I was patient. Kammler's one thought, at the time, was self-survival, and that's what I played on. He already knew of the hidden colony. He was startled and intrigued. I could see, as I unveiled further facts, that he was drawn to the notion. The Reich was crumbling all about him. There were plots and counterplots.

The Nazis were devouring their own kind and survival was difficult. Then, of course, there were the Allies. Kammler knew the war was lost. He also knew that if the Allies took him prisoner they would certainly hang him. Kammler had to get out of Ger-many. He had to disappear completely. When I knew this, I told him my plan and he said he would join me.

That same month he went to see Himmler and blatantly lied to him. He painted me in a black light. He praised Schriever to the skies. He claimed that my own project was a mess, that I was stealing from Schriever. I was too old, he said. Flugkapitan Schriever was young and bright. He said that Schriever should be given his own project and encouraged much more. Himmler wasn't too sure. Kammler pressed home his point. He reminded Himmler that the Allied invasion had begun and that he should take precautions. Kummersdorft West should be evacuated. The American and Schriever should be separated. Kammler suggested that I be moved to the mountainous region of Thuringia, and that Schriever be moved to Mahren. It was better that way, he said. Schriever could then work unencumbered. Himmler, now dependent on Kammler, promptly gave his permission.

I was moved out shortly after. At last I was free of Schriever. In Kahla, in the mountains of Thuringia, I completed my major work. Himmler never knew about it. Kammler told him I was not progressing. Himmler eventually turned his attentions away from me and focused them all on young Schriever. That was just what we wanted. We were not concerned with Schriever. I had insured that Schriever's flying saucer project would never succeed.

June 25,1944. In my office in the research center at Kahla, I talked to Kammler and Nebe. I remember it well. SS General Artur Nebe. A man whose very name suggested terror and the screams from the basements. General Nebe was ice and fire. He had the cunning of a rat. He was a man who did not show his feelings, who worked quietly and ruthlessly. An exemplary record in the Gestapo. Extermination squads in Russia. With such work he had gutted his soul and embraced the unthinkable. Nebe knew how to survive. He was a master of intrigue.

He had trampled on the bones of countless comrades to protect his own skin. A dangerous man, certainly. Also, a cold realist. And that day in my office in Kahla his eyes were wide open.

General Nebe was escaping. There had been an assassina-tion attempt. The Fuhrer had survived the explosion and was now seeking vengeance. The reprisals were terrible. Himmler's men were butchering hundreds. A lot of officers were fleeing for their lives, disappearing forever. General Nebe was such a man. He had been forced to desert. Kammler had told him of what we were doing and he now wished to join us.

Nebe controlled the escape route. His most fanatical SS men joined him. Those men formed the chain that stretched from Kahla to the port in the Baltic. I often watched the trains pull out. The SS cracked their whips. The dogs snapped at the feet of the children as they wept on the platform. Many came from the concentration camps. Others came from the Lebensborn. We stole children from all over Europe and marked them for slavery. The trains took them to Kiel. The ships and submarines devoured them. They vanished off the face of the earth and were not seen again.

Meanwhile, I continued working. My time was running out. The final components for the saucer were in production, but had not yet been tested. The Red Army was in Warsaw. Very soon it would reach the Oder. I had to complete the saucer and test it before the Russians arrived.

Kammler helped me all he could. His authority was considerable. What we didn't have, he took from other scientists and less powerful research centers. Hitler was dreaming of secret weapons. He spared no expense in getting them. All over Germany, even as the bombs were falling, the scientists worked night and day. There was an Atom Bomb project. There were electrical submarines. There were laser beams and infrared warheads and remote-control systems. The Kaiser Wilhelm Institut. The Forschungsinstitut of Lindau am Bodensee. From such places I stole what might help to enhance my own project. The swirling energy of the Feuerball. A porous metal called Luftschwamm. In the laboratories of the Kreiselgerate, not far from Berlin

Britz, I solved the problems of gyroscopic control and Prandtl's infamous boundary layer. This latter proved to be the break-through. The boundary layer was the key. At the end of 1944 we had conquered it and started construction.

The thought of Schriever amuses me. Perhaps it always will. I look out upon the glinting ice caps and think of what that man lost. Schriever lived for fool's gold. His saucer designs were all useless. While I finished the real work in Thuringia, he chased phantoms in Mahren. His flying disc was an abortion. All my guidelines were false. Nevertheless, Schriever thought it would work, and that's what we all wanted. Himmler rarely asked about me. He kept visiting Schriever. The Schriever disc could hover above the ground, but could do little else. No matter: it was impressive. Schriever thought he could make it work. He told Himmler that it only needed time, and the Reichsfuhrer believed him. That was just what we wanted. It was exactly what we had planned. As Himmler focused all his attentions on Schriever's disc we got on with the real one.

It was a miracle that we managed it. It was a desperate, frantic race. The skies overhead were filled with Allied planes, the horizon was smokey. The Ardennes offensive had failed. The Soviets had now crossed the Oder. The Allied armies were advancing in the south and our towns were in ruins. Hitler had moved into the Chancellery. He was preparing his Gotterdammerung. His Reichsfuhrer, Heinrich Himmler, was in panic and had almost forgotten us. Himmler wanted a flying saucer. He wanted Schriever's flying saucer. Because of this, we were free to continue without interference. The war raged far away. The smoke thickened on the horizon. We stepped out of our caves to see this, and then went back to work.

I remember it all vividly. The sounds of labor still echo. The great underground complex at Kahla represented my future. The caves were inside the mountain. From the air they were invisible. Inside them were thousands of slave workers and dedicated technicians. The bright lights stung our eyes. Walls of stone cast giant shadows. Machines roared and plates of silvery, porous metal dangled over our heads. The flying saucer was a skeleton.

It grew large and filled the hangar. The technicians clambered under its steel ribs, their eyes covered in goggles. The hissing white flame of the welders. The laborers sweating beneath the dome. The lights beamed down and flashed off the cabin and hazed the slave workers. The great caves dwarfed them all. They were cathedrals carved from stone. The sounds of riveting and welding and drilling reverberated throughout. The men looked very small. They were like ants in their nest. They climbed lad-ders, crossed catwalks, stood on platforms and girders, now removed from the real world, isolated inside the mountain, working long hours and sleeping very little, supervised by Nebe's soldiers.

We kept working night and day. We heard the thunder of distant guns. Every night our trains snaked down the mountain and headed for Kiel. The flying saucer took shape. Its glittering mass filled the hangar. The final plates were welded around the pilots' cabin and the body was finished. The immense disc hung from chains. It was lowered onto the massive legs. The legs housed the four jet propulsion boosters that would aid its ascent. The disc locked onto the legs. The noise echoed throughout the caves. The slaves looked on in silence, their eyes dulled with exhaustion, while the technicians all roared and applauded, their hands linked in triumph.

An historic day. I will never forget it. I stood beside Kammler and Nebe and felt as if I were dreaming. The enormous hangar doors opened. Light and cold air poured in. The Kugelblitz, now supported on mobile blocks, had a quiet, serene beauty. We wheeled it out of the hangar. It was February 1945. The sun shone upon the base of the mountain, but was darkened by gray smoke. Then the rain and snow came. We had to cancel the test. Two days later, on 16 February, the saucer soared to the heavens. It climbed vertically and gracefully, stopped abruptly and then shot south. It became a winking light above the battlefields, a bright star in the smokey haze.

The next week, we destroyed it.

The minute he saw the house the pain left, but the fear lingered on. Richard stood by the gate. The graveled path ran through the gardens. The moonlight fell over the flowers, over the Audi in the driveway, over the Italian tiles that led up to the front door, over the white, Georgian house. Richard pressed his head again. He couldn't believe that the pain had gone. The pain had pulled him from his bed, the voices whispering and urging, and sent him on the next train to Cornwall, determined to find her. Now he shivered with fear. The pain had gone, but the fear lingered. He glanced up at the house in the moonlight and wondered how he had found it In truth it had been easy. She had told him she was from St Nicholas. It was a very small village, very insular, and they all knew the lady.

He had asked about her in the local pub, feeling dazed, the pain blinding him, and the people with the large jugs of beer had all chattered at once. Aye, lad, they knew the lady, knew the expensive foreign car; the lady and her bloody great car were just outside the village... And so he had walked here, still dizzy, the headache monstrous, and now stood by the large, open gates and touched his head, not believing it The headache had gone, but the fear lingered on. Richard kicked the gravel nervously with one foot and looked up at the large house.

Why had he come? He didn't know why he had come. Yes,

he knew - because the headaches had destroyed him and te voices had urged him. What voices? The voices. Voices? Was he mad? Sitting slumped in the train, his head throbbing, he had sensed his own lunacy. Not voices. Couldn't be. He had gone to the bar car. The bar was crowded and the smoke stung his eyes and made his throbbing head worse. And the voices. I won't listen! He drank a double Scotch. It had burned down inside him, a thin flame, and made him feel better. Yet the headache grew worse. He returned to his seat and sat down. He closed his eyes and tried to block them out, but the voices persisted. What voices? I won't listen! He wanted to scream with pain. The pain was killing and the voices were whispering and making him dizzy. Five hours on the train. The shadows creeping across the hills. He had glanced once at the moors and closed his eyes and felt the fear breathing over him. What voices? I won't listen! The train had pulled into Bodmin. He had disembarked and walked to the village like a man in a trance. Then the smokey pub, the noisy clatter and ringing glasses. He had asked about the lady with the Audi and they pointed the way. A short walk through the darkness. The night silent, stars glittering. He had arrived at the gate of the house and then the headache had gone.

The fear lingered on. It was with him right now. He stood by the gates and kicked the gravel and saw lights in the windows. The house was white in the moonlight. It was a converted eighteenth century manor: elegant, romantic, dreamlike, the stars glittering above it Richard walked through the gates, stopped again and felt the fear. Why fear? There was nothing to fear, and yet he felt it and shivered. Then he moved again, knowing he couldn't turn back. When he thought of going back his head hurt and the voices returned. He was imagining it, of course. He tried to turn back and it started. He licked his lips and stared at the house and then moved forward again.

Silence. A light breeze. The light breeze hissed through the silence. Richard walked along the broad, curving driveway toward the white Audi. It was definitely the same car.

There could be no doubt about it Richard looked at the car and felt a chill and remembered the white haze. No, he should not have come. Yes, he had to go on. The voices whispering in his head confirmed the latter as he walked toward the gleaming car. He stopped once, stared above him, saw the black sky, the stars, felt fear and something else, a sense of wonder, then moved forward again.

He stopped when he reached the car. His fear and wonder had increased. He shivered, felt the ice in the breeze, and reached out to the car. He ran his fingers along the hood. He had to confirm that it was real. Satisfied, he gazed up at the house, the large windows in white walls. All the lights were on. The whole house was ablaze. He saw long velvet drapes, a chandelier, a rich mahogany table. There were lanterns about the door, the door made of natural wood. The door was open and he thought that was strange and it made him more frightened.

Fear. The inexplicable. He walked slowly around the car. The breeze hissed and chilled the sweat on his brow and made him shiver again. He walked across the Italian tiles. The fear grabbed him and held him. He had the urge to turn around and run away, but he just couldn't do it Then he was on the porch. Italian tiles and potted plants. There were vines writhing along the balustrades that gleamed white in the moonlight He stood there, uncertain, thinking of Jenny and the doctor, remembered them, forgot them, heard the voices, then walked toward the open door.

Why was the door open? He knew why: she was waiting for him. She had known he would come, somehow known that, and now she expected him. Fear. The inexplicable. The need to know and the fear of knowing. He reached out and touched the door with his fingers, lightly stroking it testing it. The door was very real. A bright light poured out around it. He stepped forward and pushed it further back and then stepped into the house.

Silence. The hall was empty. Paintings hung from paneled walls. There was a chandelier glittering below the ceiling,

illuminating the stairs. Rich carpets, shining glassware. Richard stood there, couched in fear. The stairs ran up to a balcony that was angled around the hall, closed doors con-cealing numerous other rooms and offering nothing but silence.
Richard licked his dry lips and looked slowly around him. Two varnished doors, one at either side, leading into more rooms. One of the doors was open. The light poured out around it. He knew it was the room that he had seen from the lawn, the room with the velvet drapes and chandelier and rich mahogany table. He took a deep breath, not alone, sensing someone, remembering the silhouettes in the white haze, the woman's red hair and green eyes. Then he walked toward the open door. The silence swam out and surrounded him. He pushed the door back and walked in and then stopped, feeling frightened.
She was sitting at the far end of the table, the red hair tumbling down, the green eyes very bright, even now, at this considerable distance. She was staring straight at him, perfectly still, almost frozen. She was wearing a black evening gown, flowery frills around the sleeves, and her right hand was curved around a glass of what looked like red wine,
Richard was frightened. Her green eyes were insane. She raised her glass and sipped at the wine and then set the glass down.
'I was expecting you,' she said.
'Why?' Richard asked.
'I just knew you were coming,' she said. 'Don't ask me why. I just knew.'
Richard didn't move toward her. He was frightened and confused. He didn't know why he was here, couldn't believe that he was here, felt unreal and divorced from himself, not in charge of his actions. The woman just sat there, staring at him, not smiling. In the black dress, surrounded by antiques, she looked like someone from long ago. Another time, another age. Richard didn't know where he was. He had the feeling that he had stepped into a dream from which he might

not escape. His headache had gone, but the fear lingered on. He stood there, near the door, staring at her, wondering who had informed her.
'How did you know?' he asked.
'I told you not to ask that'
'I had to come,' he said. 'I just had to. I have to know why.'
She smiled bleakly and raised her glass, sipped some wine, set the glass down. The glass made a sharp, ringing sound that made his heart leap.
'Why did you have to come?'
'I'm not sure,' Richard said. 'I had forgotten - I was trying to forget - and then it suddenly came back to me. I started getting bad headaches. I thought the headaches were going to kill me. I heard voices, or I thought I heard voices, and kept thinking of you. I just had to come. It seemed imperative that I come. I had the feeling, I had this thing in my head, that said to come here would cure me. The headaches were terrible. They drove me out of my apartment I didn't know what to do, I couldn't think of anything else... just the train - I thought of catching the train, and that made it seem better.'
'And your headache has gone?'
'I think so. I hope so.'
'How strange,' she said. 'My headache's gone as well. It's very strange... I'm not frightened.'
Her declaration frightened Richard. He glanced nervously around the room. He didn't know what he was expecting to see, but he had to look anyway. A chandelier above the table. A long wall lined with books. Velvet curtains, large paintings, various trophies, the glint of bottles and glasses. The long table was illuminated. Her green eyes were slightly shadowed. The shadows deepened where they swallowed the corners, making strange, gargoyle shapes. Richard shivered and felt cold, wondered vaguely where he was, glanced around him and then stared at the woman, feeling frightened: in need of her.
'How are you?' he asked.
'Pardon?'

'How are you?'
She looked at him, brow furrowed, not believing what she had heard, then she put her head back, her hair gleaming, burning red, tumbling over her bare, convulsed shoulders as her laughter exploded.
'What—?'
'Oh, my God!' Her laughter echoed around the room, a barbaric sound, slightly insane, devoid of humor or warmth. 'Oh, my God, what a question!'
Richard stood where he was. 'Shut up,' he said quietly.
'How are you? she gasped, laughing dementedly. 'What a question to ask me!'
Richard walked across the room, hardly knowing he was doing it, seeing bright light and shadow, glinting glass, flick-ering candles, the chairs stacked against the table, all empty, supporting ghosts, her laughter cutting through the silence, demented, a jagged sound all around him. He slapped her face. It was a single, precise blow. The laughter stopped as her head jerked to the side, and froze there, green eyes wide. She took a deep breath. She was staring straight at the wall, her eyes bright, her lips forming a tight line, holding in a cold fury. Richard stepped away from her, pulled a chair out and sat down. The woman stared at the wall, leaning over, turned sideways, then she straightened up and took a deep breath and touched her cheek with her left hand.
'You hurt me,' she said.
'I'm sorry,' Richard said. 'I didn't know what else to do. You sounded hysterical.'
She touched her cheek again, smiled ruefully, picked her glass up, sipped some wine and then put the glass down and pushed a bottle toward him.
'Have a drink,' she said. 'I think you need a drink. Before the night's out you'll need it more, but you probably won't get it.'
'What does that mean?' Richard asked.
'I don't know,' she replied. 'I don't know what any of this means... I just know that it's happening.'

Richard poured himself a drink, noticed that his hand was shaking, set the bottle back on the table and then stared at the woman.
'How did you know I was coming?'
'I don't know,' she said. 'I just knew. I just had the feel-ing... a very strong feeling.'
'You left the front door open.'
'Yes. I left it open.'
'You don't leave a door open for a feeling - it must have been more than that.'
The woman looked at him and smiled. Her green eyes were very strange. They were bright, but they were looking straight through him as if not really seeing him. Richard felt himself shivering. He reached out for the glass of wine. He picked it up and turned it around and saw the light flashing
off it.
'Drink it,' the woman said. 'It's not poisoned. It's not going to hurt you.'
Richard smiled and drank some wine, set the glass back on the table. The woman watched him with that strange, bright intensity, her left hand tightly clenched.
'Where's your husband?' Richard asked.
'He's not here,' the woman said.
'Where is he?'
'I don't know,' the woman said. 'He left me five months ago.'
'Left you? You mean for good?'
'Yes, I mean for good. The poor man thought his wife was going mad, so he packed up and left.'
'And are you going mad?'
'I'm not sure. I think so.' She picked her glass up and drank some more wine, licked the rim with her tongue. 'I rarely sleep,' she said. 'I get nightmares when I do sleep. I get angry, start smashing things up, wreck the place, rip the phones out.' She set her glass back on the table, lit a cigarette, inhaled, turned her head aside to blow the smoke out, slowly turned back to face him. 'We had terrible rows,' she said. 'I

never knew what I was saying. I just hated him - no reason -just hated him and wanted to get rid of him. I had to be on my own. I don't know why - I just had to. I wanted to be alone in this mausoleum, where I could wait... wait for something... Naturally he left me. I could hardly live with myself. headaches, like migraines, terrible dreams, really bad, then he left me and it all went away and I sat back and waited.'

She exhaled cigarette smoke, let it swirl around her face, a blue haze disguising her fading good looks, the lines of ten-sion and loss. Yes, she had changed. Her face advertised the fear. Richard stared and saw a woman grown much older quietly mad, disappearing.

'Waiting?' he asked. 'Waiting for what?'

She shrugged, shook her head, studied her glowing ciga-rette, looked at him as if looking through him, nicked ash to the floor.

'I don't know,' she said. 'I just know that something's happening. Last night I had a headache, went to sleep and dreamed about you. I woke up and thought my head was coming apart, but I kept thinking of you. I knew then that you were coming. I knew that when you came I would be cured, so I opened the doors.'

'That's crazy,' Richard said.

'Is it? You really think so? And yet you had a headache, it drove you out of your apartment, it compelled you to take a train straight to Cornwall, it drove you right here... Are we both... ? Are we crazy?'

Richard glanced around the room. A nineteenth-century drawing room. The shadows swallowed the corners, crept along the bookshelves, crawled across the floor and faded out against a bright pool of light Another time, another age. Another age, another place. He sipped his wine and felt the movement of his mind, slipping out through a black hole. He wasn't here; he was there - somewhere else, far away -here and there which was one and the same, divorced from reality. Then he stared at the woman. Her green eyes swam in the shadows: mad eyes, obsessed with what was coming,

feeling more than they understood.
'What happened?' Richard asked. 'That day on the moors. I member the silhouettes in the haze. Only that. Nothing else.'
The woman licked her upper lip, green eyes wandering, returning, looking at him, looking through him and beyond him, going back, finding nothing.
'I don't know,' she said. 'I remember no more than you. I woke up three days later, in the car, the same place, and drove straight home, not understanding what had happened, not really believing it I remembered the start of it. The huge aircraft in the haze. I remembered the saucers flying around us, the light beaming in on us. Then nothing. Oblivion. I woke up and you were gone. It was dawn and I thought I'd slept there all night that I'd somehow passed out So, I drove back here, went to bed and slept all day. I got up, had some food, watched TV, and found out that three days had passed. Then the headaches came. The nightmares, the fear. When my husband put his hands on my body, I flinched with revulsion. I couldn't understand it. I just knew I had to get rid of him. I had fits and started wrecking the house, and he left me eventually. It was better after that: no more nightmares, no headaches. Just people... I couldn't stand to see people, so I stayed in the house. I just hung around all day. I drank a lot and that helped me. I knew something was happening, would happen, but I didn't know what. No nightmares, no fear. That all started again last night. I knew then that it had happened, that it hadn't been a dream, and I knew that you would come here tonight and that soon it would end.'
'What would end?' Richard asked.
'I don't know. I just know it will end.'
She stubbed her cigarette out picked her glass up, drank some wine, set the glass back on the table, looked at it, then smacked it away. The noise made Richard jerk. He looked down at the table. The glass was lying on its side, reflecting light, shaking lightly, the red wine pouring out across the table and dripping down to the floor. Richard looked at the

woman. She stood up and smoothed her dress. She was tall and very slim, her face pale and fatigued, still elegant, her hair gleaming in the light, pouring down the black dress.
'Did the police come?' Richard asked.
'The police?' She looked puzzled. 'No, not the police... some men came, wearing gray suits, briefcases... from the government... took notes.'
'About a week after it happened?'
'No. About a month. They said it was just routine - they took notes - I haven't seen them since then.'
'They came a month after the event?'
'That's right A good month.'
'What did you tell them?'
'I told them what happened. They obviously didn't believe me.'
Richard stared up at the woman. She was still standing in front of her chair. The shadows fell across her eyes, across her face, across the swell of her breasts. Richard stared at her, mesmerized. The light fell upon her hands. Her fingers were locked loosely together, long and thin, a pale web.
'What did they say?' Richard whispered.
'The woman shrugged. 'Nothing much. They told me they had seen you, that you had told them what happened, that they just wanted to confirm that it was true. I told them what I remembered. It wasn't much, but they wrote it down. Two men, very quiet, quite polite. I haven't seen them since then.'
'You confirmed that it happened?'
'I confirmed what I remembered. When I got to the beam of light they just smiled, not believing a word of it They said I had seen the planet Venus. They got into their car and drove off and have not been back since.'
She still stood there, staring around her, faraway, not really present, a ghostly lady in a long, flowing gown, the walls behind her in shadow. Richard didn't know what was happening. His fear blossomed in the silence. He looked up and saw her glittering eyes, their bright, unfocused depths. What was he doing here? What were they both waiting for? Richard

thought of standing up and walking out, but his head tight-ened instantly. He knew then that he wouldn't leave. His gaze fastened on the woman's breasts. He breathed deeply and the threatened pain departed and his head felt more normal.
'This is crazy,' he said.
'Yes,' she said. 'It's crazy.'
'I'm frightened and I just don't know why.'
'It's all right. It's all right.'
Richard felt a sudden chill, remembering the blinding white haze, remembering that what she said at that moment had frightened him more. It's all right. It's all right. He recalled the words clearly. He now looked up at her green eyes, very bright, surveying the room, and he knew, even through his mounting fear, that in some way he needed her.
'We've been brought together,' he said.
'Yes,' she said. 'I think so.'
'Why?' he asked. 'I don't understand.'
'It's all right. It's all right'
She gently bit her lower lip, staring above him, through the windows, looking up at the black, star-flecked sky, her eyes searching, appealing. A shiver ran down Richard's spine, made him feel more unreal. He saw the darkness lying over the lawns, a fine line of mushrooming trees. The stars were bright and multitudinous, offering silence, revealing nothing, and he turned back and looked up at the woman and felt the fear creeping over him.
'I feel tired,' he said obliquely.
'It's very tiring,' she replied.
'Do I stay here? Is that what I do? I have to stay here... the headaches.'
The woman looked at him and smiled, a strange smile, not her own, raised her right hand and stroked her flaming hair, flecks of steel in her green eyes.
'Yes,' she said. The headaches... Something's happening... it's all right... Yes, of course, you have to stay here... We both have to stay here.'
Richard stared at her, mesmerized. The black gown flowed

on her body. She was tall, her skin white, very elegant, unreal in the shadowed light.
'Can I sleep here?' Richard asked.
'Yes,' she said. 'You should sleep. You'll feel better.'
They stared at one another. The wind groaned across the lawn. The candles flickered on the table, their light defeated by the chandelier, a larger pool of light around them both: a pool of light in the darkness.
'I'll take you up,' the woman said.
'Thanks,' Richard replied. 'I haven't actually brought any-thing with me... No towels. No clothes...'
The woman waved her right hand, a languid, eloquent movement. 'Don't worry,' she said. 'It's all right. We're al-ways ready for guests.'
Richard stood up very slowly, his body aching and weak, glanced up and was blinded by the chandelier, looked away, his eyes sparkling. The corners of the room were dark. Glasses glittered in a cabinet. He saw his shadowy reflection in the glass, a gray ghost, nonexistent Then he saw another reflection, a flowing form, incorporeal, felt a chill and turned around and saw the woman walking slowly toward him.
This way,' she said, touching him lightly as she passed, her long fingers outspread, brushing briefly across his chest, then falling back to her side as she walked on, the dress rustling around her.
Richard followed her out, stepping into the hall, a pulse beating nervously in his stomach as he walked toward the stairs. The hall seemed very large. It looked bigger than it was. They advanced across the carpet, the woman's gown rustling lightly, then the woman put her hand on the bannister and calmly walked up.
Richard followed her, feeling strange, more unnerved by her calm, confused, not really knowing what was happening, wondering if he was sane. None of this was real - not the house, not the stairs, not the lights that bled weakly from the walls and fell over the woman. He reached out for the bannister. It was smooth to his touch. He looked up at the woman,

at the swaying of her hips, his gaze traveling along her arm to her wrist, the white flesh on the polished wood. She was real. It was happening. They both stepped onto the landing. The woman turned and looked over her shoulder and smiled enigmatically ... then she walked away from him.

Richard followed her, feeling cold, along the balcony, through the shadows, the wall lamps hanging downward, glowing weakly, a modest aid in the gloom. The woman stopped at a closed door, put her hand out, turned the knob, gently pushed the door open and then stepped back, waving Richard inside. He glanced at her, saw the smile, a strange smile, not her own, then he shivered and brushed past her and stepped in, his shoulder grazed by her breasts.

'Will this do?' she asked quietly.

Richard hardly saw the room, just the bed, the covers turned back, a lamp burning on a table beside the bed, a pool of light in the shadows.

'Yes,' he replied. 'It's fine.'

'You look tired,' she said. 'Exhausted. That other door leads to the bathroom. You'll find towels... pajamas.'

Richard nodded, but said nothing, too nervous, confused, mesmerized by her eyes, by that green, opaque glittering, by the long line of her body, the black dress, the shadowed light all around her.

'Don't worry,' she murmured. 'It's all right, it's all right. Have a good sleep and then you'll feel better. We'll just stay here. We'll wait.'

He wanted to know what she meant, what she thought they were waiting for, opened his mouth and then closed it again, now afraid of his own voice. The woman stepped forward and reached down, put her hand on the doorknob, stepped back and pulled the door as she went, disappeared, the door closing.

Richard stood there in the silence, in a noise that seemed like silence, his ears ringing, the closed door in his eyes, feel-ing tense and light-headed. He stood there a long time. He heard her walking away. She stopped walking, a door opened

and closed, and then the silence was total.
Richard shook his head slowly, feeling dazed, a bit fright-ened, turned around and had a good look at his room, a large room, neat and comfortable. He studied it carefully, drank it in and saw nothing, just the bed and the lamp on the table with a window-framed darkness. He walked across to the win-dow. Feeling nervous, he looked out He saw the far edge of a patio, a low wall, a few steps, a flat lawn disappearing in the darkness, some trees, a small shed. He looked up at the sky. The moon glided beneath the stars. He shivered and turned away, feeling desolate, then went into the bathroom.
He turned the lights on. Blue and green tiles, blue rugs. A toilet, a marble bath and a shower, expensive and tasteful. He turned the lights off. He didn't feel like a shower. He walked over to the bed and stood there, then went back to the bathroom. He turned the lights on. They were bright and stung his eyes. He used the toilet and then took his clothes off and stepped under the shower.
He turned the water on to hot, let it scald him and revive him, remained there for a very long time, then turned it off, dried himself. He walked out of the bathroom, making sure the door was closed; naked, he walked over to the bed and lay down, sighing loudly. He lay there for some time, hearing the silence of the house. He heard the wind blowing outside the window, then he turned out the bedside lamp.
The darkness was divided. Moonlight fell through the window. Richard heard the blowing wind, felt the pounding of his heart, looking up, looking around, seeing the ceiling, the dark walls, his fears multiplying and joining and becoming a blanket. He suddenly felt claustrophobic, rubbed his face with his hands, saw the moonlight trickling over a cupboard and an empty white chair. He lay there, breathing deeply, forcing himself to stay calm. He wanted to get off the bed and leave the room, but he just couldn't do it What was happening? Why stay? He rubbed his face and closed his eyes. He saw the moonlight - or he thought he saw the moonlight - and then it seemed like a dream.

The door clicked and then opened. Richard opened his eyes. He looked around - or he thought he looked around -and saw her shadowy outline. She was standing in the door-way, silhouetted in yellow light She was naked beneath her
nightgown, a short nightgown, transparent, and he saw her slim waist, her broad hips, her long legs parted slightly. She didn't say a word, simply stood there, looking at him. Richard rubbed his face and then licked his lips and stared up. The woman closed the door and walked toward him and lay down on the bed.
Flesh. The warmth of skin. There were dreams within the dreams: the moonlight falling on the white sheets, on the edge of a pillow, on a flash of red hair, the gleaming eyes, the pink tongue on the wet lips. They came together and merged, their limbs colliding, embracing, warm skin, willing flesh, her flattened breasts, his sweating spine, searching fingers, scratching nails, outspread thighs, thrusting groin, a dream within a dream, shadows writhing in the moonlight, rising up and falling down and rolling over and biting like animals... He had to have her, couldn't stop, either dreaming or awake, not caring, now knowing, seeking release from his fear, a child again, helpless, lips and tongue on the nipple, wanting solace, revenge, forgiveness, final answers, his hands searching for her breasts, his belly sliding on her belly, thrusting up, trying to hide himself inside her, sweat and blood, life's reality... Did it happen? Did it matter? The red hair across his eyes. Her face sliding down his chest, down his stomach, her lips open, receiving him... Release. No more fear. He looked up and saw the moonlight He closed his eyes and let himself be devoured, flowing out pouring into her.
The moonlight The darkness. Stars swimming in the void. He lay back and dissolved and disappeared and defied space and time. To touch and be touched. The beating blood and pounding heart. To touch and to feel and to know and to drift toward peace. He remembered her touch. He awakened, still remembering. He blinked and rubbed his eyes and looked around him, his body still burning.

'It's all right, it's all right...'

Richard saw her in the doorway, her back turned toward him, naked beneath the white transparent gown, slipping out of the room. Then she was gone. He felt her flesh upon his flesh. He blinked again and looked hard at the door and saw the light on the balcony. Then the fear returned. He sat up straight on the bed. The moonlight fell into the room, met the light from the doorway, illuminating the necklace she had dropped before entering his bed.

The fear slithered in slyly, crept toward him, enveloped him, turned to ice that first froze and then burned and left him sweaty and shaking. He glanced wildly around the room. The moonlight fell through the window. He felt the fear and it forced him from the bed and made him run to the door.

He saw the woman on the stairs, walking down toward the hall, naked beneath the white, transparent slip, her lean body outlined. Richard stared at her, terrified. She walked as if in a trance. The nightgown rippled around her breasts, on her thighs, as she walked down on long legs. Richard grabbed hold of the bannister, seeing pale light on her face. He shouted at her - someone screaming, someone urging her to come back - but she continued to walk down the stairs, her eyes fixed on the front door.

Richard looked over the balcony. The lights in the hall were dim. The front door was open, moonlight falling on the hall, a small figure silhouetted on the porch, featureless, not moving.

The fear grabbed Richard and crushed him, made him move back from the bannister, press his spine to the wall and glance around him, paralyzed, his head spinning. Then he suddenly moved again. He felt a need to touch the woman. She was real, a vibrant presence, flesh and blood, and she was all that he had. Richard raced toward the stairs. He saw the woman in the hall. The figure standing on the porch had disappeared, but the moonlight poured in. Richard cried out again. The woman didn't look around. Richard ran down the stairs, his heart pounding, as she walked out the door.

Richard stopped, paralyzed. He held the bannister with one hand. He looked down at the door, at the moonlight, the fear slicing through him. Then he moved again, hardly knowing that he was doing it, his one thought for the woman, for her presence, for that touch of reality. He reached the bottom of the stairs. The moonlight fell across the floor. He stepped forward and saw the woman on the lawn, the darkness swim-ming around her.

Richard walked toward the door. The fear was choking him, draining him. He reached the door and stepped out onto the porch and saw the woman ahead of him. She was in the middle of the lawn. She stopped walking and just stood there. The wind blew her hair around her, pressed the white nightgown to her body, her hips and her legs emphasized in a singular beauty. Then she slowly turned around. She was looking directly at him. He saw her pale face, her streaming red hair, and her strange, haunting smile.

Richard stood on the porch, felt the wind and its ice. He was draining out of himself, the fear choking him, dulling his senses. The woman stood there on the lawn. Her red hair streamed in the wind. He heard the wind and then he heard the humming sound, felt the sound, was crushed by it He stepped forward slowly, keeping his eyes on the woman. He saw the line of trees behind her, the light appearing beyond the trees, a hazy light that rose and spread out and became a pulsating fan. 'Oh, my God,' Richard whispered.

After that, he said nothing. There was nothing to say. He knew that it had ended, that it was over, and that he could not turn back. No turning: the fear. No resisting: the pain. Richard shook his head and licked his dry lips and walked onto the lawn.

The woman was waiting for him, her arms hanging down by her sides. He stopped when he was halfway toward her, searched in vain for her green eyes. A trick of light and shadow. Richard blinked and looked again. He saw the smile on her face, that ghastly grimace, but her green eyes were

missing. Richard shook his head and shivered. He stared hard at the waiting woman. He stepped forward and saw that her eyes were closed, that she was standing there dreaming.

Richard almost stopped breathing. He felt the pounding of his heart He walked over to the woman and touched her, but her eyes didn't open. Then the fear really shook him. He stared wildly at the sky. He saw the moon gliding under the stars, a few dark, drifting clouds. Richard looked beyond the woman. He saw the light above the trees. The light pulsated and formed a hazy fan, a spectral glow in the dark night

Richard started to weep. The tears rolled down his cheeks. He heard the sound, felt the sound, was crushed by it and he clenched both fists. Then he saw them coming toward him. They were faceless in the darkness. There were three of them, all of them small, spreading out walking slowly.

Richard stared at them. The fear slithered down his spine. He forgot the woman by his side, forgot the doctor and Jenny, thought of nothing but the dread that was embodied in the men walking toward him. The tears rolled down his cheeks. He saw his history dissolving. He watched the men spreading out walking toward him, and he knew he must join them. His grief and fear combined. His head tightened and throbbed. The men walked out of darkness, the light spreading out behind them, their shadows hazy and falling before them, creeping over the damp grass. Richard stood still. The men approached him and stopped. They were small and they wore silvery masks and were dressed in gray coveralls. Richard stood there, transfixed. One of the men walked to him. The man reached up and touched Richard's neck and the fear fell away from him.

'Yes!' Richard said.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

New York in December was a bitch of a city, the wind blowing like ice along the canyons of concrete, stabbing at Stanford's eyes and raw face, his Californian blood frozen. He cursed and turned his collar up, saw the bright lights of Broadway, breathed the dust and the exhaust fumes of the traffic, appalled by the noise. He wasn't in a good mood, hadn't been for a long time; he now lived with a cold, suppressed rage that often threatened to strangle him.

'New York,' he murmured. 'Shitsville.'

He didn't know what was happening to him, was lost in his obsessions, haunted by the lights of Galveston, by the girl on the porch, by the vision he had witnessed in the bay near St Thomas, by the mysteries that increased every day and made sleep much more difficult.

Stanford felt the freezing wind. He cursed again and walked faster. The traffic ran along Broadway, lights flashing, horns honking, the pavements crowded with junkies and prostitutes and pimps, people tumbling out of cabs, out of restaurants and theaters, the neon signs flashing out against the night, a kaleidoscopic display. Stanford studied it with distaste. He had never liked New York. He cursed and then turned into the disco-bar, hurrying down the steep steps.

The disco was in a basement, beyond a silver-gleaming arch, past the blond girl who sat behind a desk and a glittering cash register. The girl was wearing a negligible halter,

her breasts ballooning dramatically, her tanned belly ex-posed, her crotch emphasized by hot pants, long legs in black stockings, crossed languidly; green lipstick, false eyelashes. Stanford paid her and walked through, passing a man in black leather, the amplified rock music exploding over him, deaf-ening him, the strobe lights flashing on and off the stage where a glitter group screamed.

'Are you alone?' someone hissed.

'What's that?' Stanford said. He looked around to see a shock of purple hair, rainbow eyes, the girl looking like a cross between an Apache Indian and a Buddhist monk, her lips lined with glitter dust and pouting invitingly, blowing smoke in his face.

'Thirty bucks,' she hissed. 'Make it fifty for all night. We go to my place and I'll show you some tricks that you'll never forget.'

Stanford shook his head and left, pushing his way through the crowd, brushing against creamy breasts and jolting asses in tight pants, the air smelling of nicotine and marijuana and sweat, the strobe lights flashing on and off the heads that bobbed up and down crazily. Stanford just kept on going, concentrating on the bar. He saw phosphorescent shirts and tight denims and sunglasses, the girls elegant and tatty, displaying tits and belly buttons, the men rattling with necklaces and bracelets, their talk loud and pretentious. Scaduto wasn't at the bar. Stanford moved on, looking elsewhere. He cut across the dance floor, the band shrieking just above him, the dancers gyrating all around him, asses jolting like pistons, ducked flying hands and long, whipping hair, and finally reached the far side. A line of girls held the wall up, glittering brightly, looking limp, and he avoided their eyes and went past them, entering another large room.

The band seemed more distant here, the sound muffled, the talk clearer, people crushed between a parallel line of booths that led back to another bar. He saw Scaduto at the bar, unmistakable, flamboyantly dressed, wearing a fringed buckskin jacket, very tight purple pants, kneelength boots, a

mess of chains around his neck, hanging over the bar. Stanford walked up behind him and grabbed his long blond tangled hair.
'What the fuck—?' Scaduto yelped.
'Hi, hotshot,' Stanford said. 'What the hell did you tell me to meet you here for? I can hardly hear myself speak.'
Scaduto grinned and slapped Stanford's back. Stanford let go of his hair. Tou old shitface!' Scaduto said, patting his hair down. 'How you bin? Great to see you!'
Stanford smiled and glanced around him. 'What the hell are you doing here?' he said. Tou're getting a bit old for this, aren't you? I mean, these girls... they're all kids.'
Scaduto rolled his eyes and grinned, formed his right hand into a tube, pumped it up and down above his groin and groaned loudly, theatrically.
'That's the idea,' he said. 'A guy doesn't get any younger. At forty they're ready to put you out to grass, and these kids soothe the pain. I like 'em tight, Stanford. Oh fuck, I like 'em tight Some day I'm gonna find one so tight, they'll have to cut my dick off.'
'You want a drink?' Stanford asked.
'I've already got one,' Scaduto said.
'Have another,' Stanford said. 'I'm only in town for one night. Let's have an old-fashioned reunion. We'll throw us a big one.'
Scaduto rolled his eyes and grinned, slapped the counter with one hand. 'Goddammit!' he exclaimed. 'What a turn-up! 'It's been a long time, old buddy.'
'What do you want?' Stanford asked.
'I'll have a bourbon on the rocks. Fuck it, the night's just begun - let's have us a good time.'
There was only one barman, moving fast but overworked, serving two or three groups all at once, his head down, his brow furrowed. Stanford tried to attract his attention, failed, tried again, started wondering if the barman was ignoring him or if the noise had just deafened him. Scaduto came to his rescue, getting off his tall stool, bending forward, his long

body across the bar, his hair falling around him. 'Hey, greaser!' he bawled. 'What the fuck? Are you jerking off back there?' The barman glanced at him, face swarthy above bow tie, glared and then recognized Scaduto and broke out in a grin. 'Does it feel good?' Scaduto bawled. 'You got blisters on your fingers? Two bourbons on the rocks, you fucking greaser, or I won't pay my bills.' The barman grinned and shook his head, poured the drinks, disappeared, and Scaduto turned and grinned at Stanford and then laughed as if he just couldn't stop.

'Here's to you,' Stanford said.

'Fucking right,' Scaduto said. He had a drink and wiped his lips with his wrist, his glassy eyes sliding sideways. 'Just look at it,' he said. 'All that tight stuff, all that honey. I swear, the world's coming to an end - they just can't get enough of it.'

'You're kidding yourself,' Stanford said. You're just a middle-aged roue. You can't stand the thought of being forty and now you're making an ass of yourself.'

Scaduto leered and glanced around him, almost falling off the stool, then he reached out and grabbed Stanford's shoulder and grinned like a lunatic.

'Fucking right,' he said. 'I stand unzipped and corrected. I'm a middle-aged prick, a wilting dick, and I'm having a great time. So how are you, Stanford? What the fuck have you been doing? How long's it been - five years, ten years? I hear you're still with that Epstein guy.'

That's right,' Stanford said. 'I'm still with Professor Epstein. You and I, we last met in '69 - when you finally left NICAP.'

Scaduto grinned and shook his head, his body swaying from side to side, his stomach flopping over the glittering belt the shirt youthful, too tight.

'Great days,' Scaduto said. 'I had a fucking good time. Wandering over the whole country, meeting people, seeing places, chasing UFOs like they were going out of fashion - a great time, a fond memory.' He almost fell off the stool, steadied

himself, glanced around him, then stared at the bag on Stanford's shoulder and said. 'Hey, what you got there?' 'Just a shoulder bag,' Stanford said.
'Oh, yeah?' Scaduto said. 'Carrying anything of interest? Anything I can swallow or smoke or inject? I mean anything, old buddy, to light my fire and get me through the long night?'
'No,' Stanford said.
'Not to worry,' Scaduto said. He closed one eye and waved a finger across his face, a stage Irishman, drunk. 'We can always go back to my place. I've got a few syringes there. A little nip, a little jab and then it's Heaven, a slow glide through inner space. You fancy that, old buddy? We might even get some cunt. Something warm, something tight as a glove, to make the dawn look more pleasant'
'Who knows?' Stanford said.
They ordered more drinks. The smoke swirled all around them. The room was packed and noisy, people tugging and pushing, colored lights drifting over the walls in surreal, dreamy patterns. Scaduto drank very fast. He kept ordering more drinks. He was obsessed with the girls, their legs and plunging necklines, his glassy eyes darting restlessly around the room, his wolfish leer unappealing. Stanford was shocked by him, found it hard to recognize him, was embarrassed to see this forty-year-old man in his juvenile clothes. In truth, he was ridiculous, pathetically trying to fool himself, and Stanford couldn't reconcile the man before him with the man he had known. Scaduto had been with NICAP for close to twelve years, had investigated UFOs up and down the whole country and had built up a strong reputation. He had left in 1969. He had been in Arizona then. He and Stanford had gone drinking, had painted Tucson red, and had then gone their separate ways and had not kept in touch. That's why Stanford was shocked: he couldn't recognize the old Scaduto. The man swaying on the bar stool, talking loudly, leering openly, was a pathetic, shocking shadow of his former self, obsessed with drugs and young girls.
'I'm still at it,' Stanford said. 'I'm still out there chasing

UFOs. I guess I've been at it too long. Why did you give it up?'
'I thought, fuck it,' Scaduto said. That's all: I just thought, fuck it. There was too much coming down, too much flak, and I just didn't need it.'
'What sort of flak?' Stanford asked.
'Just flak,' Scaduto said. 'Flak from the left, right and center, every day, a real drag.'
'I got a bottle,' Stanford said. 'Here, fill your glass up, I don't understand. What kind of flak? Who was giving you flak?'
Scaduto swayed from side to side, almost fell off his stool, held onto the counter and cursed, reaching for his glass.
'Everyone,' he said. 'Fucking flak from every bastard. Who needs them? Who needs the CIA, the FBI, the fucking Air Force? Couldn't take it anymore. Too much shit in the bathtub. When they started to pay me visits at midnight, I decided to quit.'
'Midnight?' Stanford asked.
'Would you believe it?' Scaduto said.
'Who started coming to see you at midnight? I don't understand that'
Scaduto nearly fell off his seat. Stanford grabbed him and held him up. Scaduto leered at the girl beside him, had a drink, smoothed his long hair, gazed down at the bar and started snorting like a horse at the starting post
'Fucking CIA,' he said. 'Fucking bastards came to see me. Came at midnight, got me out of my bed, my cock still standing straight. No rough stuff. Just questions. A formality. A mere formality. Sat me naked in a chair, froze my balls and talked very polite, like we're having a business lunch. Very pleasant Very quiet Didn't mind if I poured a drink. Said it's your house, you do what you want, we're just here for a talk. Asked me some questions. About NICAP and our work. Said they'd heard from a friend of a friend that I was digging too deep. Then we had a little chat. Woke me up. Interesting. They said they hoped I wasn't feeling too tired, but could they make some suggestions. Suggest, I say; I'm breathless. They

suggest I clip my wings. They say I shouldn't be mixed up with UFOs, that they don't really like that I say it's a free country. They assure me that it is. They also say they saw some drugs in my bathroom, and that that isn't legal. I tell them it's a setup. I say you're setting me up. They tell me that's a nasty thing to say and that I could get ten years. You want me to leave, I say? You want me to leave NICAP? We wouldn't dream of suggesting such a thing, they say. You can do what you want. A free country, they say. I can work where I want It's just that they're worried about those drugs that they found in my bathroom. I say I'm sorry about that I say I'm truly repentant. They say maybe it's the strain of chasing UFOs that's making me take them. You have a point there, I say. I say I'm gonna resign from NICAP. They say that's a wise decision, we respect you for that, and maybe, if you really leave NICAP, we'll forget what we found. That's real decent, I say. I confirm that I'm resigning. They both shake my hand, very pleasant, and walk out the door. So, I resign from NICAP. I get a job with RCA I forget that I ever knew NICAP, and they never come back. Hallelujah. Peace, brother.'

Scaduto burped and glanced around him, smiled beautifully and grabbed the counter, swayed dangerously from side to side, his eyes blinking, then reached out for his glass.

'Fuck,' be said, 'it's empty.'

'I bought a bottle,' Stanford said. 'Here, have another, it's on me. What the hell were they worried about?'

Stanford filled Scaduto's glass, watched him put it to his lips, drink and then burp and put his glass down, his red eyes slipping sideways.

'Motherfuckers,' he said.

'What bothered them?' Stanford asked.

Scaduto closed one eye and waved his finger, playing up as an Irishman.

'Secrets,' he slurred. 'Secrets! I knew things I shouldn't know. Those sonsofbitches, they knew I'd been to Canada -and they didn't like that.'

'Canada?' Stanford asked.
'Right,' Scaduto said. 'Very cold in the forests, very quiet, and at night the wind haunted you.'
'I don't understand,' Stanford said. 'What's Canada got to do with it? They accused you of digging too deep. What did they mean by that?'
Scaduto grabbed him by the arm, leaned closer, breathed in his face, his eyes darting left and right, melodramatically hissing his words."
'What have you got in the bag?' he asked.
'Nothing,' Stanford said. 'Some papers, a calculator, odds and ends - it's just a traveling bag.'
'You're going somewhere?' Scaduto asked.
'I just got here,' Stanford said.
'Of course. Stupid of me. Forgot. What you got there?'
'Nothing,' Stanford said.
'Jesus Christ,' Scaduto said. 'A little smoke, a little coke, a little something to shoot? What the fuck, we can't go on like this forever - I'll take just about anything.'
'I didn't bring anything,' Stanford said. 'I'm only here for one night. Here, fill your glass, have a drink; we'll get something else later.'
Stanford filled Scaduto's glass. Scaduto nodded his appreciation. He put the glass to his lips and drank deeply, shook his head, looked around him.
'Sonsofbitches,' he said. Those sonsofbitches made me leave. I had a good time at that time, but those bastards just killed it.'
'Why?' Stanford asked.
'My discoveries,' Scaduto said. 'Very cold up in Canada, the forests, all that shit in the forests.'
'What shit?' Stanford asked.
'The fucking truth,' Scaduto said. 'I found out and I braced them with the facts and then they paid me the visits.'
'You took the facts to the CIA?'
'Whistled in like the breeze. You fuckers know all about it, I said. You bastards knew all along.'

'Knew what?'
'They kicked me out. They took my papers and kicked me out. They said don't come around again, you're fucking crazy, it's a lie, then they paid me those cute midnight visits and made me leave NICAP.'
'What papers?' Stanford asked.
'Hey, listen,' Scaduto said, grabbing Stanford by the arm, leaning closer and hissing into his face, the red eyes darting left and right 'Let's get out of here, old buddy. Let's go back to my place. Fuck the cunt, they'll only give us the pox, let's get high the clean way. I've got some hot shit back there. Fucking blow your head off. I've got cable TV and we'll shoot us some stuff and then watch a blue movie and do it that way. Okay, buddy? Let's go,'
He stood up and fell forward, tripping over his stool, crashing into Stanford's shoulder and spinning off and knocking into some people. Stanford reached out and grabbed him, held him up, shook him lightly, and he straightened his shoulders and looked around him, outraged by the angry stares. 'Stupid cunts,' he said. 'You can't get out for the stupid bastards.' Then he shook his head and grinned, threw an arm around Stanford, said, 'Let's go, old buddy, let's get out, let's blow our brains through the roof.' They pushed their way through the crowds, through the surreal, strobe-lit darkness, passed the dance floor, the long line of ladies, the rock music pounding. Scaduto waved to some friends, shouted out, his white teeth gleaming, still clinging onto Stanford, unsteady, his face a jigsaw of colors. It took a long time to reach the stairs, the crowds thicker than before, the pert buttocks and the bulging breasts teasing as they stumbled on through. Eventually they made it, stepping under the silvery arch, staggering up the stairs, Stanford supporting Scaduto and stepping into the night.
'Jesus Christ,' Scaduto said. 'All the lights, they're fucking blinding me. Jesus, I just love it here on Broadway, I just love the Big Apple.'
'Where do you live?' Stanford asked.

'In SoHo,' Scaduto said. 'I got a little loft there in Broome Street. We'll be there in no time.'
He started off along the sidewalk, swaying dangerously from side to side, and Stanford rushed up and stuck clse beside him, not wanting to lose him. The neon signs flickered crazily, the cars roared and honked their horns, and the sidewalks were crowded, people queuing for the theaters, the whores standing at the side streets in their flame-colored clothes, hopeful customers silhouetted by the bright lights of the large plate glass windows. Stanford saw it and ignored it now obsessed with cracking Scaduto, just wanting to get him back to his loft, sober him up, get him talking.
Those hookers,' Scaduto said. Those fucking whores get me going. Just look at that black bitch wearing nothing - I mean, she's practically naked. What about it, Stanford? You think we should take one back? We'll take the Amazon and share her between us, shoot some stuff, have a threesome.'
'I'd rather shoot first,' Stanford said. 'And I don't like to pay for it. Let's go back to the loft and shoot up and then I'll make a few phone calls.'
That's my Stanford,' Scaduto said. 'Always in there with the phone book. The most famous fucking phone book in the country, and it's always paid dividends. You had a reputation, Stanford. I'll have to give you that. When it came to getting pussy, you could do it, no two ways about it'
They turned into Broome Street, stumbling along the sidewalk, passing art galleries and antique shops, health food stores and fresh food restaurants, the old warehouses converted, repainted, decorated, the fire escapes saluting the past, the noise falling behind them.
'Those sonsofbitches,' Scaduto mumbled. Those CIA bastards. I'm earning twice as much as I did before, but it's just not the same.'
'A raw deal,' Stanford said.
'Fucking right, a raw deal. Now I'm a salesman for RCA and that's why I'm so fucked.'
'What worried them?' Stanford asked.

'What I found out.'
'What did you find out?' Stanford asked.
'Fucking Canada. My God!'
Scaduto stopped at a converted warehouse, almost fell against the wall, straightened up and plunged his hands in his pockets and eventually pulled out a key. He had trouble finding the keyhole, kept cursing and mumbling, finally managed to push the door open and stagger inside. Stanford followed him in, opened the gates of the elevator, a large elevator once used for heavy goods, now used only by residents. Scaduto swayed as they went up, holding languidly to the gate, tried to open it when the elevator stopped, then had to let Stanford do it The door opposite was large and ugly, the paint stripped, the wood flaking, but the loft behind the door was luxurious, a plush Playboy-styled penthouse.
'Wow!' Stanford exclaimed. 'Is this yours?'
'Fuck it,' Scaduto said. 'I feel ill. I gotta fix myself up.'
He burped and slapped his belly, shook his head as if dizzy, then walked along the clean, polished floorboards of the enormous, rectangular loft. The walls and ceiling were white, stretching back to a wall-length window, the living area situated near the window, illuminated by spotlights. Stanford walked behind Scaduto, impressed by the decor, passing a vast spectrum-colored picture that covered the right-hand wall, its colors fading as they neared the large window where in daytime the light poured in. Scaduto stumbled and almost fell, grabbed a table of natural pine, straightened up and skirted around a modern couch and stopped beneath an arched Flors lamp.
'Christ,' he said, 'I feel shitty. I think my head's stuck up my ass. The room's spinning, the walls are closing in. What the fuck are we doing here?'
'I want to talk to you,' Stanford said.
'You want to shoot?' Scaduto asked. He took his jacket off and threw it on the couch and started rolling his sleeve up. Those fucking sonsofbitches killed me. They put the fear of

God up me. Very nice. Very polite. Regular gentlemen. Planted pot in my bathroom.'
'I thought you took that anyway.'
'I didn't have it at the time. I was clean as a whistle, the fucking bathroom was bare, and those bastards had me set for ten years because I hit them with Canada.'
'I want to talk about that'
'No way, buddy, I'm not talking. That bathroom's not bare anymore and I want to shoot up.'
'I'm not joining you,' Stanford said.
'Have a drink,' Scaduto said. 'Relax, put your feet up, watch TV; we'll call some hookers and burn ourselves.'
'I have to know,' Stanford said.
'Fuck you, baby, I'm not talking. It never happened. I can't remember, I know nothing. I won't talk, it's not worth it.'
Scaduto finished rolling his sleeve up, shook his head, glanced around him, licked his lips and then walked to the door that led into the bathroom. Stanford watched him disappearing, felt desperate and outraged, wondering what he could say to this lunatic to shake him out of his stupor. The loft had central heating. Stanford felt very warm. He felt dizzy with rage and frustration, and he wanted to smash something. It couldn't happen again: he couldn't let this one go. Stanford stood there and let the rage take him and shake him awake. Then he cursed and turned around, walked across the rush matting, stopped once, clenched his fists very tight, then walked into the bathroom.
Red walls. Mirrored panels. The bath unit was charcoal brown. Scaduto stood there with one foot on the bath, his knee supporting his elbow. He was tying the tourniquet to his arm. He had one end between his teeth. His fist was clenched and a vein throbbed in his neck, beads of sweat on his forehead. Stanford glanced at the dark brown unit He saw the gleaming hypodermic. Scaduto grunted and tugged at the tourniquet and then looked up at Stanford.
'I have to know,' Stanford said.
The tourniquet slipped from Scaduto's teeth. 'What the

fuck are you talking about?' he said. 'Can't you see what I'm doing here?'
'I have a contact,' Stanford said. 'A strong CIA contact. He said that you had found something out that could blow this whole thing.'
'Fuck off out of here,' Scaduto said. 'You sonofabitch, that's why you came. I must be fucking dumb. I should have known. Just get the fuck out of here.'
'I have to know,' Stanford said.
'I know nothing,' Scaduto said. 'If I knew, I'd have blown it to the papers and made myself rich.'
You're frightened,' Stanford said.
'Go to bell. Get out of here. I don't know what the hell you're talking about. Fuck off, Stanford. Just leave me.'
'Tell me.'
'I'm shooting up. Jesus Christ, I can't think straight. I've got my head in my ass, my nerves are singing, and you're just fucking killing me. I don't know anything, Stanford. I don't remember, I don't care. I'm shooting up and you're not going to stop me and that's all there is to it.'
Stanford moved in very fast, his left hand swinging sideways, sweeping Scaduto's bent leg off the bath and making it slam to the floor. Scaduto's body jerked forward, following the line of his leg, and Stanford moved in and grabbed him by the hair and cracked the head on his knee. Scaduto yelped and jerked back up, his head shaking, mouth open, his hands flapping and trying to cover his belly when he saw Stanford's punch. A sluggish gesture, too late - Stanford's fist punched his belly; Scaduto doubled up and Stanford grabbed him by the hair and threw him into the wall. Scaduto gasped and seemed to dance, his arms waving, legs shaking, then he groaned, turned around, his hands reaching for the basin, leaned over the basin and vomited, his whole body shuddering.
Stanford stood there, feeling cold, far removed from himself. He waited until Scaduto had turned around and then hit him again. It was another blow to the stomach, one blow,

sharp and brutal, and Scaduto just grunted, doubled up, reached out for him, grabbed Stanford and slid down his legs and then collapsed on the floor.

Stanford knelt down, rolled Scaduto onto his back, grabbed him under the armpits and pulled him up and heard him mum-bling and groaning. He dragged Scaduto toward the shower stepped in backwards, laid him down, pushed him into a fetal position and then turned the shower on. Scaduto yelped and started flapping, still not fully awake, the water drenching his clothes, forming a pool all around him, as he groaned and kicked his legs and waved his arms, a fish flung on the shore. Stanford kept changing the temperature, first hot, then icy cold, and Scaduto opened his eyes and started bawling, slithering around on the wet tiles. Stanford kept the shower going, hot and cold, hot and cold, and Scaduto bawled a stream of colorful abuse and slithered around like a drowning rat. He finally stood on his hands and knees, shaking his head, pouring water, cursed and tried to crawl from the shower and was kicked back by Stanford. Scaduto howled and waved his hands. He managed to get up on his knees. He was gasping and he swayed from side to side, the water hissing down over him. Stanford turned the shower off. Scaduto groaned and flopped forward. Stanford grabbed him and dragged him over the bloodred tiles, past the bath, through the door. Scaduto kicked and waved his arms, sluggish movements, devoid of strength, and Stanford dragged him across the living room, still struggling and protesting, then left him on the floor before the couch and stood there and just stared at him.

Scaduto lay there and shivered, shook his head, groaned and cursed, his fingers scrabbling at the squares of rush matting, the steam still rising off him. Stanford stood there, saying nothing, breathing deeply, fists clenched, feeling cold and removed from himself, determined to finish it Eventually Scaduto moved, propped himself up on his hands, shook his head and struggled up on his hands and knees, a colt learning to walk. He shook his head and stared at Stanford, took a deep breath, turned sideways, then hauled himself up

on to the couch, and slumped there, looking stunned.
Stanford walked across the room. He had left his traveling bag on the table. He picked the bag up and quickly unzipped it and pulled out a small tape recorder. He set the tape recorder on the table, threw the bag to the floor. Scaduto watched him, his glassy eyes wary, still red and unfocused. Then Stanford walked over toward him, knelt down right in front of him, reached out and grabbed him by the collar and shook him a little.
'You're going to talk to me,' Stanford said. 'You're going to tell me all you know. We're going to sit here all night, you're going to talk and keep talking, and we'll go over it again and again until I've got what I want. You don't have to be formal about it. Just lay it down as it comes. I'm putting it all down on tapes, I'm going to cross-check and edit, and when I've finished it will all be in sequence and sound quite intelligent. I'm not bullshitting, Scaduto. I want to drain your damned brain. I want everything, from your first day to your last, and I want no evasions. If you're a good boy, I'll reward you: I'll let you shoot up. If you're a bad boy, I'll knock the shit out of you and then start again. And don't try lying, Scaduto. Don't try leaving things out. If you lie, or if you leave anything out, I'll go straight to the CIA. I'll show them what you've given me. That should be enough to choke them. They'll be around here so fast, you won't know your balls from your ass. So don't mess with me, Scaduto. Talk long and talk well. If you give me what I want, iif it's correct, I'll never mention my source. I'm turning the tape recorder on now. I'm going to sit down here beside you. Just relax, put your feet up and talk, and the night will soon pass.'
Stanford went to the table, picked the tape recorder up, bent down and picked up his traveling bag and then returned to the couch. He sat down beside Scaduto. He reached into the traveling bag. He pulled out a lot of cassettes and set them down on the table, placed them on the table one by one until they formed a neat pile. Scaduto stared at all the tapes. He licked his lips and shivered slightly. Stanford picked up the

first tape, slipped it into the small recorder, turned the machine on and then sat down, looking right at Scaduto. 'That's it,' he said. 'Talk.'

'My phone's been bugged,' Epstein said quietly. That's why we're out walking.'
It was nighttime in Washington, and they walked through the streets of Georgetown, passing discos and restaurants.
'Bugged?' Stanford said. You've been bugged? Why the hell would they do that?'
Epstein turned his collar up. He looked older and very frail. He coughed a lot and rubbed his eyes constantly, rarely raising his head.
'I'm not sure,' he said. 'It obviously happened when I was away. I think it's got something to do with London and young Richard Watson.'
'No one knew about that.'
'My passport,' Epstein said. 'It makes me nervous. They must be watching us carefully. I think it started in St Thomas.'
'Mr Gerhardt.'
'That's right,' Epstein said. They're disturbed that we saw what we saw, and I'd like to know why.'
'Fucking CIA.'
'Yes,' Epstein said.
'Where we go, people just disappear. It's not a comforting thought.'
They were in Wisconsin Avenue, passing kids wearing baubles, the vendors defying the weather and hawking their wares. Stanford hardly saw a soul, now buried inside his head,

obsessed by the girl in Galveston, by his experience in the Caribbean, by the revelations of Gardner and O'Hara, by Scaduto's long story. Stanford knew he couldn't leave it; he was hooked right through the throat No matter what might happen in the future, he now had to continue.

'You said Scaduto was sensational,' Epstein said. 'All right. Let me hear it.'

Stanford shrugged. 'I don't know where to start.' The whole story's just fucking incredible - and it's pretty damned complex.' He glanced briefly around him, his eyes stung by the bright lights, heard the sound of disco music pouring out from a crimson-lit doorway. 'Okay,' he said. The basic background to Scaduto is that he was working for the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena way back in 1957 when they first started up.'

'NICAP,' Epstein said. 'A civilian organization. Not too good a background at all: the outside looking in.'

They're an efficient organization,' Stanford said, 'and damned well you know it.'

Epstein smiled gently, huddled up against the cold, almost lost in the thick, furlined coat, the street lights washing over him.

'Right,' Stanford said. 'I hope I can continue now. You know, of course, about the Levelland sightings.'

'Of course,' Epstein said. 'Probably the most remarkable sightings on record. November 2, 1957. Seven different automobile drivers, all at different locations around Levelland, Texas, suffered at approximately the same time inexplicable car disablement and subsequent recovery after coming across large, egg-shaped, glowing metallic objects which were sitting on the roads and then ascended vertically and disappeared. The Air Force later caused themselves acute embarrassment by (a) not examining the reported landing sites, and (b) attributing the cause of the sightings to an electrical storm that was not in fact in the area of Levelland at that time.'

'Full marks,' Stanford said. 'So, the Levelland sightings

formed a sort of grand climax to the biggest UFO flap since 1952. Those sightings caused the Air Force a lot of embarrassment and led to NICAP pushing for congressional hearings. In August 1958 John McCormack's House SubCommittee on Atmospheric Phenomena requested a week-long hearing in closed, secret session, but NICAP's pleasure at this was quickly guillotined. Any hope that the hearing would be a fair one was destroyed by the evidence of Captain George Gregory, then representing Project Blue Book, who came out with so many half-truths he made Menzel seem Christlike. Given this, as you can imagine, the House Sub-Committee decided to take no further interest in the matter.'

'So?'

'NICAP was furious. And they were even more furious when, in December of that year, the Air Force published a staff study that came down heavily on the civilian UFO groups, accusing them of being biased and sensationalist. To make matters worse, it was during that same month that NICAP found out, through one of the more powerful members of the NICAP board, that the Robertson Panel, in making their recommendations back in 1953, had, when discussing civilian UFO groups then in existence, used the chilling phrase: "The apparent irresponsibility and the possible use of such groups for subversive purposes should be kept in mind" and, further, when they discovered that both the FBI and the CIA had been keeping extensive records on people involved in UFO investigations, including quite a few members of NICAP.'

Epstein smiled and nodded wearily, rubbed his eyes and coughed a little, looked away when an elegant prostitute started walking toward him.

'Now,' Stanford said, 'stories about the CIA's involvement in the UFO phenomenon had been circulating for years, but a lot of people put it down to paranoia. However, after Gregory's performance in front of the House Sub-Committee, and after learning about the Robertson Panel

recommendations, some of the people at NICAP, including Scaduto, decided to check out the situation. Then, just after they started, one of the members of their board came up with a pretty amazing story.'

The prostitute kept trailing them, swinging her shoulder bag, looking prosperous in her long coat and boots, the breeze blowing her dark hair. Stanford glanced at her briefly, thought of the girl in Galveston, experienced a sudden, blind-ing lust, and then waved his right hand. The woman shrugged and turned away, a neon sign flashed green and red, and the snow drifted lazily along the ground as Epstein stared at his own feet

'Apparently,' Stanford continued, 'just a few weeks earlier - this was 1959 - the Office of Naval Intelligence had heard of a woman in Maine who claimed to be in contact with extraterrestrials and brought that fact to the CIA's attention. Since this seemed like a typical crank contactee case in which the woman, a psychic, had used automatic handwriting for communication with the extraterrestrials, the CIA naturally gave it a miss. However, the Canadian government had also heard about the woman and they sent their leading UFOlogist to interview her. According to the Canadian expert that woman, during a trance, had correctly answered highly complex questions about space flight Surprisingly, when the US Navy learned about this, they sent two intelligence officers to investigate. During the subsequent interview, one of the Navy intelligence officers, who had been trained in ESP, tried to tune in to the woman's contactee; this experiment failed, so he and his associate returned to Washington and informed the CIA This time the CIA displayed more interest than before and arranged for the intelligence officer to try making contact in CIA headquarters. Six witnesses - two of them CIA employees and one of them from the Office of Naval Intelligence - got together in the office in Washington to observe the results of the experiment - and this time, when the intel-ligence officer went into his trance, he reportedly made contact with someone.'

Stanford glanced at Epstein, trying to gauge his reaction, but Epstein was gazing down at the ground, looking frail in his heavy coat.

'At that point,' Stanford said, 'one of the men in the room demanded some kind of proof that they were in contact with extraterrestrials. The intelligence officer, still in his trance, said that if they looked out the window they would see a fly-ing saucer over Washington. The other three men went straight to the window and were amazed to see a UFO in the sky - a description of which has never been released. How-ever, it has been established that at the time of the supposed sighting, the radar center at Washington National Airport reported that its radar returns had been blocked out in the direction of the sightings.'

Epstein glanced up at the sky, saw dark clouds drifting lazily, dropped his gaze and stared forlornly at the snow, rubbed his eyes, coughed again.

'So,' Stanford said. 'Major Robert J. Friend - who had since replaced Captain Gregory as head of Project Blue Book - was informed of these events by the CIA and asked to sit in on a later trance session during which, reportedly, nothing unusual happened. Nevertheless, Friend felt that Duke University's parapsychology lab should investigate both the psychic and the intelligence officer, which they subsequently did... but their report never materialized, Blue Book released no analysis of the sighting report, the government did nothing about the Washington radar blackout, and what the intelligence officer saw over Washington remained a tight secret Not only that, but the CIA took 'punitive' action against the men involved, and had them all transferred to other positions.'

That story is authentic,' Epstein said. 'Major Friend wrote about the whole affair in a Memorandum for the Record - a memorandum that can now be found in the Air Force Archives at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama.'

'Right,' Stanford said. 'And that's exactly what got Scaduto going. First, Scaduto wondered at the unusual amount of

official interest displayed in a civilian female with supposed telepathic abilities. Scaduto was aware that both the Russian KGB and the CIA had been investigating the espionage po-tential of telepathy, psychic photography and other forms of parapsychology, and he therefore wondered if there could be any connection between that fact and the psychic from Maine. Since communication by telepathy had already been attained with moderate success both in Russian and American labora-tories and between submarines and land bases, it was possible that the CIA was genuinely concerned with the wom-an's knowledge of the more complex aspects of space flight. It also stands to reason, since they themselves were interested in the espionage potential of telepathy, that they would have certain men trained in ESP - thus, they sent one of their men to attend the trance sessions.'

'I don't see where this is leading,' Epstein said.

'Patience,' Stanford said. The first thing Scaduto had to accept was that telepathic communication had been made with someone in that CIA office in Washington and that the man in a trance, if not actually making it materialize, had been informed that there was a UFO in the sky. If he then kept in mind the fact that certain secret military laboratories had succeeded in training people in telepathic communication -which had been done in a primitive fashion years before - it then seemed more possible that the woman from Maine had actually been in contact with some telepathically trained government employee.'

'Wait a minute,' Epstein said, looking a lot more interested. 'Are you suggesting that the UFO over Washington was a government aircraft?'

'Yes,' Stanford said. 'And for Scaduto, this possibility be came even more intriguing when he thought of the US Navy Intelligence's interest in the matter and, even more intriguing, when one of the members of NICAP's board of directors reminded him that the Canadian government and the US Air Force had both acknowledged their involvement in supposedly unsuccessful flying saucer construction projects.'

Epstein suddenly stopped walking, glanced up at the sky, then looked all around him, at the snow on the ground, at the discos and restaurants and bars, his eyes bright with excitement.
'I'm hungry,' Stanford said. 'Let's get something to eat. Also, I don't like all this walking and I want to sit down.'
They went into Clyde's, enjoyed the warmth and the saloon atmosphere, sat down and gave the waitress their orders and didn't speak until she left. Stanford studied Epstein's face: he looked ill, but more alive. Stanford thought of them both, of Epstein's fate and his own obsessions, and he had to beat down the cold rage that now drove him relentlessly. His old friend was soon to die. The pains of cancer now assailed him. Stanford wanted to give him something - all the answers -before death cut him down.
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'Bear in mind that at least some kind of flying saucer prototypes had actually been built by the US and Canada: first, the US Navy's Flying Flounder and the Air Force's Flying Flapjack - projects reportedly worked on between 1942 and 1947 - then the mysterious flying saucer that the Canadian government claimed they had aborted and passed over to the US in 1954. Now the most interesting thing about those projects was that, one, the US Navy claimed to have dropped their project back in 1947, but were known to be still involved in super-secret aeronautical projects scattered around the White Sands Proving Ground; and, two, the Canadian government, while admitting that the enormous UFO seen over Albuquerque in 1951 was similar to the one they had tried to build, claimed that they had passed their project on to the US because they couldn't afford to continue it.'
'So what you're saying is that the UFO over Albuquerque might have been a US product based on the 1947 Canadian designs.'
'Right... And that everyone's admitted that they had once tried building saucers, but all are now denying that they succeeded - which could well be a lie.'

'I see,' Epstein said.
'Now remember,' Stanford continued, 'that Scaduto had started to investigate these questions in the Year of our Lord 1959. The first thing he remembered was that the first major UFO sighting - the Kenneth Arnold sightings of June 24,1947
- had taken place near Mount Rainier in the Cascades in the state of Washington - which divides Canada from Oregon -and that Arnold had stated that the nine UFOs had disap-peared in the direction of the Canadian border. What is not so widely known is that on that very same day another man, Fred Johnson, prospecting about four thousand feet above the Cascades, reported seeing six similar objects, and that three days before, on June 21, Harold Dahl, on harbor patrol in Puget Sound - which runs from the Canadian border to Tacoma - was following the coastline of Maury Island when he reportedly saw five UFOs maneuvering fifteen hundred feet above the coast before disappearing toward the open sea. Throughout that whole month - even ignoring the crank reports encouraged by the initial sightings - there was a disturbing number of sightings over the northwest corner of the United States, and by the first week in July there were reports of "strange, luminous bodies" in the skies over the Province of Quebec, Oregon and New England. The following week those sightings spread to California and New Mexico, and by the end of that year - the same year that the US Navy had, apparently, dropped their flying saucer project
- flying saucers were being reported from all over the world.'
'So you're suggesting that the US Navy, the US Air Force and the Canadian government were all working together to build those saucers.'
'Yes,' Stanford said. The next major flap was the Washington flap of 1952. On reinvestigating that case, Scaduto found that while the real flap had started on July 19, there was a record, dated June 17, of several unidentified red spheres that flew at supersonic speeds over the Canadian Air Base of North Bay in Ontario and then crossed over some of the southeastern states. He also discovered that nearly all of the

subsequent Washington UFOs were described as disappear-ing toward the north, and that when the UFOs returned en masse, on July 26, their disappearance in a general northerly direction also applied.'

'All heading toward the Canadian border,' Epstein said.

'Right,' Stanford said.

The waitress brought their food, set it down and smiled at Stanford, did not receive a smile in return and flounced off in a huff. Epstein had ordered a Spanish omelet and a glass of cold milk; he drank the latter down in one thirsty gulp and then stared at the former. Stanford was perturbed, feeling sorry for his plight, then he picked up his own bacon cheeseburger and sank his teeth into it.

'It adds up,' Epstein said. 'Lake Ontario and Lake Erie are as notorious as the Bermuda Triangle for the unexplained destruction of hundreds of aircraft and ships, the failure of gyroscopes and radio instruments, irrational behavior in normally sane crew members and, of course, the sighting of numerous UFOs. It's also worth noting that Canada, contrary to popular belief, is one of the greatest aeronautical powers in the world, that as far back as 1952 it had been described as the Promised Land of Aviation, that it has a truly remarkable range of world-famous aircraft companies, and that it also has vast areas of heavily wooded and uninhabited land - ideal for hiding secret aeronautical research establishments.'

That,' Stanford said, 'is what Scaduto found out. So, the next thing he had to ascertain was whether or not the Canadian saucer project had really been passed on to the US Air Force and if the Air Force had then simply dropped the project.'

'And the answer on both accounts was No.'

'Correct. His research revealed that on 11 February, 1953, the Toronto Star announced that a new flying saucer was being developed at the Avro-Canada plant in Malton, Ontario—'

'The word "new" suggesting that it wasn't the first one.'

'Exactly. Then, on February 16, the Minister of Defense Production, C.D. Howe, informed the Canadian House of

Commons that Avro-Canada was in fact working on "a mock-up model of a flying saucer, capable of flying at fifteen hundred miles an hour and climbing straight up in the air." By February 27, Crawford Gordon Jr., the president of Avro-Canada, was writing in the Avro News that the prototype being built was so revolutionary that it would make all other forms of supersonic aircraft obsolescent. Next, the Toronto Star was claiming that Field Marshal Montgomery had become one of the few people ever to view Avro's mock-up of the flying sau-cer, and shortly after that Air Vice Marshal D. M. Smith was reported to have said that what Field Marshal Montgomery had seen was the revolutionary construction plans for a gyroscopic fighter whose gas turbine would revolve around the pilot, who would be positioned at the center of the disc.'

Epstein winced with pain, ignored his omelet and swallowed a tablet, washed the tablet down with a glass of water and then looked right at Stanford.

'Good God,' he said, 'I think I remember it The American press dubbed that then legendary machine the Omega and in 1953 the RAF Review gave it a semi-official respectability by reprinting most of the unclassified Canadian research and including doctored drawings of the machine.'

'What did it look like?' Stanford asked.

'According to the sketches, it was a relatively small, horseshoe-shaped flying wing, with numerous air intake slots along its edge, ten deflector vanes for direction control, a single pilot cabin topped by a cupola of transparent plastic, and a large turbine engine that revolved around the vertical axis of the main body.'

'Fantastic,' Stanford said. 'Now listen to this. In early November 1953, Canadian newspapers were reporting that a mock-up of the Omega had been shown on 31 October to a group of twenty-five American military officers and scientists; then, in March the following year, the American press was claiming that the US Air Force, concerned at Soviet progress in aeronautics, had allocated an unspecified sum of money to the Canadian government for the building of a prototype of

their flying saucer, that the machine had been designed by the English aeronautical engineer John Frost - who had worked for Avro-Canada in Malton, Ontario - and that it would be capable of either hovering in midair or flying at a speed of nearly two thousand miles an hour. This hot bit of news was followed by Canadian press assertions that their government was planning to form entire squadrons of flying saucers for the defense of Alaska and the far regions of the North, and that the machines required no runways, were capable of rising vertically, and were ideal weapons for subarctic and polar regions.'

'Did the Canadian government make any comment about all this?'

'Not until 3 December, 1954, when they suddenly announced that the saucer project had been abandoned.'

'Any reason?'

'Oh, yeah. Because, although it was believed that the saucers would fly, they would, quote, serve no useful purpose. The Minister of Defense then confirmed their decision, adding that the project would have cost far too much for something that was, in the end, highly speculative.'

Epstein picked up the fork, poked distractedly at the omelet, set the fork down again and glanced around him, his eyes still excited.

'All right,' he said. 'All these facts merely confirmed what your friend Scaduto had known for some time: that the Canadian government had officially dropped their saucer project in 1954.'

'I would stress the word "officially,"' Stanford said.

'Why?'

'Because that announcement by the Canadian government was clearly contradicted on 22 October, 1955, when US Air Force Secretary Donald Quarles released an extraordinary statement through the press office of the Department of Defense. Among other things he said that an aircraft of "unusual configuration and flight characteristics" would soon be appearing, that the US government had "initiated

negotiations" with the Canadian government and Avro-Canada for the preparation of an experimental model of the Frost flying disc, and that that aircraft would be mass-pro-duced and used for the common defense of the subarctic area of the continent.'

Epstein rubbed his eyes, studied his omelet and shook his head, then looked back at Stanford and smiled, his hands flat on the table.

'So what am I to make of all this?' he asked. 'First, the Ca-nadian government announces that they have abandoned their saucer project. Next, ten months later, the US Air Force officially announces that such a project is still underway. Was it or wasn't it?'

'It was,' Stanford said. 'By February 1959 the press was receiving ambiguous Air Force statements about a revolutionary new aircraft that had been jointly undertaken by the US Air Force, the US Army and the Canadian government. Then, on 14 April, during a press conference in Washington, General Frank Britten implied that the first test flight of the aircraft was imminent and that it was destined to revolutionize traditional aeronautical concepts.'

'That doesn't necessarily imply a saucer.'

'It did,' Stanford said. 'In August 1960 the Air Force, giving in under pressure, allowed reporters to view the very machine they had all been writing about. What the reporters were shown was the Avro Car, an experimental aircraft that combined the characteristics of air-cushion machines and airplanes - in short, a crude flying saucer based on the principles of the jet ring and barely able to rise above the runway. Small wonder, seeing this, that they experienced no surprise when, in December the following year, the Department of Defense announced that they were withdrawing from participation in the project'

Stanford finished off his cheeseburger, wiped his lips with a paper napkin, then sat back and stared intently at Epstein, not smiling at all.

'There the story of the official flying saucers ended,' he

said. 'Scaduto spent months trying to work out what it all meant, but in the end he grew increasingly baffled. First, he tried to find a correlation between the fact that an awful lot of UFOs seemed to come from and return to Canada and the fact that the Canadian government had been engaged in try-ing to build flying saucers - but there could be no remote comparison between the capabilities of the unknowns and the pathetic performance of the government-sponsored saucers. On the other hand, there were a few lingering mysteries...'

'Let me try to guess,' Epstein said. 'Why did the Canadian government announce that they had dropped their saucer project when in fact, at least according to the US Air Force, they were still working on it? And why did the US Air Force Secretary announce that aircraft like flying saucers would soon be flying? And why, after that announcement, was there a four-year gap - with no sign of the magical aircraft - before a remarkably similar announcement was made? And why, after this latest announcement, did the Air Force unveil their magical offering, let it be known that it was a failure, and then announce that they were dropping the project? And finally why, if the Canadians had genuinely dropped their flying saucer project, did the US Department of Defense, in announcing the termination of their own project, state that they were withdrawing from participation in the project? Withdrawing from participation with whom?'

'Those were the burning questions,' Stanford said. The suspicion remained that both the Canadian government and the US Air Force were still involved in the construction of flying saucers, that those saucers were vastly more advanced than the rubbish the Air Force had deigned to show us, that some of the supposed UFO landings on or around various top-secret military establishments were actually the products of Canadian-US cooperation, and that the Canadian and American statements, with their contradictions and ambigui-ties, had been designed to deliberately confuse the facts and turn them into mere rumors.'

'Good God,' Epstein said.

Stanford didn't smile at all. He paid the check and stood up. Epstein followed him out into the street and turned his fur collar up. Neon signs flickered erratically. The snow was turning to slush. The street was filled with beaded young-sters and politicians and whores, with lush secretaries and generals wearing suits, all defying the biting cold. Stanford headed for M Street Epstein coughed at his side. They both walked in a slow, casual manner, rarely looking around them.

'Anyway,' Stanford said, 'unable to solve the problem, Scaduto finally had to let it go. Then, in 1965, it all came back with a bang.' Stanford glanced up at the sky, hardly knowing he was doing so; he saw a patch of glittering stars beyond the clouds, the black void all around them. 'In 1964, 1965 and 1966 there were three singular events that really put the Air Force in a fix. It was the culmination of those events that finally stung the Air Force into getting rid of its much publicized Project Blue Book - and that also encouraged Scaduto into re-examining the whole Canadian mystery. The first of these events was the close encounter of the third kind in Socorro, New Mexico, in 1964, when Deputy Marshall Lonnie Zamora claimed to have seen two schoolboy-sized people in coveralls standing beside an egg-shaped, metallic craft that was resting on legs extending from its body. The machine took off with a roar, spitting flames and ascending vertically, before Zamora could get down there to investigate.'

'An extraordinary case,' Epstein said. 'Witnesses, including Allen Hynek, later confirmed the four landing marks and the burned greasewood plants, a local verified that they had seen Zamora's squad car heading toward a strange, oval-shaped object that was descending in the direction of the sighting, and a check with NASA, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and fifteen industrial firms to see if they were working with experimental lunar landing modules in the area received nothing but negative answers. Hynek later described the sighting as one of the major UFO sightings of all time.'

'Jesus,' Stanford said, 'you're like a computer. Anyway, that was the first event. The second was when, on March 20, 1966,

at Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan, eighty-seven women students and a civil defense instructor saw a glowing, foot-ball-shaped object hovering over an empty swamp a few hunndred yards from the women's dormitory, repeatedly racing at and retreating from the dormitory, dodging an airport beacon light, and generally flying back and forth for hours before disappearing - and when, the next day, in Dexter, Michigan, five people including two police officers reported seeing the same. The third event was merely the fact that by 1966 a Gallup poll had indicated that approximately nine mil-lion Americans thought they had actually seen a UFO. It was these major events, plus the Great Northeast Blackout of November 9, 1965, that led directly to the infamous Condon Report and the final closing of Project Blue Book. Now while the Great Northeast Blackout was actually the second incident, I've left it to the last because it was the incident that really resurrected the Canadian mystery at NICAP - particularly with Scaduto.'

Stanford glanced at Epstein and saw him swallowing a tablet, passing the numerous people on the pavement as if they didn't exist. His old friend looked exhausted and ill, and Stanford felt angry.

'As you already know,' he said, 'there's a long history of UFOs being seen over power lines and of subsequent, unex-plainable power failures. Now, during the first week of August 1965, thousands of people in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and neighboring states witnessed one of the biggest UFO displays ever. Unidentified lights flew across the skies in formation, were tracked on radar, and played tag with civilian and Air Force aircraft. This major display of UFOs eventually faded away, but a milder flap continued over foe next three months until, on the night of November 9, 1965, unidentifieds were reported from Niagara, Syracuse and Manhattan. Then, that same night, all the lights went out - in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire,

New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont and a section of Canada - went out over a total area of eighty thousand

square miles and a population of twenty-six million people.'
'I remember it,' Epstein said. The huge power grid that controlled all those blacked-out areas - an interlocking net-work linking twenty-nine utility companies, with hundreds of automatic controls and safety devices - was considered to be invulnerable... yet the cause of the blackout was never as certained.'
'Right,' Stanford said. They never found out what caused it. The only thing they knew was that the failure had occurred somewhere in the flow between the Niagara Falls generators and the Clay power substation, an automatic control unit through which the electric power flowed from Niagara Falls to New York.'
'There was a UFO connection,' Epstein said.
'Yes,' Stanford said. 'First report of an unidentified was made by the Deputy Aviation Commissioner of Syracuse, Robert C. Walsh, and several other witnesses, all of whom, just after the power failed at Syracuse, saw what resembled a huge fireball ascending from a fairly low altitude near Hancock Airport. Approaching for landing at that time was flight instructor Weldon Ross and his passenger, computer technician James Brooding, both of whom saw the same object, at first mistaking it for a burning building on the ground - something corroborating the fact that the fireball was at low altitude - then quickly realizing that it was something in the air: a single, round-shaped object about one hundred feet in diameter, which they later described as a "flame-colored" globe. And, according to Ross's calculations, that object was directly over the Clay power substation.'
'So,' Epstein said, 'we're back with Canada.'
'Yes,' Stanford said with some emphasis. 'For obvious reasons this whole fucking mess resurrected the Canadian mystery at NICAP, particularly with Scaduto. Now, more than ever, he was convinced that there was some sort of connection between Canada and the UFO phenomenon. He was further convinced of this when a friend pointed out that until the United States defensive radar network was extended to

the Far North, which was in 1952, Soviet long-range reconnaissance planes from Siberian and subarctic bases had flown frequently over Alaska, the Yukon territory and the MacKenzie District areas to spy on what was supposed to be relatively uninhabited territory. This just didn't make sense. What the hell were the Russians spying on? And wondering this, Scaduto pulled out his Canadian files and started work-ing again.'

They walked across M Street, hypnotized by the traffic lights, turned left on the sidewalk and kept going, rarely look-ing at anything. Eventually they turned again. They both walked like blind men. The residential streets were empty and quiet, the snow gleaming in darkness.

'Scaduto found nothing new in the files,' Stanford said, 'but by accident he finally struck gold. One of the members of the NICAP board of governors had managed to run down one of the CIA agents who had been transferred after the Woman from Maine affair. This agent, who had been transferred to London before being eased out of the service, was naturally feeling embittered and was willing to talk as long as it was off the record. Consequently, Scaduto met him in a room in the Drake Hotel in New York, and what he told Scaduto knocked Scaduto out.'

Epstein shivered with cold, rubbed his eyes and coughed painfully, cursed, but kept listening to Stanford.

'Apparently,' Stanford said, 'one of the agent's assignments in the CIA was to undergo specialized training in Duke University's parapsychology lab, the psychology department at McGill University in Canada, and a sensory-deprivation establishment at Princetown. The purpose of all this was to open his mind - a naturally responsive one - to mental telepathy, sightless vision and psychokinesis. The reason for this - it was explained to him - was that the US was about thirty years behind the Soviets in this field, and that the Russians were already employing such skills for espionage purposes.

'After a year of training the agent found that he could, like Ted Serios, cause photographs to appear on a film by merely

studying the camera. A year after that, in 1959, he was work-ing with US Naval Intelligence and having successful shore to ship telepathic communications with the US Nautilus the then famous atomic submarine. And that same year, when the press exposed the Nautilus experiments, he was trans-ferred back to Washington to work with the female psychic from Maine.

'During his first session, in the presence of the psychic, the agent was unable to make contact. However, at the sec-ond session, in the CIA office in Washington, when the woman wasn't present, he went into a trance and made contact with someone. Now, like the woman from Maine the agent was scribbling down, automatically, what it was he was hearing in his trance. He never actually found out what he wrote... because by the time he awakened one of the senior officers present had spirited the message out of the office.'

'So they didn't want him to know who he was talking to.'

'Correct,' Stanford said. 'No matter: when he finally woke up he found everyone at the window, all excitedly scanning the sky where the UFO, apparently, had been. Intrigued -and annoyed because his notes had been stolen from him -the agent later had a clandestine meeting with one of his colleagues and asked him if the UFO had been real. His colleague, very drunk at the time, told him that it was real, that it was part of a top-secret government project, and that one of the crew on board had been ESP trained. The woman from Maine had picked his thoughts up by accident'

They were nearing Epstein's house, the streets were desolate and quiet, and Epstein kept his head down, breathing harshly, coughing often, his head filled with what Stanford was telling him, his heart pounding excitedly.

'That wasn't all,' Stanford said, speaking almost in a monotone, his gaze fixed on the empty street ahead, on the tall, brownstone buildings. 'According to the agent's colleague, the UFOs reported to have landed at Cannon AFB, Deerwood Nike Base, Blaine AFB and, apparently, Holloman AFB, actually existed. Those saucers were the products of years of

highly secret activity between the Canadian and United States governments - but in no way did they resemble the aborted projects that were "leaked" to the press. They were, in fact, highly advanced flying discs of the most extraordinary capa-bility - and there was a total of about twelve in existence.'

Epstein felt his heart pounding. He ignored his aching stomach. He didn't feel Stanford's rage, had no thoughts of betrayal, felt nothing but an exalting vindication of all he had lived for. The UFOs existed. He had not pursued a phantom. He could die without dwelling on failure, and that made it all worth it.

'Only twelve?' he asked instinctively.

'Yes,' Stanford said. 'According to the agent, his colleague had previously been seconded to the Royal Canadian Air Force Intelligence where he was given the task of implementing internal security on the flying saucer project. The project, he discovered, had been in existence since 1946, and was being run jointly by the Canadian government, the US Air Force and Navy, and a few high-ranking Army officers from the Pentagon. They had managed to maintain secrecy by locating the underground production plants in the vast, deserted regions of southern Canada between British Columbia and Alberta; by ensuring that the production of the numerous components of the saucers was distributed be-tween hundreds of different, international companies, none of whom could have guessed what they were for; by undertaking the more specialized research in the super-secret installations of the White Sands Proving Ground and similar establishments all over Canada; and, finally, by deliberately confusing the press and public with a continuous stream of ambiguous "leaks" and misleading statements. In other words: those saucers are real and they're hidden in Canada.'

Epstein stopped at the street corner, turned around and stared at Stanford, looking up, his eyes bright in the lamp-light, white snow on his gray beard.

'You do realize,' he said, 'that this leaves a mere twelve saucers to account for all the sightings of thirty years?'

'Yes,' Stanford said, 'I realize that. But that's not what I'm saying.'
'Oh? And just what are you saying?'
Stanford didn't hesitate. 'It transpires that the Allied Air Forces had been harassed by UFOs - mostly in the shapes of balls of fire - from as far back as 1944. Then, shortly after the war, in the summer of 1946, the more familiar types of UFOs mostly cigar-shaped, swarmed across Scandinavia, seemingly coming from the general direction of the Soviet Union. The conclusion at the Pentagon was that German scientists, seized by the Russians at Peenemiinde where the V-2 rocket had been developed, were constructing advanced weapons for the Soviets, and that the unidentified "missiles" were being launched from the rocket test site of Peenemiinde which was then in the Russian-occupied zone of Germany. This suspi-cion became stronger when the British, who had also seized and taken back to Britain a wealth of Germany's top-secret scientific and weapons research material, announced that the Germans had been working since 1941 on extraordinary aero-nautical projects and on processes to release atomic energy. Included in the former was a "remotely controlled, pilotless aircraft" and a "device that could be controlled at a considerable distance by another aircraft." So, faced with this, and thinking of the supposed Soviet "missiles" over Scandinavia, there was a sudden British-Canadian-United States alliance to beat the Soviets in the race to follow through the German designs and complete their extraordinary aeronautical projects.'
They both stood there at the corner, a cold wind whipping around them. Stanford was totally humorless, his eyes bright and intense, and Epstein looked up at him in wonder, either dazed or still doubtful.
'Listen!' Stanford hissed. 'As we've just been discussing, the actual concept of a flying saucer is not a new one. The US Navy and the British Navy have both been interested for a long time in the possibility of constructing either a vertical rising aircraft or a simpler air-cushioned machine that would

be particularly suitable for use at sea. Regarding this, the Navy Flounder and the Flying Flapjack were crude examples of the former, the normal Hovercraft a perfect example of the latter. However, what they were attempting to build in the underground plants in Canada was a machine with the extraordinary capabilities of the machines suggested in the incomplete German research material. They wouldn't achieve this goal for another twenty years, but the first, extremely crude versions of their saucers were successfully tested over the Canadian border on 21 June, 1947: a total of five disc-shaped aircraft, two of them piloted and approximately fifty feet in diameter, the remaining three remotely controlled by the pilots flying nearby, these three a mere six feet in diameter. These particular flying saucers could reach an altitude of approximately seven thousand feet, could hover uncertainly in the air, and had a horizontal speed of about six hundred miles an hour.'

'That test flight,' Epstein said, 'could account for the Harold Dahl sighting of that same day.'

'Right,' Stanford said. 'However, it was what happened after that test flight that really got the ball rolling. On 24 June, three days after the first successful test flight of the five Canadian-US saucers, a total of nine, highly sophisticated, unknown saucers flew down over the Canadian underground plants, hovered there for about twenty minutes, shot off toward the Cascades where they reportedly circled the test area, then returned, circled the plant for another twenty minutes, then shot off at an incredible speed. And from that day on - the day, incidentally, of the famous Kenneth Arnold sighting - those UFOs, and others, returned again and again, and eventually spread out across the whole world.'

Epstein stepped back and covered his mouth with his hand, his eyes very large and very bright, his whole body shaking. Stanford watched him, saying nothing, waiting for Epstein to recover, finally saw him removing his hand from his month and shaking his head.

'My God,' Epstein said, 'are they Russian?'

'No,' Stanford said. The agent's colleague, during his ten-ure at the flying saucer plant in Canada, never found out who those saucers belonged to. What he did find out was that some time during the Cold War the Pentagon received proof that the unknown saucers didn't originate in Russia - and that the Russians were being harassed by the same objects. He also found out that they were not from outer space, that the Pentagon probably knew where they came from, and that Canada and the United States were racing to build similar machines because the unknown saucers, even as far back as the Fifties, had the sort of maneuvering capability that made them virtually invincible.'

Epstein stepped back, turned around and walked away, and Stanford followed him around the street corner and saw him stopping again. He seemed to be frozen. He was staring across at his own house. Three men were coming out of the house and walking toward a black limousine. Epstein offered a strangled cry. The three men all looked up. Epstein started to run across the road toward them, his overcoat flapping. Stanford cursed and ran after him. The men slipped into the car. The car's headlights flashed on, formed a dazzling pool of silver, and then the car roared and shot off down the street Epstein stopped and stared at it Stanford slid to a halt behind him. The car slowed down at the bottom of the street, turned the corner and vanished.

Epstein cursed and lurched forward, almost slipping in the snow. He and Stanford reached the brownstone together and found the door open. They both raced inside. The whole house had been ransacked. Epstein kept looking around him, his eyes dazed, uncomprehending, then he groaned and cov-ered his face with his hands and slumped into a chair.

'Bastards!' Stanford hissed. They've got us marked!'

He reached down and grabbed Epstein, pulled him up to his feet, shook him until his hands fell from his face and his eyes were wide open. He held Epstein by his shoulders, trying to keep his old friend steady, then he spoke in a low and murderous voice that gave Epstein his strength back.

'Listen to me,' he said. 'I didn't stop at Scaduto. I did some investigations of my own and this is what I discovered.
'I discovered that the mysterious fireballs seen frequently over Germany disappeared for good when the Second World War ended. I discovered that the Russians, the British and the Americans divided the scientific spoils of Germany between them, and that some of those spoils were rumored to be related to the mysterious German fireballs. I also discovered that the British had received the major portion of this booty, and that they had, in 1945, sent back secret German aeronautical equipment and papers to be distributed to their experimental center in Bedford, England, and to their complementary research centers in Australia and Canada.
'I discovered that by 1947 the British aeronautical establishment was experimenting with such bizarre German concepts as a supersonic "flying wing," a gyroscopically stabilized pilot's cabin surrounded by a revolving turbine engine, and a suction airfoil shaped like a meniscus lens - or like a fucking great mushroom. And finally, I discovered that in 1946, with the encouragement of the British government, there had been a mass migration of aeronautical establishments and their workers from their original English production centers to the vast, uninhabited regions of southwest Canada.'
'So,' Epstein said. 'What does it mean?'
'What I believe,' Stanford said, 'is that the Canadian and American governments, quietly backed by the British, have been working jointly since the end of World War II on the development of supersonic flying saucers, that they now have a limited number of such machines hidden away in the wilds of Canada or in the White Sands Proving Ground, and that those saucers are based on aeronautical projects that originated in Nazi Germany - but aren't related to the vast majority of UFO sightings. What I also believe is that the US govern-ment knows the origin of the more extraordinary saucers, that it is frightened of what the capability of those saucers might represent in military and political terms, and that its

building of its own saucers is a race against time and its se-crecy a means of avoiding national panic. Finally, what I believe is that the government has to keep its secret, that it will murder to do so, and that the deaths of Jessup and Hardy, of Dr McDonald and Irving Jacobs, are examples of how far the government will go to keep the lid on the pan.

The Canadian government has flying saucers. The US government has flying saucers. But someone, somewhere, has flying saucers so advanced we can't touch them. Those sau-cers don't come from space. They aren't figments of imagination. They are real and they are right here on earth and their source is a mystery.'

Epstein pushed himself away, spinning around, hitting a chair, then he walked across the wrecked room, past his pil-laged belongings, and tore the curtains back from the windows and looked up at the stars. He stood there a long time, didn't once rub his beard, and when he finally turned around his eyes were glazed with a strange, haunted brilliance.

'I'm going to Paris,' he said.

I owe Kammler and Nebe. Without them, I would not be here. That I killed them was not a sign of malice but of simple expediency. I think of it often. What I did, I had to do. The deaths of Kammler and Nebe were necessary for the good of the colony. They were both growing greedy. They wanted power for themselves. They were more concerned with politics than science, and I knew what that meant. Plots and counterplots. The introduction of intrigue. A dissension that would interfere with work and thus hinder our progress. Such a thought could not be tolerated. We had come too far for that. For that reason I had them gassed in their sleep and then took over the colony.

Yet I recognize my debt. Without them, I would not be here. I never liked them, but they did what was required and made good our escape. We left Germany behind us. We embraced a world of ice. Beneath the ice, in the immense towering caves, thousands slaved to support us. The colony grew quickly. Without dissension there was progress. Our medical and scientific experiments led to wondrous achievements.

I was racing against time. I was sixty-six years old. What I did in the laboratories in the ice was a necessary evil. What I did, I had to do. If J died before my work was completed, the colony would flounder. I had to make it self-sustaining. The workers had to be controlled. Sooner or later, even the guards with the whips would have negative thoughts. This could not be allowed to happen. The control had to be automatic. I was ob-

sessed with the mysteries of the brain and biological mutation.
What I did, I had to do. The slaves writhed beneath my knife. The gray matter of their brains was examined; lungs and hearts were explored. Their blood was my life. What they suffered was necessary. Vivisection on animals is useful, but has grave limitations. So, I operated. The experiments were not pleasant. Many died and many more became useless and had to be terminated. Nonetheless, I progressed quickly. Without law there are no boundaries. The mystery of human life was unraveled as it writhed on the tables.
I was aging every day. I felt the fluttering of my heart. My skin was tightening across the cheekbones of my face and my stomach was addled. This frustration was energizing. I spent months in the laboratories. The experiments in the camps of Nazi Germany now bore splendid fruit. Hearts and lungs were transplanted. Prosthetic arms and legs flourished. Many died on the tables, those maimed were terminated, but our gains quickly overcame the cost and encouraged us further. Gerontology was a priority. My own aging was the spur. We experimented with various drugs and surgical aids and had dramatic results. Naturally we made mistakes. There was paralysis, palsied limbs. Nevertheless, with application and will, we eventually met with success. At first it was modest. Vitamin pills and various stimulants. They were, however, just a beginning and soon led to much greater things. I myself was thus saved. The first injections renewed my vigor. Within a year, with my heart at full strength, I could take the pacemaker. A tentative first step. The artificial stomach followed. Years later would bring the plastic surgery and the minor prosthetics.
The means of control was urgent. This object obsessed me next. I was aware that even the most fanatical guards would soon yearn for the outer world. Human nature is a curse. It is weak and quite irrational. What I wanted was a method of control that would make the guards obsolete.
I exposed the human brain. Once exposed, it is a blancmange. No mystery: just tissue and fibers, blood and acid and water. I experimented with the brain. I specialized in living subjects. I

discovered that by tampering with certain cerebral areas, the mental processes of the brain could be altered in any manner required. I inserted microscopic electrodes. I had them activated by computer. Thus, at the press of a button, I could induce pain of pleasure, craven fear or brute aggression, numb acceptance or insatiable curiosity, heightened intelligence or idiocy. This discovery was invaluable. It was quickly utilized. Within months, implantation of the workers was well underway.

We were masters and slaves. The latter were virtually robotized. The former were still controlled by Artur Nebe, but were clearly redundant. The slaves had all been implanted. The whips were needed no longer. The only danger of revolt now resided in the guards and technicians. Nebe recognized this danger. He gave permission to implant. We both knew that this could lead to resistance, so we had to work carefully. It took us two years. We performed the implants one by one. We anesthetized the men while they were sleeping and then stole them away. The operation was simple. The men were programmed to forget the implant. When they awakened, they would not seem any different to those still untouched. After two years it was finished. There were no untouched left. Only Kammler and Nebe and myself were allowed to go free.

Every member had his function. His every thought was controlled. Every man, woman and child was robotized and had his course mapped out for him. Their desires were my desires. Their needs were my needs. I ordained their pain and pleasure, their every hunger, and was worshipped accordingly.

The implantations were all different. Some severe, some less so. What mattered was that each individual would perform as required. To drain a mind is to kill it. One must drain just a little. One must leave free those cerebral areas that perform certain functions.

The technical staff were least affected. I left them the spur of discontentment. This discontentment only related to their creative urge and did not go beyond that. What I removed was their hostility. What I enhanced was their love for work. Given this, they were almost like normal men, but lacked personal ambition.

Below the technical staff were the administrators. Such men and women were more affected. Required for systematic work, uncreative and repetitious, they were programmed to be wholly positive thinkers, enthusiastic and dedicated. They were drained of discontentment. Their work triggered satisfaction. Infrequent contact with the scientists, who were almost like normal men, the administrators had minimal personality and no thought for themselves.

The lowliest workers were most affected. I could allow them no personality. I think of Nebe's soldiers, of the factory workers and secretaries, of the drivers and laborers and cooks who performed simple tasks. All were heavily implanted. All were drained of personality. All were programmed to perform their given tasks without reason or thought. In a real sense they were robots. They experienced few emotions. Much cheaper and more reliable than cyborgs, they had a minimal consciousness.

What an achievement this was! The first perfect society! No waste, no crime, no need for debate, no insubordination or rebellion, no conflict of any kind. Such a society is a miracle. It is also highly productive. With no digressions for politics or conflict, it can advance by extraordinary leaps. It can and ours did. We rode the whirlwind and conquered it. Within two years our saucers were creations of an awesome complexity. Jet propulsion was obsolete. Atomic energy was routine. And even this, given the benefit of hindsight, was but a modest beginning.

I see the saucers as I sit here. They climb vertically from the wilderness. As I watch them, they glide across the skies and cast their shadows on mountain peaks. The sun beats all around them. They seem to merge with the flashing ice. They rise up and then hover in silence, their inertial shields glowing.

I confess: I feel pride. Inhuman? I cannot be. As I sit here on the mountain, as I gaze out through the windows, the beauty of the saucers above the snow makes me feel like a young man.

A divided society could not have accomplished it. Certainly not in that brief period. I would not have accomplished it myself had I ignored Nebe and Kammler.

They both wanted to leave the wilderness. They wanted to

regain what they had lost. Simple men, moved by normal, point-less hungers, they wanted cheap, instant glory. The saucers offered that opportunity. They knew the saucers were invincible. They wanted to use the saucers to plunder the earth and make it bow down before them.

I did not desire the same. I wanted no more than my work. My new cathedrals were made of ice and stone, my one religion was science. I did not want that changed. I knew that conflict could change it. I also knew that with patience and time there would be no need for conflict.

The saucers rendered us inviolable. Their very presence was our security. What we needed, we could get from the outer world if we handled it gently. Meanwhile, we could progress. We could increase our capabilities. If we did so, we would be in a position to gain much with no effort. The outer world would have to join us. We would slowly draw it in. Given time, the outer world would surrender, turning men into Man.

Yes, given time. But Kammler and Nebe had no time. Their brains untouched by the healing electrodes, they were still normal men. They still suffered from base emotions. They knew fear and resentment. They both yearned for the world beyond the ice, and for its decadent pleasures. Vengeance and power. Material gain and the means of squandering it. Like restless children, Nebe and Kammler were inflamed with the need for attention. No, they couldn't wait. They wanted a war of aggression. They wanted to use my extraordinary creations as their weapons of plunder.

I could not let that happen. Such a conquest would be shortlived. Such aggression would be met with the resistance of insane politicians. Why encourage a nuclear war? What real purpose would it serve? Already our resources were running low, our needs increasing dramatically. What we needed, the world had. We could get it without conflict. In so doing, we could progress even more and thus bide our own time. In the end, the rest would come. The rule of science was inevitable. A conflict such as Nebe and Kammler wanted could only lead to destruction. I could not let it happen. I had no immediate goals. My

concern was for the future of science and Man's metamorphosis - I still wanted the Superman.
My intention was to trade. I needed mass-produced items: small components and tools, nuts and bolts, screws and nails, light bulbs and paper and pens and other modest essentials. So far we had stolen them. Our flying saucers had landed. We had often abducted men and machines where isolation protected us. But nuts and bolts were more difficult. Small items were large problems. What was shipped here throughout the war years was now diminishing rapidly. No colony can be self-sustaining. I had always understood that. So it was that in 1952 I had to form an alliance. There was really no alternative. I had no choice but to trade. What I had, the world needed; what the world had, I needed; and until I had the world on my side, I would have to negotiate.
Indeed, I had already started. I was negotiating with President Truman. After the mock invasion of 1952, he had agreed to a meeting. We eventually met in the Oval Room. My CIA contacts were present. President Truman was an intelligent man, and as such he was nervous. He kept fiddling with his glasses. His lower lip was not too steady. General Vandenberg was standing near the desk, his eyes filled with suppressed rage. The Oval Room was very crowded: General Samford and Professor Robertson; other members of the Robertson Panel, including Lloyd Berkner. The meeting didn't take long. They had already examined my brief Most were specialists in the physical sciences and had no problem reading. I put forward my suggestions. Truman sighed and raised his hands. Generals Vandenberg and Samford were outraged and inevitably out-voted. The scientists knew what they were reading. They were aware of our capabilities. They put the facts clearly to Truman and we reached an agreement.
After that, I had no choice. Kammler and Nebe became a threat. Disgusted that I should trade instead of conquer, they started plotting against me. I have no proof of this. I just know if was inevitable. Their chance for immediate power and recognition had been ruined by my actions. They were now trapped in

the colony. In the outer world they would be war criminals. The only way they could return to the outer world would be to step down as conquerors. So, they felt trapped. Thus they had to plot against me. And knowing this, I had no choice but to remove them and take over the colony.

They had not been implanted. They were men of free will. I could not, as I could with the others, suggest euthanasia. For that reason I had no choice. What I did, I had to do. I could not concern myself with individuals while the future was threatened.

Not shortly after the war, then. It was 1953. We had dinner overlooking the plateau, the snow white, the stars glittering. I served champagne and caviar. The meal was followed with brandy. Such luxuries were rare in the colony, but the night seemed to warrant it. Kammler spoke of America. He reminisced about his visits. Artur Nebe turned his glass between his fingers, his dark eyes unrevealing. Kammler spoke of General Vandenberg. His voice trembled with loss. He said that Vandenberg had reminded him of his past, of his days with the military. Artur Nebe was not attentive. His dark eyes surveyed the ice. He gazed over the glistening plateau to the dark, frozen wilderness. Kammler spoke of the V-2 rockets. He talked of fighting in the Hague. He recalled his days with Walter Dornberger and Wernher von Braun. The hours passed in this manner. Artur Nebe's dark eyes were veiled. A large saucer formed a glowing cathedral that ascended majestically. Artur Nebe did not look up. His eyes were fixed on the wilderness. Kammler yawned and stood against the large window and was framed by the starlit night. He talked vaguely about the future. He said decisions must be made. He walked away and I saw the white wilderness dissolving in darkness.

They both left shortly after. I had no sense of urgency. The glowing cathedral dropped down from the heavens, hovered briefly and disappeared. I gazed out and saw the ice. The frozen wilderness stretched out below me. I stood up and then went to my desk and turned on the two scanners. Kammler and Nebe were in their rooms, the latter with his whore. I reached down

and pressed the button on my left and let the gas fill their lungs. What I did, I had to do. What I do, I have to do. Above moral-ity, above the sanctity of the individual, is my duty to science. I do not suffer guilt. They were of use and were used. Without them, I would never have escaped - thus I offer them tribute.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Stanford climbed out of the car, closed the door and looked around him, listening to the crying of the wind as it crossed the large field. The sun was going down, the sky filled with crimson light, a few drifting clouds casting the shadows that would soon die in darkness. Stanford stood there for some time. The field was utterly desolate. The lights and the barbed wire had gone, but the scorched earth remained. Nothing would grow there anymore. The dead cattle had been buried. The dust drifted lazily across the ground, emphasizing the barrenness.

Stanford looked all around him and saw the mountains beyond the flatlands. He thought of what Scaduto had told him, and it made him feel lost. The saucers didn't come from space. They weren't figments of imagination. They were real and they were right here on earth and their source was a mystery. Stanford thought about that. To think about it made him shiver. He gazed at the desolate flatlands, saw the bloody sinking sun, watched the dust drifting over the field and then turned back to the car.

He sat in his seat, closed the door and stared ahead, thinking of the girl on the ranch and of what she might know. The lust grabbed him immediately, filled his mind with her presence, almost making him forget what he was here for, his groin flooded with heat. Damn it, he thought, starting the car, driving off, thinking of her eyes, their strangely vacant lumi-

nosity, of her breasts and her thighs and her brown legs, her thumb parting her wet lips. He couldn't understand himself, didn't know what was happening, drove blindly, hardly see-ing the road, the field falling behind him. What was he really doing here? Was it the girl or what she knew? Stanford shook his head wearily, feeling nervous and excited, confused by his conflicting emotions, despising himself.

The surrounding land was desolate. The crimson sky was turning dark. Stanford drove through pools of shadow and light, over stones and potholes. He thought briefly of Profes-sor Epstein, his good friend, growing frail, now obsessed because death was at his door and the mystery remained. He had to find out for Epstein. He didn't want to fail his friend. He couldn't bear to think of Epstein fading away, his eyes haunted by failure.

Yet that wasn't the only reason. It never had been and never would be. Stanford's throbbing groin insisted on the truth and stripped the mask from his face. He had to do it for himself, his own need was the main concern, and he drove toward the ranch, feeling shame, seeing only the girl.

Stanford felt a little crazy. He didn't feel like himself at all. His thoughts tumbled on top of one another and amounted to nothing. He was obsessed with the girl. His lust went beyond sex. He had to touch her, had to break through her silence, had to creep through her tunneled eyes. This need was bewildering, an irrational, compulsive lust; it was a need for the revelations of her flesh, for the source of her being. What she was, was what he needed. She belonged to what she had witnessed. The girl was alien, a human touched by the unknown, and that made her seductive.

It was that... and much more. She had known he would come back. She had known and she had told him with her smile, and with her luminous, empty eyes. Not empty: concealing. Eyes that shone and quietly darkened. She had looked at him and willed him to return and now he felt enslaved by her.

Stanford didn't know what was happening, and was

powerless to resist. He felt as if the girl had hypnotized him and drained him of will. She had known he would come back. He had known it as well. They had both made the pact three years ago without speaking a word.

Inexplicable. Ridiculous. It couldn't happen and yet was happening: a web of mysteries and intriguing possibilities with the girl at its center. Her vacant eyes, suggesting all. Her languorous innocence, inviting lust Stanford thought of her standing on the porch, gazing up at the sky. She had touched and been touched. She had observed and now knew. She was silent as the knowing are silent: secret, inviolate. Stanford wondered what she had seen. He wondered what they had done to her. And he wondered, with a strange, hallowed awe, what she had then done to him.

Stanford drove for five minutes, driving blindly and dangerously, bouncing over potholes and mounds of earth until he came to the ranch. He slowed down when he reached the gate, stopped the car, hesitated, then opened the door and climbed out and heard the wind's lonesome moaning. The ranch hadn't changed, was still sadly dilapidated, the dust blowing gently along the porch, the lights burning inside. The girl was not on the porch. There was no sign of the old man. Stanford sighed and then opened the gate and closed it quietly behind him.

It was now nearly dark. The wind moaned across the flatlands. Stanford walked very slowly toward the ranch, his eyes drawn to the windows. The lights were on inside. There was no other sign of life. The only sound was the moaning of the wind, and that made him feel strange. Eventually he reached the porch, looked up at the nearest window. He saw an oil lamp glowing fitfully between the curtains, a shelf of cracked plates and cups. Stanford looked up at the sky. The moon glided beneath the stars. Stanford shivered and then walked up the steps until he stood on the porch. There was no sound from inside. Stanford felt very strange. He stepped forward and knocked on the door and then stepped back again.

There was no immediate response. Nothing. Stanford waited for some time. Nothing happened so he knocked on the door again and then stepped back a little. Silence. The wind. Stanford felt very unreal. He stepped forward and knocked on the door again and felt his heart racing wildly. That annoyed him a lot he wasn't used to being nervous. He cursed softly and willed her to come and then he heard a faint sound. A tin mug on a tin plate. A chair scraping on the floor. Stanford took a deep breath and let it out and kept his eyes on the door. The bolt made a rasping sound. The door creaked and opened slightly. A beam of light fell out over Stanford and he saw the girl's face.

She stared at him a long time. Her brown eyes were very large. Stanford looked at those eyes and saw the void that led into the unknown. The girl was sucking her thumb. Stanford thought she was smiling. Her long hair tumbled loosely around her face in a dark, uncombed tangle.

'Emmylou?' Stanford said.

The girl nodded her head.

'Do you remember me?' Stanford said. 'I was here a few years ago. The night all the other men were here ... the night the cattle were slaughtered.'

The girl sucked her thumb silently. The door was barely open. The girl's body was pressed against the door, her head tilted around it. She was wearing a cheap cotton dress. Stanford saw a brown leg. The girl stared at him, possibly smiling, then she nodded her head.

'Can I come in?' Stanford asked. 'It's important that I talk to you. I want to talk to you and your father. Can you tell him I'm here?'

The girl just stared at him, her thumb still in her mouth, the brown eyes very large, strangely depthless, luring him in.

'Can I speak to your father?' Stanford asked. 'Is your father inside?'

The girl suddenly giggled, a high-pitched, childish sound, then she took her thumb out of her mouth and opened the door a bit wider. Stanford stared at her. He couldn't take his

eyes off her. She was wearing the same dress she had worn three years ago, the buttons undone up her thighs, undone down to her breasts. Stanford wanted to put it into her. He suddenly saw himself doing it. The lust took him with imme-diate, startling force and stripped his senses away. He shook his head and checked himself. He was sweating and felt fe-verish. The girl was leaning in a languid fashion against the door, a distant smile on her face.

'Is your father in?' Stanford asked.

'The girl tilted her head slightly. Her eyes were staring up at him, very large, their brown depths strangely luminous. Then she giggled again. Stanford shivered a little. She stopped giggling and shook her head from side to side in a negative gesture.

'He's not in?' Stanford asked.

The girl shook her head again. Stanford saw her belly pressed against the door, one breast thrusting around it.

'You mean he's not here?' Stanford asked.

The girl nodded that this was so.

'Where is he?' Stanford asked. 'Do you understand? I want to know where he's gone.'

The girl opened the door wider, slipped around it like a dancer, moving with a natural sensuality that made Stanford harden. He saw the curve of her breasts, the faint outline of her nipples, glanced down and saw a brown inner thigh, a film of dust on her bare feet The girl pressed against the door, slid along it, moved toward him, then she passed him, brushing lightly against him, and stood out on the porch. Stanford watched her, fascinated, seeing the curve of her spine. She leaned back and then raised her left hand and pointed up at the night sky.

Stanford suddenly felt cold, raised his head and looked up. The sky was dark and the stars were very bright, the moon gliding beneath them. What did she mean? Stanford couldn't accept it. He shivered and then stepped toward the girl until he stood just beside her. She was still pointing at the sky. She turned her head and stared at him. She was smiling, a

strange, distant smile, her brown eyes hypnotizing him.
'What do you mean?' Stanford asked. 'You mean your fa-ther's up there? In heaven? You mean your father has died and that he's now up in heaven?'
The girl smiled and then giggled, shook her head from side to side, indicating that Stanford was wrong, pointing up at the sky. Stanford wished she would talk to him. He was convinced that she could talk. He stared at her, and wondered if she was mad. The girl returned his stare. The wind pressed the cotton dress against her body, emphasizing her hips and breasts. Stanford glanced at the sky, saw the moon and the stars. He looked back at the girl and she nodded and kept pointing upward.
'He's not dead?' Stanford asked.
The girl giggled and shook her head.
'He's up there?' Stanford asked. 'He's in the sky? Someone took him away?'
The girl nodded in agreement, dropped her hand and turned toward him. The wind blew the dress behind her legs. Stanford wanted to put it into her. He wanted no more than that. It was a mindless, brutally primitive desire, and he ached with his need for her.
'Who took him away?' he asked. 'Was it the men here that night? Was it the Army or the Air Force or the police? Who took him away?'
The girl raised both her hands, placed them together above her head, drew them apart and lowered them gently to describe something dome-shaped. Stanford shivered, feeling cold. He also felt a distinct excitement He nodded to show that he understood, then the girl raised her hands again. She pointed to the sky. Her left hand was mushroom-shaped. She let the hand drop in a vertical line, knelt down and placed the hand on the porch and swept it up toward the sky again. It was an eloquent gesture, graceful, dreamlike, and then the girl turned around on her bare feet and slowly stood up again.
'They came back,' Stanford said. They came down in the

strange aircraft. Your father was taken into the aircraft and then they all flew away.'
The girl nodded and smiled, put her thumb in her mouth, brushed past him and walked back to the house and leaned against the doorframe. Her long logs were crossed. The dress blew around her hips, Stanford saw the shadowed area between her thighs, raised his eyes, saw her luminous stare. She was sucking her thumb, a child, perhaps insane, and Stanford flushed with a mixture of shame and primitive lust.
'How long ago?' he asked.
The girl's brown eyes grew large.
'When did all this happen?' he asked. 'How many days? How many weeks ago?'
The girl made a V sign.
'Two days?' Stanford said.
The girl nodded, then giggled and turned around and vanished into the house.
Stanford followed her inside, feeling strange, not himself, haunted by what she had told him, and by what it might mean. The house was unchanged, the oil lamps still near the windows, casting shadows on the dusty wooden floor and the makeshift furniture. The girl stood near the table, smiling at him and sucking her thumb; the shadows fell down flaking walls, crept over the wooden chairs, danced fitfully on and off the girl's face, the rise and fall of her breasts. Stanford simply smiled at her. There was light in her brown eyes. Her left thumb was in her mouth and her right arm was folded behind her back, Stanford saw her parted thighs, saw her flesh as his salvation. The shadows flickered on her face, a pool of light around her eyes; and the eyes, which were vacant, were also bright with some vague, sly awareness.
'Who were they?' Stanford asked. 'Who took your father away? Can you describe the men who took him away? What were they like?'
The girl tilted her head slightly, her knuckles pressing against her nose, her dark hair hanging down across her face and covering her right eye. Stanford thought she was smiling,

wasn't sure, just had that feeling: he then thought of what had happened, of the strange craft descending, of the men taking her father away, and wondered how she could smile. An idiot? Possibly. Stanford wasn't too sure of that There was a light in the brown, vacant eyes that gave hints of awareness. The girl seemed to be teasing him, her languid carnality seducing him; silent, she spoke through her body with a sly, feline elo-quence.

'Who were they?' Stanford asked.

The girl giggled and walked up to him, stood very close to him, her breasts very close to his chest, the rising flesh lightly shadowed. She looked up at Stanford, still smiling strangely mischievous, arched her spine and stood on tiptoes and raised her hand to his head. Stanford felt sick with longing; he had a hard, pulsating erection. The girl put the edge of her hand against his forehead and drew it down to his chest Stanford followed the hand down. He saw the shadow between her breasts. She moved her hand in a cutting motion across his chest, as if marking a line.

'They were all that size?' Stanford asked. They were small? Is that what you mean?'

The girl nodded and stepped away. Stanford moved into the shadow. His erection was tight against his pants and he wanted to hide it The girl moved closer to him. She cupped her left hand in the air. She indicated that the men had been five feet tall, her brown eyes more expressive. Stanford nodded that he understood. The girl smiled and touched her forehead. She placed her hands around her neck, probably indicating a collar, then ran the delicate hands down her body in two parallel lines.

Stanford didn't understand. He was finding it hard to concentrate. The girl's hands were on her breasts, on her belly, on her thighs, pressing her own hollows and curves and inciting his need. It wasn't what she intended. She was trying to tell him something. She waved her left hand in a negative gesture and then started again.

She moved her hands down from her throat, drawing them

away from one another, rubbing them over the buttons on her dress as if trying to erase them. Stanford nodded that he understood. He saw the shivering of her breasts. The girl smiled and placed her hands on her shoulders and ran them straight down her sides. Her hands traced her gentle curves, She stooped down and ran her hands along her legs until they touched her bare feet.

'One-piece suits,' Stanford said. They were wearing one-piece suits. They were wearing some sort of coveralls and you didn't see buttons.'

The girl nodded and stood up, a graceful movement, very sensual, the dress falling back over her legs, rippling over her breasts. She put her thumb back in her mouth. Stanford felt that she was smiling. She stared up at him, her eyes more expressive, even inviting. Stanford looked her up and down. He couldn't take his eyes off her. He wanted to peel the dress from her body and press himself into her.

'Who were they?' he asked. 'I want to know where they came from. You know and I think you can talk and I want you to tell me.'

Stanford stared at her, fascinated, his will destroyed by his erection, trying to gauge what her large eyes were concealing, the room dissolving around him. The girl looked like an adolescent, ragged, unkempt, her feet dirty, her legs burned by the sun. Stanford heard the moaning wind. He thought of the moon and stars. The girl stood there, beside the old table, her long legs slightly parted.

'You won't talk,' Stanford said. 'Did they order you not to talk? Did they do something? Why won't you talk to me?'

The girl smiled and sucked her thumb, started humming a tune. Stanford watched her, fascinated. He felt very unreal. The oil lamp on the table burned fitfully, flickering over her face. The girl sucked her thumb and hummed. She rocked languidly back and forth. She was leaning against the table, her hips forming a graceful curve. Stanford wanted to press against her, wanted to feel her tender flesh; he felt dizzy and tense with throttled lust, hardly knew where he was.

'Who were they?' he asked.
The girl didn't reply. Stanford stared at the thumb in her mouth, at her breasts, her curved hip. The shadows flickered across her face, across the pale skin of her throat, across the cleft of her breasts, her rocking belly, the leg exposed by the open dress. Stanford felt choked with lust, finally walked over to her. He stood right in front of her, very close, almost touch-ing, and looked down at her brown, expressive eyes, saw himself in their dark depths.
'Who were they?' he asked. 'I know you can talk. I want to know where the men came from. I know you can tell me.'
The girl looked up and smiled, her thumb still in her month, still humming, her body rocking to and fro, her warmth flowing around him. He reached up and put his hand on her wrist and pulled her thumb from her mouth. The girl licked her lips. Her hand dangled indecisively. She smiled and slid the hand beneath her dress and lightly scratched her right breast Stanford felt that he was choking. He saw the hand beneath the dress. Her fingers moved up and down, scratching lightly, her palm pressed to the white skin. Stanford's heart started pounding. His one truth was his erection. He raised his hand and pressed it down on the cloth right above the girl's hand. He saw her tongue at her lips, his own reflection in her eyes, then he felt her fingers slipping away and his hand cupped her breast.
'Who were they?' he asked.
The girl made no reply. She was still humming quietly. Stanford felt the breast beneath the cheap cotton, very soft, very warm. He pressed gently and felt the nipple. The girl continued humming quietly. Stanford pulled the dress back and cupped the bare breast in his hand, his palm rubbing the nipple, sliding slowly, pressing down, trying to flatten it The nipple hardened against his palm. He squeezed the warm, heavy breast The girl hummed and rocked gently against him, her warmth flowing around him.
Stanford sensed the room dissolving. Shadows flickered across the walls. He looked down at the eyes looking up-

Silence. A moaning wind. His own breathing was very harsh. He took the collar of her dress in both his hands and pulled the dress off her shoulders. The girl stopped humming, bit her tongue and smiled at him. Stanford slid his hands along her smooth spine, felt her sweat, pulled her to him. The girl continued smiling. Her belly was pressed against his erection. She just hung there in his arms, arching backward, her hands loose by her sides.

Stanford looked at her shoulders, very smooth, very white, dropped his eyes and drank in her milky breasts, the dark nipples erect. He didn't kiss the girl's lips. Her smile was distant, ambiguous. He bent over and pulled her hard against his groin and pressed his lips to her right breast. The girl quivered a little. Stanford kissed her heavy breast. He put his lips around the nipple and sucked it, his tongue licking and stroking. The girl quivered and writhed against him. He felt her hand on his head. She stroked the back of his neck and pulled him down, her breast filling his mouth.

Stanford didn't know where he was. He didn't stop to think about it He saw lights ascending quietly to the sky, blending in with the moon and stars. It was all one and the same. She had known it and belonged to it. Stanford wanted her, he wanted the answers, and the mystery was part of her. He felt the nipple between his lips, sucked and licked it like a child. Her warm groin was pressed against his erection, moving back and forth, teasing it. Stanford pressed her sweaty spine. He slid his hands down to her buttocks. He took his lips from her right breast, slid his tongue across her skin, then took the other nipple in his mouth and let it roll through his teeth. The girl gasped and writhed against him, both her hands at his neck. She ground her belly against his throbbing erection and pulled him down lower.

Stanford pushed her against the table, pulled the dress down her arms; she moved her arms and let the dress fall to her waist, her body sweat-streaked and white. Stanford sucked her breasts and nipples, soaked his lips with her sweat. The girl gasped and put her hands on his neck and

sunk her nails in his flesh. Stanford felt her ridged spine, slid his hands up to her shoulders. The girl groaned and fell back and pulled him down, her thighs opening out to him. Stanford knew that he was lost A void opened up to him. The girl was bent back against the creaking table, and he glimpsed the oil lamp. The light glowed in a darkness. Beyond the darkness there was nothing. The girl opened her thighs and clamped them tight around his hips, and Stanford pushed his erection against her belly, his hands gripping her buttocks. He didn't think of what he was doing: her writhing form was his whole being. He had lived with her flesh for three years and now its touch stripped his senses. He squeezed her buttocks and pressed upon her, kissed her nipples and breasts, slid lower and put his tongue in her navel, his lips sucking the creamy skin. Flickering shadow and light A moaning wind in the distance. The girl lay back on the table, her thighs clamped around his hips, and he saw the dress tangled around her waist as his tongue licked her belly.

'Yes,' Stanford groaned. 'Yes!'

The girl reached up for his jacket, pulled it down around his arms, and he slipped his hands from under her naked spine and let the jacket fall off. The girl gasped and grabbed his shirt, her fingers tugging at the buttons, her legs coiling around him, her buttocks pressed against the table's sharp edge, her groin thrusting up into him. Stanford saw the burning lamp, flecks of light in brown eyes, the eyes wild and blind, the pink tongue at her lips, dark hair streaked across her tanned face, beads of sweat on her forehead. He groaned and ripped his shirt off. Her hands slithered along his chest He saw the pale skin of her throat, the smooth shoulders, the heavy breasts, very white, the nipples dark and erect, the dress around the slim waist

The girl writhed and grabbed his belt undid the buttons on his pants. Stanford saw her parted legs, the golden down of her inner thighs, her dress split above the crotch and falling away from a red patch of panties. He groaned and unzipped his pants, spread his fingers on her belly, very

smooth, soft and warm, felt the mound of damp hair, closed his fingers and slid them under her panties as she groped in his pants. Stanford groaned and muttered something. The girl gasped and shook her head. Stanford slid his fingers through the mound of hair, curled them back, felt inside her. The girl gasped and thrust down, her thighs opening and closing, then she tore at his pants and pulled them open and took hold of his cock. Stanford groaned and felt inside her, the wet warmth, the yielding lips, found her clitoris as she pulled his cock out, her fingers closing around it Stanford felt her sliding fingers, lost himself, became her fingers, thrust himself into the soft glove of her hand, his fingers kneading her clitoris.

The oil lamp shone on the table. Around the lamp there was darkness. Stanford groaned and dissolved, flowed out in the darkness, became one with the darkness and the silence that was torn by her gasping. The girl pulled his foreskin back. Her fingers slid up and down him. He drained out of himself, flowed away and knew only her silken touch. Stanford felt deep inside her. She was wet and very warm. He jerked his fingers out and tore her panties off, the ripping sound jolting through him. The girl gasped and shook her head, rocking wildly from side to side, her thighs clamped around his hips, her hand tight around his cock, around his hardness, trying to guide him inside her, his tip rubbing her clitoris. Stanford groaned and shuddered violently, grasped her buttocks, squeezed and pulled; the girl pushed herself against him, opened for him, drank him in, became part of him.

'Yes,' Stanford hissed. 'Yes!'

He sank down and brought her with him, his hands clutching her buttocks, kneeling low, letting her slip off the table, her thighs opening out wider. Stanford grabbed her by the shoulders, pulled her down hard on his cock; the girl gasped and slipped her hands beneath his arms and then clawed at his ribs. Stanford pushed her shoulders back. Her spine was arched in a flowing line. Her breasts were pointing at the

ceiling, her brown thighs locked around him, her legs bent back, her feet touching the floor, his cock still deep inside her. Stanford held her sweaty spine. His other hand caressed her breasts. He groaned and lowered her down to the floor and then pressed down upon her. She shook her head from side to side, her eyes closed, her mouth open. Her dark hair was coiled across her nose and lips, curled around her pink tongue. Stanford stretched out along her. She opened her thighs and writhed beneath him. She pulled her legs up, her knees level with his shoulders, slid her hands across his buttocks and squeezed him, trying to coax him in deeper Stanford groaned and rolled his hips. He felt her melting around his cock. She was liquid and his cock dissolved within her and he felt himself burning. He shuddered and changed direction. He moved from one side to the other. He thrust deeper inside her, touched her center, set her loose, and she gasped and banged her head on the floor and started shuddering under him.

'Oh, God!' she gasped. 'God!'

The words exploded over Stanford, ricocheted, filled his head, jerked him brutally back into himself and made him open his eyes. He saw the girl's bouncing head, her closed eyes, her open mouth, strands of dark hair stretched across her strained face, beads of sweat on her forehead. Stanford stared at her, startled. He raised himself up on his hands. He saw the smooth line of her shoulders, the stretched tendons in her neck, thrusting breasts, nipples dark and erect, his own sweat on her belly. Stanford looked along her body, saw his own heaving groin, her thighs parted, his groin pumping up and down, his cock thrusting, withdrawing. He was shocked, but couldn't stop, felt a mounting excitement He ceased moving and the girl's torso shuddered and pushed up toward him.

'Who were they?' he asked. You can talk. You can tell me. You hear me? I want to know who they were.'

'No!' she cried. 'God!'

Stanford held himself off her. He was propped up on his hands. He looked down at her pale, writhing body and then

thrust deep inside her. The girl gasped and clenched her fists, banged the fists on the floor. Stanford flattened her breasts with his chest and grabbed her under the shoulders. He pulled her tighter to him. She groaned and thrust down. The girl gasped; they both gasped. Stanford started to lose con-trol. He slid his hands beneath her buttocks, along the bottom of her thighs, then pushed her knees back toward her face and raised his hips and thrust deeply. Stanford's head started spinning. He thrust in and out in long, languid motions, his buttocks constricting. Stanford thrust even harder, heard the liquid sounds of sex, felt her heat, that jellied warmth around his cock, her spasms building and shaking him.

'Who were they?' he hissed.

Stanford worked himself up onto his knees and grabbed the girl by the hips. She was stretched out below him. He pulled her buttocks off the floor. He slid his hands along the soft down of her thighs and then pulled her tight to him. The girl gasped and shook in spasms. Her body flowed away from him. She was twisting on the floor, rocking wildly, her legs over his shoulders. Stanford pulled her even closer, thrust fiercely inside her. He saw the lights in the sky, the dead cattle in the field, all the friends who had died or disappeared, the pulsating, miraculous craft. He had to crack the mystery. The truth must have dominion. He grabbed her by the hips and pulled her closer, thrusting in to his limit He touched her. She broke loose. Stanford pushed his hips forward. The girl cried out as the spasms whipped through her and tore her apart. She started coming, wave piling upon wave, her body twisting and shuddering.

'Oh my God!' she cried. 'They were Germans!'

The last word cut through Stanford, exploded, made his head spin, and he shuddered, they both shuddered together, the room spinning around them.

They let it go and rolled apart, felt the floor, lay on their hacks, breathing heavily, separated by a pool of light both protected by shadows. Stanford stared up at the ceiling. The walls were spinning around him. He licked his lips and let the

spasms pass away and then looked at the girl. She was lying on her side. Her hair fell across her face. The upper portion of her body was white, both her legs a dark brown. She lay just outside the light. Her eyes were hidden by her hair. She was breathing in deep, painful spasms, her breasts rising and falling. Stanford stared at her, speechless. He knew he had to ask her more. Then he felt a wave of hatred flowing toward him as the floor started shaking.

'Jesus Christ!' Stanford hissed.

The room roared and seemed to shake, the crockery rat-tling on the shelves, and Stanford felt a sudden fierce wave of heat and was blinded by white light He thought he heard the girl screaming, blinked his eyes and saw stars, heard her screaming in a terrible manner and rolled over toward her. The floor beneath him was shaking. Cups and saucers were breaking. The glass in the windows blew apart and flew all over the room. Then the roaring stopped abruptly. The wave of heat passed away. Stanford opened his eyes and looked at the girl and saw her clutching her head. She was shaking her head from side to side. She wasn't screaming anymore. She took her hands from her head and stared at him and the hatred flowed out of her.

Stanford drew away from her. He didn't think - he just did it. Her brown eyes were very bright and intense, illuminated by hatred. The floor growled and then stopped shaking. The girl jumped to her feet Stanford jumped up behind her as she grabbed at a knife, picked it up and turned around and started slashing. Stanford ducked and jumped away. 'Get out!' the girl shrieked. She rushed at him, the knife raised high and guttering, swung it down toward his face. Stanford grabbed hold of her wrist The girl hissed like a cat The knife clattered to the floor and she clawed at him with her free hand, her nails raking down his right cheek and gouging lines in his face. Stanford felt the warm blood, felt the pain, a chilling fear; he slapped the girl with the back of his hand and pushed her into the table. The girl hissed and grabbed the oil lamp-'Get out of here!' she screamed. She threw the lamp and it

flew past Stanford's head and crashed into the wall. A crack-ling roar, a wave of heat. The burning oil poured down the wall. Stanford cursed and swung his fist at the girl and knocked her into the wall. The flames raced across the floor. Stanford had to leap away. The girl hissed and then darted for the door, flung it open, rushed outside.

Stanford choked in the swirling smoke. The flames were racing along the walls. Stanford cursed and then ran through the door and saw the stars in the sky. Then the darkness exploded, became a sheet of fierce white light, blotting out the sky and flatlands and temporarily blinding him. Stanford stopped then staggered back, put his arm across his eyes, moved his arm away and squinted through his fingers, trying to see through the blinding light. He couldn't see, but he could hear. There was a steady bass humming. Stanford heard the sound and felt it - it was drilling through his skull -and he reached up and clutched at his head and then stepped forward blindly.

He missed the steps and fell down, hit the ground with his right shoulder, heard it snapping and felt a sharp pain that made him cry out. He rolled onto his back, spitting dirt, looking up, saw the brilliant striations of white light and closed his eyes again quickly. The ground shook beneath his back. His head was tightening, exploding. The sound was drilling through his skull, making his muscles seize up, and he shuddered, his body out of control, and then dropped down through darkness.

A light bored through the darkness, spread out and filled his vision. Stanford opened his eyes and looked up and saw the brilliant white light. This time he could look at it He tried to rise, but couldn't move. He heard the roaring of flames and turned his head and saw the whole ranch house blazing. Stanford heard a noise behind him. He turned his head in the opposite direction, saw a fierce white haze with brighter lights inside it, the lights forming a long line. Then he saw the silhouettes. They formed a semicircle around him. They moved closer and he saw the ragged girl, looking down at

him, smiling. The girl's eyes were large and vacant. She was sucking her thumb. One of the silhouettes walked over to Stanford and knelt down beside him.

The man was wearing a gray coverall that seemed silvery in the bright light; his face was very pale and very smooth, smiling slightly, removed. Stanford couldn't see him clearly. The man seemed to be very small. He moved his head and the shadows disappeared and Stanford saw him more clearly. He wasn't an adult. He was about fourteen years of age. He reached out and touched the side of Stanford's neck and Stanford felt very calm.

'You shouldn't have come here,' he said, his voice deeper than it should have been. 'We don't know what to do about you, Dr Stanford, because you shouldn't be here. We know all about you. We're not pleased with what you're doing. We are computing but we don't know what to do, because you shouldn't be here. We'll have to leave you for now. We have received no instructions. We will leave you and then, when we are gone, you will be able to walk again. You shouldn't be here, Dr Stanford. We were not informed of this. We will leave you because we have no instructions and we cannot compute you. Close your eyes, Dr Stanford. That's right, keep them closed. When we leave, you will open them again and be able to walk. Keep your eyes closed. Auf Wiedersehen.'

Stanford kept his eyes closed. He hardly knew he had closed them. There was silence and his head felt very light and he felt very calm. He heard the footsteps moving away. A film of dust fell on his face. He felt the earth beneath his back, very cold, eating through to his bones. Then he heard a humming noise. Something thumped the ground lightly. He heard shuffling, a hollow, metallic drumming, then the silence returned. Stanford lay there, not moving. He kept his eyes closed, feeling calm. He smelled smoke and heard the crackling of the flames that engulfed the ranch house. Then the ground started shaking. Stanford felt the vibrating noise. The vibrating noise grew stronger, seemed to fill his whole head, then it cut out, became a rhythmic humming that spread out

just above him. The ground settled down again. Stanford lay there, feeling calm. The humming noise became fainter, climbed away and then cut out, leaving silence, the whispering of the dust, the wind's dull, lonesome moaning.

Stanford opened his eyes. He looked up at the moon and stars. He shook his head and climbed painfully to his feet and looked carefully around him. The whole ranch house was on fire. The flames spat at the sky. Stanford stood there, feeling dazed, gazing over the desolate flatlands, the flames crackling and illuminating the darkness, and thought of only one thing: the parting words of the boy.

Auf Wiedersehen.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Lying on the double bed in the lodge in Mount Rainier, Epstein dreamed of the lights in the sky, rising gracefully, silently. He tossed and turned in his sleep, felt a desolate sense of loss, wanting to follow the ascending lights, to drift up there through the darkness, to share in their serene, graceful majesty, to unravel the mystery. Then the dream changed. Epstein murmured and groaned out loud. He was on the flight back from Paris, flying high above the clouds, listening to the voice on the tape recorder, the revelations astounding him. Then the whole plane suddenly shook, rolling over, scattering passengers, a blinding white light pouring through it, temporarily blinding him. Epstein shaded his eyes, ignored the screaming, tumbling passengers. The plane leveled out again and he looked through the window and saw a flashing mass just above, gliding over the plane. It was the great mother ship, the one he had seen in the Caribbean, and Epstein watched it as it came down on the plane and then somehow swallowed it... In his sleep he tossed and turned. He looked down upon himself. He saw himself lying there on the bed, his eyes opening, frightened. He was surrounded by a group of men. They all seemed very small. They were wearing gray coveralls, they didn't say a word, and then one of them leaned over Epstein and reached out and touched him... Epstein groaned aloud. He returned to the streets of Paris. He was sitting in the restaurant on the Rue de Rivoli,

the old man talking into the tape recorder, sipping cognac methodically. The old man was English. There was dandruff on his shoulders. He talked slowly, with studied precise, and Epstein drifted away... He was just back from Paris, changing planes at Kennedy Airport. There were people all around him, rushing back and forth, shouting, and he felt very frightened to be there, but didn't know why. Then he was on another plane. The flight to Washington was uneventful. He glanced down at the clouds, a field of cloud, shifting slowly, and he checked the cassette tapes in his pocket because the fear was still with him... Epstein groaned in his sleep. He tossed and turned on the bed. He was in his office in Washington, putting the tapes in his safe, obsessed with the idea that he was being followed, that someone was watching him. The office was very quiet The bright lights stung his eyes. He heard the traffic along Massachusetts Avenue, still there even at midnight Epstein locked the safe. He read the message from Stanford: his young friend was up in Mount Rainier, checking some recent sightings. Epstein felt tired and frightened. The night faded into noon. He was in his car, driving up the mountains, the fear making him sweat ... Epstein groaned and muttered something. He tossed and turned in his sleep. The lodge was empty and he found another message and lay down and felt frightened. The fear increased and became unreal. Epstein opened his eyes. He saw the small men standing all around the bed, very quiet, looking down at him. Epstein felt very cold. They weren't men: they were boys. Then one of them, about fourteen years of age, leaned over and touched him...

Epstein groaned and woke up, feeling cold and very frightened, thinking only of the tapes in the safe and of what they might mean. He licked his lips and rubbed his eyes, saw the wooden beams above him, the room no longer dark, the lights on, a chair creaking beside him. He turned his head, expecting Stanford. There was a stranger in the chair. Epstein sat up on the bed and rubbed his eyes and tried to keep himself calm.

The man was tall and sophisticated, wearing a black shirt and slacks, his eyes bright blue and intense, his hair silvery but plentiful, parted neatly on the left and falling down over an unusually seamless forehead. He sat casually in the chair, his hands folded on his crossed legs, staring straight at Epstein and smiling, a cold, remote smile. 'Who are you?' Epstein asked.

'Wilson,' the man said. 'You might remember me. Richard Watson mentioned my name. It was there in the transcripts.'

'How did you know about the transcripts?'

'Richard told me,' the man said. 'We let him go and then we brought him back and he told us about it.'

The fear shivered down Epstein's spine, made him numb, a bit unreal, and he rubbed his eyes and tried to wake up, still tired from his flights. The man was looking at him steadily. There was something odd about the man. He seemed to be in his early fifties, very handsome, extremely youthful, but the skin on his forehead was unlined, his chin smooth as a boy's.

'You remember the transcripts?' the man asked.

'Yes,' Epstein said.

'Then you should remember me,' the man said. 'I'm Wilson. I was present.'

Epstein shook his head slowly, feeling slightly disorientated, not sure that this was actually happening, his fear slowly subsiding.

'You're Wilson?'

'That's right,' the man said. 'I know it must be something of a shock, but that won't last too long.' He smiled in that bleak manner, glanced casually around the room, then turned his gaze back upon Epstein, his blue eyes still bright. 'Stanford's on his way back,' he said. 'He's been up in the mountains. He's been checking on some UFO reports, but he hasn't found much.'

'How do you know?' Epstein asked.

'We've been watching him,' Wilson said. 'It was my flying saucers that were seen - and they're up there right now.'

Epstein felt very cold. He wondered if he was dreaming. After pinching his left wrist, he knew he wasn't, and he shiv-ered a little.
'Your flying saucers?'
That's right,' Wilson said. 'Don't look so shocked. They're very real... and they're up there right now.'
'Where?' Epstein asked.
'Above the atmosphere,' Wilson said.
'Then our reconnaissance satellites will see them.'
'They've been seeing them for years.'
Epstein wondered what he meant, wanted to ask but couldn't do it, still dazed from being jerked out of sleep, a throbbing pain in his stomach. He coughed and rubbed his eyes. The room seemed very bright Wilson uncrossed his legs, placed his elbows on his knees, then rested his chin in his cupped hands, studying Epstein intently.
'How are you?' he asked.
'What do you mean?' Epstein said.
'Your stomach,' Wilson said. 'Is it hurting you? It must bother you a lot'
'How do you know about my stomach?'
'Cancer's a terrible thing,' Wilson said. 'I myself have suffered ailments in the past, but all that is behind me now.'
'Behind you?' Epstein asked.
'Yes, behind me,' Wilson said. 'I used to have bad trouble with my heart, but I've managed to mend it.'
'What are you talking about?' Epstein asked. 'I don't understand. What are you doing here in my room? Who let you in?'
'I have a pacemaker,' Wilson said. 'A very sophisticated device. It utilizes a piezoelectric crystal, a small balloon filled with water, and causes the heart's own pumping power to stimulate itself. It is, of course, maintenance free. It does not require batteries. The miracles of science, Dr Epstein, are literally boundless.'
'Plastic surgery,' Epstein said.
'I beg your pardon?' Wilson asked.

'I was looking at the skin on your forehead. You've had plastic surgery.'
Wilson smiled and nodded slightly. 'Most perceptive,' he said. 'plastic surgery, pacemaker, various organs replaced... unfortunately I was one of the first - we are much more advanced now.'
'Who's we?' Epstein asked.
'My own people,' Wilson said. 'We are very removed from what you know, but that, too, can be remedied.'
Epstein coughed and rubbed his eyes. He thought that maybe he was dreaming. He blinked and glanced around the bright room and then turned back to Wilson.
'Who are you?' he asked.
'I created the saucers,' Wilson said. You've been trying to solve the mystery for twenty years, and I'm here to assist you.'
Epstein rubbed his eyes again. He didn't have to, but he did it. He wanted to bang his head and wake up, but that seemed a bit foolish.
'You created the saucers?'
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'They exist, they are right here on Earth, and I'm the man who created them.'
'For the Air Force?'
'No.'
'For the Navy?'
'No.'
'I don't understand. I'm confused. I'm very tired. Who are you and what do you want with me? What are you doing here?'
'You don't believe me,' Wilson said.
'Of course not,' Epstein said.
'I can't tell you where I come from,' Wilson said. 'But I'm taking you back there.'
The fear slithered down Epstein's spine. He couldn't believe that this was happening. He thought of Stanford and Scaduto, of his own trip to Paris, of the questions that writhed and collided as the facts were unveiled. He would have to keep his mouth shut. He would have to watch this man care-

fully. This man knew an awful lot about him, and that couldn't be good. He thought of the tapes in his safe. This man knew about the tapes. This man must be from the government or the FBI or the CIA; he already knew about the tapes and wanted to steal them and shut Epstein's mouth. Epstein felt very frightened. He didn't know what to believe. He stared at the man sitting in the chair and wondered if he were real.

'You're from the government,' Epstein said.

'No,' Wilson said. 'The government saucers are relatively primitive. My saucers are the ones you're looking for.'

'I don't believe you,' Epstein said.

'I was in the Caribbean,' Wilson said.

The Caribbean?'

'St Thomas,' Wilson said. 'It was my ship that abducted Professor Gerhardt. You saw it - you and Stanford were on the beach.'

Epstein's fear deepened considerably, made him hold his breath in, now starting to believe the man in the chair, having no other choice.

'You took Gerhardt?' he asked.

'Yes,' Wilson said.

'Where do you come from?' Epstein asked. 'How do you know about me? I can't really accept what I'm hearing. This just doesn't make sense.'

'I built the saucers,' Wilson said. 'You've just found out how they started. You've got that information down on tape. I want you and the tapes.'

Epstein licked his dry lips. He felt shaken and frightened. Wilson's eyes were very blue, almost steely with intelligence; he leaned forward and looked directly at Epstein, speaking slowly and clearly.

'We know all about you,' he said. We've been watching you for twenty years. You're a very tenacious man, you don't stop, and now you're dying of cancer. That makes you more dangerous. You'll be even more determined. We think you've found out too much already, so it has to end now.'

'I've found nothing out,' Epstein said.

'You're lying,' Wilson said. 'You've just come back from Paris where you were seeing Professor Ronald Mansfield, an Englishman who worked for the scientific division of the Brit-ish Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee during World War II and who is currently working for the Groupement d'Etudes des Phenomenes Aeriens. That disturbed us, Dr Epstein. That's as far as you can go. We want you and the tapes you brought back, which is why I am here.'

The fear took hold of Epstein, creeping over him slyly, paralyzing him, removing him from himself, not convinced thiss was happening.

'You want me?'

'That's right,' Wilson said. 'You will not see the dawn over Mount Rainier. You are coming with us.'

Epstein didn't know what to say. He wished that Stanford would return. This conversation was bizarre, not quite real, and he felt very strange.

'I don't have the tapes,' he said.

'Where are they?' Wilson asked.

'I didn't tape the conversations,' Epstein said. 'We just talked. He knew nothing.'

'You're lying, Dr Epstein. I respect it, but it's pointless. We will take you away tonight and then ask you - and believe me, you'll tell us.'

'What about Professor Mansfield?'

'He hung himself yesterday.'

'You mean you murdered him.'

'That's a very emotive word,' Wilson said. 'We simply did what we had to do.'

'And what happened to Richard Watson?'

'An interesting case,' Wilson said. 'He had very strong resistance, great will, so we wanted him back.'

'You've got him now?'

'Yes. We were surprised at how much he told you. We implanted an electrode in his brain and he still showed resistance.'

'He's alive?'

'He is functioning. We will send him back soon. He will do what we tell him to do - and he won't be alone.'
'Who's we?' Epstein said.
'I can't tell you that now.'
'And is that what you do? You pick them up and robotize them? Then you send them back into the world and make them follow your orders?'
That's right,' Wilson said. 'It's not as incredible as it sounds. Bear in mind that such work has been going on for years - in America, in Russia, in Europe - and it's highly ad-vanced. Your people don't understand that, they don't know what's really happening; they only hear about acceptable ex-periments - they don't know the full extent of it. Electrocontrol is a growing industry, being expanded behind closed doors. In your own society it's relatively well advanced; in ours, much more so. Our own people begin in infancy - we take them out of the cradle. We implant electrodes in their brains, and at certain points in the spinal column, before they've even reached their fourth week. After that, they be-long to us. They are developed in extraordinary ways. They are programmed for obedience, their capabilities are en-hanced, and they never know the pain of discontentment.'
Epstein closed his eyes. 'The young boys,' he murmured.
'Ah, yes,' Wilson said. 'Stanford saw them. That must have confused him.'
Epstein opened his eyes again. 'And Richard Watson?' he asked.
'It's different with outsiders. Their advanced age makes all the difference. With outsiders we have to be more careful -and aren't always successful. Richard Watson was such a case. A strong will, great resistance. We've inserted another electrode in his skull and now he seems to be functioning.'
Epstein glanced around the room, feeling unreal, almost dreamy, glanced out through the window, at the darkness, heard the wind on the mountains. Stanford was out there. He was looking for UFOs. The irony of it made Epstein smile, but then the fear trickled back again. He looked at the man

called Wilson. The blue eyes were very bright. Epstein looked at the smooth skin on his forehead and felt very uncomfortable. 'I don't believe this,' he said.
'What don't you believe?'
'I don't believe a damned thing you say. I think it's some kind of trick.'
Wilson smiled bleakly. 'You'll believe soon enough,' he said. 'You've been working at the mystery for twenty years...
your reward comes tonight' 'What do you mean?' Epstein asked.
'We're taking you away,' Wilson said, 'It doesn't matter where you go, where you hide... we'll just come down and get you.'
'You're not taking me now?'
'It's not convenient,' Wilson said.
'And what happens if I don't leave this room?'
We'll just open the door.' Wilson smiled and stood up, went to the window and gazed out, turned back and looked down at Epstein, his blue eyes bright and cold. 'You were in the Caribbean,' he said. 'You know what happened there. If we want someone, we just come and take them - and nothing can stop us.'
Epstein thought back on the Caribbean and remembered the howling wind, the hotel room going crazy, the bright light and intense heat; recalled Stanford's experience at the ranch about five months ago. White light and heat, fierce storms and shaking buildings: the symptoms were always the same, the causes unknown.
'Did you cause the storms?' he asked.
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'Advanced weather engineering. Something similar to your own various cloud-busters, but much more sophisticated. Our own cloud-busters are laser-based and highly effective. The larger saucers can whip the wind up - or disperse it if necessary.'
'I don't believe this,' Epstein said.
'Why not?' Wilson said. 'Cloud seeding is an established

science. Orgone energy weather engineering is expanding every day - with floods and droughts engineered for political purposes. Of course we can cause a storm - so can the Rus-sians and the Americans. Weather engineering is no longer a mystery - it's an effective new weapon.'
'And the cattle?' Epstein asked.
'For our laboratories,' Wilson said. 'For various drugs and vitamins and advanced medical research. Again, there's noth-ing outlandish about it... a simple question of theft.'
'And the people... the kidnapped people?'
'Like the cattle,' Wilson said. 'More complex, but essen-tially the same: they are there to be used.'
'How do you mean?' Epstein asked.
'It depends on the catch,' Wilson said. 'Some are used as slave labor, some are robotized and returned, some are sent to the medical laboratories as guinea pigs for our research.'
'That's horrible,' Epstein said.
'The word "horrible" is redundant. The spider eats the fly and in turn is devoured - all that lives in the present supports the future and has no other purpose. Nothing is horrible, Dr Epstein. As a scientist you should know that. Blood and suffering is the constant of the laboratory - and is vital to progress.'
'We're talking about human beings.'
'Indeed we are,' Wilson said. 'And human beings are no more than the rungs on evolution's great ladder. Science is all, Dr Epstein. The mysteries of life must be uncovered. Science cannot progress as it should if it's held back by sentiment. Humans live and die anyway; they do so to no purpose; only science can stop this primitive wastage and make people useful. Free choice leads to conflict and wastage and is harmful to progress. Emotion is wasted energy. Moral judgment holds back science. There are too many people, there is too much human wastage, and we have to accept that human life is just cement for the future. To merely exist is not enough: what we need is a new form of being. We must learn to take the human being apart and reconstruct him as

something else. A superior being. A creature devoid of contractions. And the gulf between Man and Superman can't be bridged with emotions.'
'That's still horrible,' Epstein said.
'You're still a primitive,' Wilson said. 'Where you are going, you will not feel the same: you will come to accept it.' 'Where am I going?' Epstein asked.
'You'll find that out soon enough.'
'I don't believe this,' Epstein said. 'I can't believe it It just doesn't seem real.'
'Time will tell,' Wilson said.
Epstein closed his eyes briefly. He felt weak and lightheaded. In the darkness behind his closed eyes he saw the void of the cosmos. Not a void: something else. The voids of space were filled with energy. Beyond the galaxies, in what seemed like a void, possibilities were boundless. Where would Man go? What would he become? Epstein opened his eyes again and tried to accept what he was hearing. He had searched for twenty years, had lived constantly with the mystery, and now, face to face with the answer, his fear overwhelmed him.
'The machines are real,' he said.
'You know that,' Wilson said. 'What you heard in Paris must have convinced you, so the question's superfluous.'
'What are they?' Epstein asked.
'You already have the basic facts. We've progressed enormously since then, but the basics remain. At present, apart from the systems which Mansfield doubtless told you about, we utilize advanced ion propulsion, electromagnetic propulsion, in certain cases nuclear fusion pulse rockets, and, for the carrying ships, an antigravity field. Ionization and electromagnetic discharges account for the plasmalike glow that so fascinates your witnesses, the antigravity accounts for the lack of turbulence and sonic booms; and you and Stanford have already discussed - reasonably accurately - the cause of the sudden invisibility.'
'How did you know that?' Epstein asked.

'We bugged your rooms,' Wilson said. 'Nothing is new under the sun - we've simply made progress.'
'And the antigravity shield accounts for your crews' appar-ent ability to withstand the extraordinary speed and direction changes of your machines?'
'Precisely. The gravity-field force applies simultaneously to the crew and the ship... and, since it provides a cushion of air around the ship, it also prevents the ship from heating up. Incidentally, I should point out - since you're looking so disbelieving - that antigravity is not as revolutionary as it seems. As far back as 1965 there were at least forty-six unclassified G-projects being undertaken in America alone - by the Air Force, the Navy, the Army, NASA, the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Science Foundation. Since these were the unclassified projects, I need only point out that considerably more advanced projects are doubtless under way right this minute in the strictest of secrecy.'
'Are you saying that you're connected with the US government?'
'No, I'm not saying that.'
Epstein couldn't think straight. He looked at Wilson, at the blue of his eyes. Then he remembered Dr Campbell, what he had related about hypnosis; remembering this, he thought he should try to get off the bed ... but Wilson spoke and that stopped him.
'It's all right,' Wilson said.
'Yes,' Epstein said, no longer worried, simply wanting to know more. 'We keep receiving reports of different-sized machines, and that always confuses us...'
The smallest discs are similar to your own CAMS - Cybernetic Anthropomorphous Machine Systems, either remote-controlled or programmed to react to certain stimuli, used mainly as sensing devices or probes. Taking the Richard Watson case, the beam of light that shone into the car was merely a laser beam on a wavelength that temporarily freezes skeletal muscles or certain nerves - thus producing either paralysis or a trancelike condition.'

'And the other discs?'
'The first group are anything from five to fifteen feet in diameter. Again, these are highly complex Cybernetic Anthropomorphous Machine Systems, either flying with their long axis vertical or flying in the direction of their axis, used mainly for reconnaissance and basic manual tasks, such as the collecting of soil or water, and controlled by Remote Ma-nipulator Systems not much different from normal ones. The second group, usually about twenty-five to thirty-five feet in diameter, are extensions of the former group, but revolving around their axis and controlled by extremely advanced cyborgs. The pilot that Richard Watson saw in the second disc was just such a cyborg: half man, half machine - the results of our thirty years of prosthetic experiment The lungs of these cyborgs have been partially collapsed and the blood in them artificially cooled; since this operation renders their mouth and nose superfluous, these are sealed and completely nonfunctioning. The cyborgs' respiration and other bodily functions are controlled cybernetically with artificial lungs and sensors which maintain constant temperature, metabolism and pressure, irrespective of external environmental fluctuations - thus they are not affected by the extraordinary accelerations and direction changes of their craft. The third group of ships can range from one hundred to three hundred feet in diameter, can be up to several stories tall inside, are used mainly to pick up people and animals and machines, and have a crew of about one dozen men. The fourth category is the carrying ship - what you people call the "mother" ship - a somewhat gigantic affair, approximately a mile in diameter, used for major operations of a long-term nature. The carrying ships are essentially self-generating airborne colonies, capable of drifting in outer space or of hibernating on the sea bed, manned by a large crew of humans and cyborgs, the heavy labor performed by programmed slaves, and contain-ing workshops, laboratories, medical wards, cryonic preservation units, various hangars and all the other discs mentioned.'

Wilson smiled as he talked to Epstein, a slightly distant, cool smile, his lips dutifully performing the motions while his eyes remained icy. His eyes fascinated Epstein, repelled him and drew him in, unblinking, as clear as sunlit ice, making Epstein feel unreal. And yet the man sounded reasonable, talking quietly, precisely, explaining with the patience of a teacher, making everything simple.
'You must be very advanced,' Epstein said.
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'We are. Our society is based on masters and slaves, and exists just for science.'
'Where is it?' Epstein asked.
Wilson smiled. 'Just be patient'
'Tell me now,' Epstein said. 'I want to know.'
'You'll find out soon enough.'
They stared at one another, the silence broken by the wind outside, the light in the room very bright, the window framing the dark night.
'You said that the carrying ships can hibernate on the sea bed,' Epstein said. 'Is there a connection between that fact and the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle and the other areas reported to be like it?'
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'We have permanent undersea laboratories in the Bermuda Triangle, the so-called Devil's Sea between Guam, Luzon in the Philippines, and the southeast coast of Japan, and another off the coast of Argentina. These laboratories are manned by cyborgs and a few programmed scientists, and are visited frequently by the carrying ships.'
'And it's your carrying ships that cause the unusual magnetic disturbances in those areas?'
'Yes.'
'I can't accept that you could construct such laboratories without being noticed by someone - by some ships or planes.
'Various governments know we're down there, and in fact cooperate with us. As for the actual construction of the laboratories at such depths, you have to appreciate the unusual dimensions and capabilities of the carrying ships. As I said, the average carrying ship is about one mile in diameter,

which means that its interior space is considerable. The car-rying ship simply settles near the sea bed and the laboratory instructed inside it. The base of the carrying ship then opens up and deposits the laboratory, complete with crew, on the sea bed. The permanent fixing of the laboratory to the sea bed is accomplished with the aid of specially reinforced, remote-controlled CAMS, and then the carrying ship ascends to the surface, leaving the laboratory down there.' 'And various governments know you're down there?' 'Yes.' 'But you don't belong to any of those governments?'

'No.'

'Will you explain that?'

'Not yet.'

Wilson smiled bleakly and turned back to the window, looked out as if searching for someone, glanced up at the night sky.

'Our reconnaissance satellites,' Epstein said. 'Is it true that they've seen you?'

'Yes,' Wilson said, turning back and looking at him. 'Naturally. How could they miss us? They've seen us for years.'

'Then they've been covering up for years.'

'Of course,' Wilson said. There's nothing particularly unusual about that - they've been covering up everything.'

'I don't know what you mean,' Epstein said.

'Don't you? What about all their secret research programs: their chemical warfare programs, their advanced weaponry programs, their secret achievements in aeronautics and communications and neurology; their covert operations against, and their clandestine agreements with, the Soviets and the Chinese and the Third World countries? The private citizen knows precious little. He knows only what they deign to tell him. Governments cover up everything, from their politics to science, and when it comes to something as big as our ships, they cover up even more.'

'Why?' Epstein asked.

'Because they don't trust the people. Because there isn't a government in the world that still believes in Democracy.'
'What's your connection with them?'
'I can't discuss that,' Wilson said.
'You're not an extraterrestrial,' Epstein said. That much I know.'
Wilson stared at him, offered a faint, victorious smile, and Epstein flushed, thinking of the tapes in his safe, knowing that Wilson had tricked him.
'Ah, yes,' Wilson said, 'Professor Mansfield. He must have told you a lot.'
Epstein burned and then cooled down, his throbbing stom-ach now peaceful, feeling bright to the point of unreality, removed from himself. He wondered where Stanford was, wished that Stanford would return. The wind moaned outside the window, sweeping over the darkened mountains, and he thought of the sightings over the Cascades, of what Scaduto had told them. The truth emerged in small pieces. It lay before him like a jigsaw. There were still missing pieces, gaping holes, and the clock ticked the time away.
The harassment,' Epstein said. The suicides and disappearances. I take it that they're part of the cover-up and that you engineered them.'
'Some of them,' Wilson said. 'It depends on the circumstances. The actual harassment was usually arranged by your government, but most of the deaths and disappearances are due to us.'
'Most?'
'Not all. Occasionally your government steps in and does a job on its own.'
'Then they work with you,' Epstein said.
'On and off,' Wilson said. 'As with all political situations, the agreements are tenuous and are prone to break down at any moment. We negotiate with the US government. We also negotiate with the Soviets. We trade and play one against the other because we haven't much choice yet.'
'Yet?'

Wilson smiled. 'The Nuclear Deterrent, the Balance of Terror, is a precarious business.'
'And you're in the middle?'
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'We straddle the seesaw... but we'll soon tip the other two off.'
Epstein felt very calm now, divorced from himself, the pain in his stomach gone, the fear disappearing with it, the bizarre nature of the whole conversation making it unreal. He didn't know what to think, felt distant, almost placid, well aware that this man had done something to make him accept it all. The revelations were stunning, ambiguous, fascinating, and yet Epstein thought they sounded quite reasonable, down-to-earth, almost simple. He wondered if he was hypnotized, stood outside himself and thought this. He saw Wilson standing right beside the window, gazing up at the night sky.
'You killed Irving,' Epstein asked.
'Irving Jacobs?' Wilson said.
'Yes. Irving Jacobs. You killed him. Why did you do that?'
Wilson walked back to the chair, sat down, stared at Epstein, not smiling, his blue eyes very bright filled with icy intelligence.
'He was digging too deep,' he said. 'He had found out too much. Your own government was disturbed by his discoveries and wanted us to get rid of him. They didn't want to do it themselves. They didn't dare use their own men. They didn't want the FBI or CIA to get anywhere near him. So, we worked on him. We had him followed and harassed. When he grew frightened, when his resistance was low, we used long-range telepathy. We stole part of his mind that way. We made him think he was possessed. In the end we made him drive out to the desert where we came down on top of him. We didn't need him as a scientist - we have plenty in that field - so we simply stuck the gun in his mouth and made it look like a suicide.'
Epstein should have been shocked, but he felt nothing at all. He thought of Irving and Mary and the old days, but it seemed far away.

'You use mental telepathy?'
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'Certain brain implantations can en-hance telepathic powers and actually lead to nonverbal communication. Some of the children, and all of the cyborgs, communicate that way.'
'Were you involved with the woman from Maine?'
'Yes,' Wilson said. 'We were experimenting and the woman from Maine picked us up and then told the CIA. The people she first informed knew nothing about us or their govern-ment's saucers; but the Canadian government, when they heard about her, were naturally more concerned, thinking she might have picked up some Soviet signals. Bearing in mind that only a limited number of government and armed forces personnel know about the existence of the saucers, it was unfortunate that the men who first interrogated the woman knew nothing about what was going on. However, at the second meeting, some of the officers present knew all about the saucer programs - and it was they who subsequently buried the incident and transferred the CIA men who were in the office but didn't know what was happening.'
'Our informant said it was a Canadian-US saucer.'
'An understandable error. Unfortunately it was an error that led to your friend Scaduto spying on the Canadian plants. Mr Scaduto recently died of a premature heart attack. You can blame that on Stanford.'
The remark hardly affected Epstein. He felt calm and interested. The man speaking sounded exceptionally reasonable, the revelations quite commonplace.
'What about Irving?' Epstein asked.
'I've already told you about him.'
'You didn't actually tell me what he found out. I'd like to know that.'
'Jacobs was interested in the deaths and disappearance of so many of his contemporaries, and this encouraged him to investigate the Jessup case. In doing this, he discovered that the US Navy had, back in 1943, been experimenting with pulsating and vortexual high intensity magnetic fields which

might alter the molecular structure of physical properties and render them temporarily invisible. This experiment became known as the Philadelphia Experiment, but contrary to popular belief it was a disaster. What in fact happened was that the Navy inadvertently created a source of electromagnetic en-ergy that produced an infrasound of such intensity that it killed every sailor on board the ship and actually split the ship's hull. In short, the ship rumored to have disappeared actually sank - and naturally, since the Navy didn't want word of this to leak out, they whipped up a mass of rumors that acted as a cover-up and led to the contemporary myth ... However, in investigating this, Dr Jessup discovered that the Navy's basic scientific principles were valid, that the Navy and Air Force were involved in saucer projects, and that those projects were utilizing certain aspects of the original Philadelphia Experiment. Having found out about this, Jessup had to be removed ... then Jacobs found out much the same thing and also had to be terminated.'

'I see,' Epstein said. 'And those principles were also the principles underlying the invisibility-inducing properties of your craft?'

'Correct. A specific quantity of electromagnetic radiation creates a stream of escaping photons of the same wavelength and frequency, which leads either to a glowing, plasmalike shield or to a color source beyond the known spectrum that renders the saucer invisible.'

'How does this relate to the annotations in Jessup's book -the ones that stimulated the interest of the Office of Naval Research?'

'That was something of a red herring,' Wilson said. 'In 1955 the Navy was still experimenting with the possibilities of elec-tromagnetically-induced invisibility. They were then, and remain today, unsuccessful. Nevertheless, they were disturbed by some of Jessup's published remarks - and the annotations in that copy of his book had been made by their own intelligence officers, and related only to the sections that discussed force fields and dematerialization. The Navy

wanted to know the source of his information, Jessup natu-rally refused to tell them, then Jessup walked out of their office - and that's all there was to it.'
'You had nothing to do with the annotations?'
'No. Not a thing.'
Epstein closed his eyes, let himself drift away, drifting down through the darkness and the long years he had labored, feeling peaceful, then feeling confused, and drifting back up again. He thought of the tapes in his office, of the old man now dead, thought of everything the old man had told him, wondered what it might mean. He had to get the tapes to Stanford. If nothing else, he had to do that. He now knew that they would take him away, and that he would not resist. He didn't want to resist. His curiosity was too great. He opened his eyes and saw Wilson by the window and felt a great peace.
'I have to go now,' Wilson said. 'When I depart, you will sleep. When you wake up, you will do what you feel like -because the choice won't be yours.'
'I'm confused,' Epstein said.
'By what?'
'You're not an extraterrestrial, you're from Earth, and you created the saucers. That's what confuses me. It just doesn't make sense. The first genuine UFO sightings were in 1897-yet you say you're the man who created them.'
'That's correct,' Wilson said. He turned away from the window, walked back to the bed, and stood there, staring intently at Epstein, his blue eyes very bright. 'I am one hundred and seven years old,' he said. 'You, too, can live that long.'

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Approaching the lodge after his long day in the mountains, covered in snow and freezing, Stanford desperately wanted sleep, a respite from it all, an escape from the fear that now dogged him every day and was encouraged by his present exhaustion. The snow was deep and very clean, drifting lazily upon itself, sweeping gently around the trees, the moonlight making it glisten, the wind moaning and scraping at his nerves, the mountains looming above him. Stanford longed for the lodge, for its safety and warmth, but when he saw it, the fear increased greatly and made him stop walking.

All the lights were on. The front door was ajar. A beam of light fell from the door to the porch, illuminating the snow that drifted along the wooden boards. Stanford stood beneath some pines, not moving, his heart pounding, wondering why the lights were on, who was in there, his head spinning with fevered thoughts. He knew he was being foolish, felt ashamed of it, couldn't stop it, remembering the boys in gray coveralls, the burning ranch and the vanished girl, remembering Gerhardt's abduction and Scaduto's recent suicide, and the fact that they knew who he was and might come back again...

Stanford cursed and shivered slightly. He wiped snow from his face. He thought of the lights he had seen above the mountains, drifting up, shooting sideways. Not descending: ascending. Not meteors: unidentifieds. Stanford shivered and stared ahead, the panic emptying his mind, then he shook his

head and realized it was Epstein, cursed again, started walk-ing. He climbed the wooden steps, pushed the door open, walked inside, glanced around the living area, seeing no sign of Epstein, wondered why he had left all the lights on, then went into the bedroom. Epstein was on the bed, wearing pajamas, looking sleepy, his hands folded primly in his lap, his gaze fixed straight ahead.

'You got my message,' Stanford said.

'Yes,' Epstein replied.

'It's been a bitch of a day,' Stanford said. They've been all over the place.'

'Unidentifieds?'

'Yes.'

'What kind?'

'Just lights. They've been flying all over Mount Rainier but they never came close.'

'No possible landings?' Epstein said.

'None reported,' Stanford said. 'Most of the lights were high up, standing still, then shooting sideways, racing back and forward across the mountains, disappearing, coming back again. Then this big light came down. All the smaller lights went into it Then the big light climbed vertically and disappeared and hasn't been seen since. That was an hour ago.'

Epstein nodded judiciously, looking down at his folded hands, very frail in his pajamas, too frail, a man fading away. Stanford noticed the frailness - that and something else: a remoteness, a sort of dreamy look that seemed very unnatural.

'Are you all right?' he asked.

'Yes,' Epstein said. 'I'm fine.'

'And how was Paris? What did you find out?'

'You were right It was Germany.'

Stanford was taking off his jacket, but he stopped and stared at Epstein, the shock mixed with fear and excitement, disbelief and wild hope. He shrugged his jacket back on

again, took a deep breath, just stood there, the snow melting on the shoulders of the jacket and dripping down to the carpet.
'Germans?' he asked.
'I don't know,' Epstein said. 'I thought so at first, but now I'm not so sure. I'm confused. I don't know what to think.'
'What do you mean, you're confused?'
'I have some tapes,' Epstein said. 'It's vital that you hear them. From what the old man told me, it seems almost cer-tain that the Americans and Canadians, and possibly the British, have their own flying saucers... But Scaduto was right: there's someone else involved. I don't know who they are or where they come from or what they're up to, but I do know that they're not extraterrestrial and that they're fright-eningly advanced ... It's vital that you hear the tapes. They're in my safe back in Washington. It's vital that you go back there right now and get them out of the safe.'
'Right now?'
'Yes.'
'That's ridiculous,' Stanford said. 'I'm exhausted. Just tell me what's on them.'
'There's no time,' Epstein said. The tapes aren't safe anymore. They want me and the tapes and they'll probably get both before the dawn. You have to get there before them.'
Stanford walked over to the bed and looked carefully at Epstein, thinking that his friend had gone mad, wondering what he was talking about. Epstein was leaning against the pillow, his hands folded on his lap, his gray beard more shaggy than usual, his eyes slightly unfocused.
'What are you talking about?' Stanford asked. 'I'm not sure I heard you right Who's going to get you and the tapes? I don't think I heard right.'
Epstein didn't look up. 'I had a visitor,' he said. 'He killed the Englishman and Scaduto. Now he wants me and the tapes. He says he'll have both by dawn.'
'A visitor?' Stanford asked.
'Yes. He came here. He left just before you arrived. He

knew all about Irving and Gerhardt and Richard Watson, about you, about me, about that girl on the ranch, and he said he wants me and the tapes and that he'll have both by dawn.'
'And you believe him?'
'Yes, Stanford, I believe him. I don't think I'll be here logn. He claims he saw you and me on the beach near St Thomas. He knows about your encounter with the boys outside the ranch, and he knows about a lot of other things that he just shouldn't know. He's one of them, Stanford. He told me about the machines. He told me enough to convince me. I've no doubt that he'll get me.'
Stanford sat down on the bed, the snow still dripping off him, and stared at his friend for some time before he managed to talk again.
'Tell me,' he said.
Epstein recounted the whole story, his voice calm and remote. Stanford sat there, fascinated, both frightened and excited, his head rilled with bright lights and pulsating coronas and glittering stars that moved majestically through black night and then blinked out and disappeared. Epstein's voice was very tired, almost toneless, abstracted, filtering through Stanford's head and out again. Stanford listened, hypnotized, the walls dissolving around him, not fully comprehending what he heard, overwhelmed and struck dumb. Then Epstein stopped talking, gave a sigh, looked at his hands, and the walls of the room reappeared as the real world crept back. Stanford glanced all around him, wondering where he was, who he was, then managed to take control of himself, looking back at his old friend.
'I don't believe this,' he said.
'It's all true,' Epstein said.
'Jesus,' Stanford said. 'It's too much. I just can't get a hold of it.'
Epstein coughed into his fist. 'You have to leave now,' he said. 'It's vital that you get all the tapes before they get me to talk.'
'What makes you so sure you'll talk?'

'Because I think they'll hypnotize me. Either that or they'll put an electrode in my brain like they did to young Richard.' 'You think they're coming back tonight?'
'Before dawn,' Epstein said. 'If s vital that you leave right this minute and get there before them.'
'Me?' Stanford said.
'I'm not coming,' Epstein said.
'What the hell do you mean, you're not coming? You can't sit there and wait for them.'
Epstein's hands shook imperceptibly. 'I don't want to go,' he said. 'I've been trying to unravel the mystery for twenty years and now it's right on my doorstep. They're going to take me with them. I can't miss that opportunity. I want to know who they are, where they come from, so I'll have to go with them.'
'Are you crazy?' Stanford said. 'If you go, you won't come back. Those bastards aren't doing you any favors; once you go, you'll be gone.'
Epstein shrugged and smiled gently. 'So what?' he said, look at me. I look like a ghost I've only got a year anyway.'
'You're crazy,' Stanford said.
'I have to know,' Epstein said. 'I can't die without knowing the whole story - and this is my chance.'
'I won't let you.'
'Get the tapes.'
'No, dammit,' Stanford said. 'I won't let you. Now get your clothes on.'
Epstein shrugged and then looked up, smiling gently, remotely, staring directly at Stanford without really seeing him.
'It's pointless,' he said. 'If they want me, they'll get me. It doesn't matter where I go, where I hide, because they'll know where to find me.'
'Don't bet on it.'
'I would bet on it.'
'Shut up,' Stanford said. 'I'm not listening. Now put your clothes on.'
Epstein smiled and nodded gently, swung his legs off the

bed, stood up and started dressing himself like a man still asleep. It didn't matter if they left. He was certain the man would find him. He was certain that whatever he did, the man would know he was doing it. This thought gave him some comfort, eased his pain, made him glow, now enraptured with the thought of the revelations that would soon set him free. He would not die defeated. Death would not have dominion. He would wait and they would come, the night would turn to blinding light, and he would blink and then open his eyes and see a world beyond reckoning. Epstein put his clothes on. When he had finished, he glanced around him. He had only been here a few hours and yet he felt a great sadness. It was not a painful sadness. His sense of loss was couched in joy. Epstein buttoned up his coat and smiled at Stanford, prepared for just anything.

'Okay?' Stanford asked.

'Okay,' Epstein said.

'Right,' Stanford said. 'Let's go. Let's get the hell out of here.'

They walked through the lodge, stepped out onto the porch, felt the cold and saw the snow falling down as Stanford locked the front door. Stanford grabbed Epstein's elbow, guided him down the slippery steps. The snow was thin on the ground, drifting lazily, as they walked to the car. Stanford helped Epstein in, holding his arm, staring at him, then he closed the door and walked around the car and slipped into the driver's seat. Epstein said nothing, simply smiled and looked ahead, and Stanford started the car and headed out through the tall, snow-lined trees.

'Are you all right?' he asked.

'I'm fine,' Epstein said.

'Are you sure? You seem a bit quiet.'

'I feel fine,' Epstein said.

Stanford drove between the trees, the snow white in the darkness, the mountains jagged and silhouetted against the sky, rising up all around them. Stanford drove very carefully, squinting against the falling snow, his headlights picking out tree-trunks and rocks and high banks of green earth. He was

nervous, excited, not sure what he was doing, glancing occasionally at Epstein, at his smile, and wondering what he was thinking. The car rolled down the narrow track, the trees gliding past silently, the snow drifting dreamily across the track, the darkness stretched out below them.

'You know, it fits,' Stanford said. 'A lot of what he told you fits. The application of an antigravity shield could result in a virtually massless body. Now, according to technical analysis, the lift-off of your average UFO would require as much energy as the detonation of an atomic bomb, would cause the body of the UFO to heat up to about eighty-five thousand degrees centigrade, and would naturally lead to intense deposits of radioactivity. However, with an antigravity shield reducing the mass of the UFO to almost zero, it would only require a very modest force to reach exceptionally high accelerations. That would account for the UFOs' ability to disappear in the blinking of an eye, for the fact that the UFOs can be brought to a very abrupt stop, and would explain why they can make such normally impossible right-angle turns. Since we can also assume safely that the inertial mass of such a UFO would decrease the higher it goes, we can then reason that such a mass would be reduced to almost zero by the time it reaches the limits of the Earth's atmosphere. That would explain why the UFOs invariably have what appears to be a two-stage takeoff: a slow rise to about a hundred feet or so, then a sudden acceleration and disappearance. Finally, since the UFOs' performance is directly related to the Earth's gravity, and since the pull of gravity varies slightly from place to place, that would explain why a UFO in horizontal flight often appears to rise and fall slightly: the increase and decrease of gravitational pull would affect the inertial mass of the UFO and make it bob up and down a bit; it would also explain why the UFOs appear to be able to automatically follow the profile of the terrain below ... So, the facts fit.'

Epstein nodded and smiled, his hands folded in his lap, his eyes slightly unfocused and peaceful, fixed on the downhill road.

'Still,' Stanford said, 'it's pretty fantastic. And he said he was one hundred and seven years old... If that's true, he's not human.'
'You don't think so?' Epstein asked.
'No, I don't think so. If the guy comes from Earth, I can't buy that: it's just too incredible.'
'I'm not so sure,' Epstein said. 'Bear in mind that whoever these people are, they're obviously extraordinarily advanced in their technology. Now, according to Wilson that technol-ogy includes medical and psychological research, with no apparent restraint on the researchers. They're definitely very far advanced in parapsychology and prosthetics, and they practice vivisection on human beings.'
'Jesus Christ,' Stanford said.
'Yes,' Epstein said, 'it's horrible. But no matter, that's certainly what they're doing. Now assuming that their medical and surgical research is as advanced as their other sciences, it is not unreasonable to assume that Mr Wilson is one hundred and seven years old. What I do know is that his face was reconstructed with plastic surgery, that he uses an extremely advanced pacemaker, and that he has had various organs replaced. He also pointed out that the work on him was performed at an early stage and that those methods were now considered to be relatively primitive. Presumably, then, it is possible that Mr Wilson is one hundred and seven years old.'
'What does that make his date of birth?'
'1870.'
'No,' Stanford said. 'I don't believe this.'
'Think again,' Epstein said. 'A few people have actually managed to live to that age - and without medical assistance. Add medical and surgical assistance of the most advanced kind, and Mr Wilson could be exactly what he says he is.'
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'But who is he?'
'Have you ever heard of a Wilson in relation to UFOs?'
'No,' Stanford said. 'I can't say that I have... No, it's too ridiculous.'

'What's ridiculous?' Epstein asked. 'Don't be shy. I want to know what you mean.'
Stanford shook his head wearily, squinting against the fall-ing snow, his headlights boring through the darkness as the car moved downhill, the road winding around canyons and ravines, the land stretched out below them.
'The flap of 1897,' Stanford said. The first real modern sightings.'
'Don't blush,' Epstein said. 'Just keep talking.'
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'As you know, the first major UFO flap was in 1896 - about November of that year - and continued until May 1897. This was five years before the Wright brothers' experiments, but there were, by this time, various airship designs on the drawing boards or in the Patent Office. On 11 August, 1896, patent number 565805 was given to Charles Abbot Smith of San Francisco for an airship he intended having ready by the following year. Another patent, number 580941, was issued to Henry Heintz of Elkton, South Dakota, on 20 April, 1897. However, I should point out that while many of the UFOs sighted were shaped roughly like the patent designs, there is no record of either airship having been built.'
'But the airships looked like the UFOs?'
'At that time the general belief was that aerial navigation would be solved through an airship rather than a heavier-than-air flying machine - so most of the earlier designs looked like dirigibles with a passenger car on the bottom.'
'Cigar-shaped.'
'Right.'
'Please continue.'
'Okay, what stands out in the 1896 and 1897 sightings is that the UFOs were mostly cigar-shaped, that they frequently landed, and that their occupants often talked to the witnesses, usually asking for water for their machines. Now, the most intriguing of the numerous contactee stories involved a man who called himself Wilson. The first incident occurred in Beaumont, Texas, on April 19, 1897, when J. B. Ligon, the

local agent for Magnolia Brewery, and his son Charles no-ticed lights in the Johnson pasture a few hundred yards away and went to investigate. They came upon four men standing beside a large, dark object which neither of the witnesses could see clearly. One of these men asked Ligon for a bucket of water, Ligon let him have it, and then the man gave his name as Mr Wilson. He then told Ligon that he and his friends were traveling in a flying machine, that they had taken a trip "out of the gulf, and that they were returning to the "quiet Iowa town" where the airship and four others like it had been constructed. When asked, Wilson explained that electricity powered the propellers and wings of the airship, then he and his friends got back into the airship and Ligon watched it ascending.

The next day, 20 April, Sheriff H. W. Baylor of Uvalde, also in Texas, went to investigate a strange light and voices in back of his house. He encountered an airship and three men - and one of the men gave his name as Wilson, from Goshen, New York. Wilson then inquired about one C. C. Akers, former sheriff of Zavalia County, saying that he had met him in Fort Worth in 1877 and now wanted to see him again. Sheriff Baylor, surprised, replied that Captain Akers was now at Eagle Pass, and Wilson, reportedly disappointed, asked to be remembered to him the next time that Sheriff Baylor visited him. Baylor reported that the men from the airship wanted water and that Wilson requested that their visit be kept secret from the townspeople. Then he and the other men climbed back into the airship and, quote, "its great wings and fans were set in motion and it sped away northward in the direction of San Angelo." The county clerk also saw the airship as it left the area.

Two days later, in Josserand, Texas, a whirring sound awakened farmer Frank Nichols, who looked out of his window and saw "brilliant lights streaming from a ponderous vessel of strange proportions" in his cornfield. Nichols went outside to investigate, but before he reached the object, two men walked up to him and asked if they could have water

from his well. Nichols agreed to this - as farmers in those days usually did - and the men then invited him to visit the airship where he noticed that there were six or eight crew members. One of these men told him that the ship's motive power was "highly condensed electricity" and that it was one of five that had been constructed in "a small town in Iowa" with the backing of a large stock company in New York.

'The next day, on April 23, witnesses described by the Houston Post as "two responsible men" reported that an airship had descended where they lived in Kountze, Texas, and that two of the occupants had given their names as Wilson and Jackson.

'Four days after this incident, on April 27, the Galveston Daily News printed a letter from C. C. Akers, who claimed that he had indeed known a man in Fort Worth named Wilson, that Wilson was from New York, that he was in his middle twenties, and that he was "of a mechanical turn of mind and was then working on aerial navigation and something that would astonish the world."

'Finally, early in the evening of April 30, in Deadwood, Texas, a farmer named H. C. Lagrone heard his horses bucking as if in stampede. Going outside, he saw a bright white light circling around the fields nearby and illuminating the entire area before descending and landing in one of the fields. Walking to the landing spot, Lagrone found a crew of five men, three of whom talked to him while the others collected water in rubber bags. The man informed Lagrone that their ship was one of five that had been flying around the country recently, that theirs was in fact the same one that had landed in Beaumont a few days before, that all the ships had been constructed in an interior town in Illinois - which, note, borders Iowa - and that they were reluctant to say anything else because they hadn't yet taken out any patents. By May that same year, the sightings ended...'

The car rolled on down the mountain, the snow sweeping across the road, the forests rising up on both sides, white and ghostly in darkness.

'Interesting,' Epstein said. 'It's certainly beginning to add up. And this Wilson appeared to be in his early twenties.'
'Exactly,' Stanford said. 'So assuming, as Wilson claims, that he's one hundred and seven years old - that means that in 1897 he would have been twenty-seven.'
'It fits,' Epstein said. 'A lot of the facts fit. For instance, Wilson said that he had originally studied aeronautics at MIT and at Cornell, New York.'
'You're kidding,' Stanford said.
'No, I'm not kidding. He said he went to MIT and then left to study under Octave Chanute... Does that make any sense?'
'Oh, Christ, yes,' Stanford said.
The snow swept across the headlights, the rising hills sliding past, the sky forming a long, glittering ribbon between the towering trees.
'It's hard to believe,' Stanford said, 'but it's possibly true. Although there were no formal aeronautical courses at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during the early 1890s, there were plenty of informal courses on propulsion and the behavior of fluids. Then, by 1896, instructors and students at MIT had built a wind tunnel and were experimenting with it to get practical knowledge of aerodynamics. Wilson, or Wilson, could have attended these courses and then gone on to Sibley College, Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York, where, by the mid-1890s, it was possible to get a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics.'
They were coming out of the mountains, the road straightening and leveling out, a great drop on one side, the soaring hills on the other, the snow banked up at both sides of the car, gleaming white in the darkness.
'So,' Epstein said. 'Wilson was born in 1870. In 1890, at the age of twenty, he was studying propulsion and the behavior of fluids at MIT, after which he went on to Cornell to study aerodynamics. Let us say, then, that by the mid-1890s he had obtained his Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics. Assuming he is a genius, we can then assume that he left Cornell and

went directly into designing and constructing flying ma-chines. Now, bearing in mind the enormous interest there was at that time in the possibilities of such machines - and the fact that numerous researchers and inventors were ob-sessed with the possible theft or plagiarism of their designs -the need for secrecy would certainly have been predominant. Given this, it is possible that your Wilson was financed by some stock company in New York to set up a secret research center in the uninhabited wilds of Illinois or Iowa. It is then also possible - still assuming that our friend is a genius - that he could have built the first airships by 1896.'

'Christ,' Stanford hissed. 'Jesus Christ! Which gets us to your tapes.'

'Correct,' Epstein said.

'What's on them?' Stanford said. Tell me what's on the tapes. I can't wait until we get to Washington. I have to know

now.' Epstein didn't reply. Stanford turned and looked at him. Epstein sat there with his head on one shoulder, his eyes dosed, breathing deeply. Stanford smacked him on the shoulder, but Epstein didn't respond. Stanford cursed and looked out at the swirling snow and then looked back at Epstein. He was still breaming deeply, his eyes closed as if asleep, and Stanford shook him and got no response and felt a sharp, stabbing panic. He shook Epstein and called his name. Epstein didn't wake up. Stanford suddenly felt frightened, wondering what was going on, thinking Epstein might have had some sort of stroke, wondering what he could do. They were a long way from Washington. The mountains climbed up behind them. Ahead, on either side of the road, the hills climbed into darkness. Stanford cursed and stopped the car, turned around and shook Epstein. Epstein blinked and then °pened his eyes and looked vaguely around him.

'Where are we?' he asked.

'Nowhere,' Stanford said. 'I had to stop the car to waken you. I thought something had happened to you.'

'I fell asleep?'

That's what it looked like. I just looked and you were gone. I've never seen anyone fall asleep that fast and it gave me a fright.'
Epstein smiled. 'My apologies.'
'Are you sure you're all right?'
'Of course,' Epstein said. 'I feel fine. I don't know what happened ... All the flying. Jet lag...'
'Can I go now?' Stanford asked.
'Certainly. Please do.'
'Good,' Stanford said. 'I'm relieved. I don't like it out here.'
He turned the ignition key. Nothing happened and he tried again. Nothing happened and he cursed and tried a third time, but still nothing happened. He glanced briefly at Epstein. Epstein's eyes were slowly closing. Stanford cursed and then tried the car a fourth time, but still nothing happened. The engine was completely dead. Stanford couldn't understand that. He looked around him, saw the thick, spiraling snow, the hills covered in trees. Stanford turned to look at Epstein. The professor was asleep. Frightened, Stanford opened the door and climbed out of the car.
The wind was light but very icy, and he shivered and went to the front of the car and lifted the hood. He beamed his flashlight on the engine, examined the spark plugs, the carburetor, the works, but couldn't find a thing wrong. Stanford shivered with cold. The snow was settling on the engine. He turned the light off and went back around the car to try the ignition again. He bent down to climb in, stopped, blinked his eyes, saw that the other door was open and that Epstein had disappeared.
Stanford straightened up quickly, feeling panic, his heart pounding, looking over the car, across the road, at the tree-covered slopes. The trees were tall and close together, blocking out the moonlight, the white snow disappearing into darkness where the slope became steep. Then he saw Professor Epstein, stooped over, coat flapping, clambering up the slope and heading through the trees, the snow swirling about him.

Stanford bawled Epstein's name. Epstein didn't glance back. He had passed the first trees, his feet buried in the snow, disappearing, reappearing, climbing up. Stanford looked above him. A chill ran down his spine. He saw the light beyond the trees, rising up, spreading out, a glowing fan at the top of the hill that grew larger each second.

'Oh my God!' Stanford hissed.

He banged the car with his fist, ran around it, followed Epstein, his feet sinking into the snow as he crossed the dark road. The light wind was sharp and icy, blowing the snow into his face, and he put his hand over his face until he reached the first trees. Looking up he saw Epstein - heading straight for the pulsating light that fanned out in the black sky. Then Stanford felt something, thought he heard it, wasn't sure, jerked his head back and looked straight above him and went numb all over. There was no sky above. There was just a total blackness: a blackness that wiped out the moon and stars and was utterly physical. Stanford kept looking up. He couldn't believe what was happening. The blackness went as far as he could see and seemed to bear down upon him.

Stanford looked up at Epstein. He saw him moving between the trees. The light fanned out above the brow of the hill, pulsating and glowing. Stanford screamed Epstein's name. Epstein didn't glance back. Stanford cursed and started racing up the hill, the air vibrating around him. He heard the sound or felt it, wasn't sure what was happening, slowed down and started slipping and sliding, his head tight, his lungs bursting. Then he fell and rolled over, looked up and saw the light, saw Epstein climbing up toward the light with unnatural energy.

Stanford lay there in the snow. He looked up and saw the light spreading out and enveloping Epstein. Then two figures materialized. They were both silhouetted. They came up over the top of the hill, moving slowly, methodically. They stopped and stood still and were framed by the fan of light. Epstein stood up and walked toward the figures, and one reached out and touched him. Stanford lay there, looking up, unable to

move. Epstein merged with the two silhouettes and then they all walked away, vanishing over the hill. Stanford lay there a very long time, the vibrating sound numbing him.

The snow continued falling. The fan of light started fading. It grew weaker and smaller, shrank to nothing, and then dis-appeared. Stanford lay there in the snow, watching the top of the hill. A line of white lights rose out of the darkness and climbed slowly and vertically. Then the vibrating stopped. The dark night was filled with light. Stanford jerked his head back and looked above him and shielded his eyes.

There was light in the blackness, a perfect circle, growing larger, spreading out and hurling down a radiant glare that turned the night into daytime. Stanford shielded his eyes. He squinted up at that pool of light. He saw the other line of lights gliding over from the hill and merging with the fierce light above him and then disappearing.

Stanford closed his eyes a moment They were watering and stinging. He blinked and looked up again and saw the blinding white light There was a black disc in the middle. The larger circle of light was shrinking. It kept shrinking until it swallowed the black disc and then the blackness was total.

Stanford kept looking up. He saw nothing but the blackness. He lowered his gaze and looked back along the road and saw a ribbon of stars. The blackness ended back there. The ribbon of stars was growing wider. The far edge of the blackness was receding and racing toward him. Stanford looked the other way. He saw the very same thing. He saw a ribbon of stars growing wider as the blackness raced toward him. Then he looked up again. He saw nothing but the blackness. He looked around him and saw the emerging stars as the black mass kept shrinking. It shrank as it ascended. The stars raced in on all sides. Stanford looked up and saw the dwindling darkness with the stars all around it It finally became a small black disc. The disc shrank and disappeared Stanford looked up and saw the starry sky, the moon wreathed in the clouds.

The tightness left Stanford's head. He stood up and then walked up the hill until he stood at the top. He looked down the other side, saw a white, empty field. He turned around and stumbled back down to the car, feeling grief and outrage. He turned the ignition key. The car roared into life. Stanford drove back to Washington, the loss of Epstein tearing at him, now determined to get the tapes in the safe before he, too, was taken.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

February 22, 1945. The guns roared in the distance, the skies were filled with smoke, and we had to destroy the Kugelblitz and make good our escape. I remember it well. I had to wrap my heart in ice. The sleek saucer stretched across the broken stones at the base of the mountain. We had removed the new components. We had to leave the rest behind. We couldn't let what remained fall to the enemy, and so we had to destroy it. I stood near the hangar doors. General Kammler was not present. The forested hills of Kahla stretched around us and were veiled in a thin mist. I glanced at General Nebe. His swarthy face revealed nothing. My fellow scientists and technicians were just behind me, their eyes fixed on the saucer. The guns roared in the distance. The saucer glittered in the sunlight. Nebe's demolition men were standing beneath it, grouped around the four legs. One of the men waved his hand. General Nebe nodded quietly. All the men walked away from the saucer and returned to the hangar.

I no longer accepted pain. It was a redundant emotion. Nonetheless, as I gazed at my creation, I had to harden myself. The saucer seemed enormous, its sloping walls a seamless gray, sweeping up to a steel-plated dome and reflecting the sunlight. It looked very beautiful. It also looked quite unreal. What I felt was a fleeting sense of loss, but I rigorously stifled it. I just stood there, saying nothing. General Nebe nodded quietly. A kneeling sergeant leaned forward and pressed a plunger and the saucer exploded.

Fierce flame and whirling smoke. We were crouched behind the sandbags. The explosion reverberated through the hangar and then faded away. We all stood up slowly. The smoke was swirling toward the sky. Where the saucer had been there was a dark hole, filled with debris and smoldering.

I found myself speechless. I turned away and faced Nebe. His dark eyes and humorless face displayed no sign of sympathy. He just shrugged and surveyed the hangar. It was vast and filled with workers. The workers were lined up against the walls, being guarded by soldiers. Nebe's dark eyes were watchful He murmured an order to his sergeant. The sergeant barked further orders to his troops and they all raised their guns. The prisoners moved immediately. They put their hands on their heads. Silent, their eyes dead as the moon, they started leaving the hangar.

The destruction began. We would leave little to the Allies. All that day the ground rocked to explosions and the shrieking of bullets. A dark smoke boiled from the hangar. The long tunnels were filled with flame. The technicians stood outside, bemused, as their laboratories crumbled. Soldiers darted to and fro. Hand grenades curved through the air. The flames daggered through the black smoke and splashed down on the ground.

Other guns roared in the distance. The horizon was smokey. The enemy was advancing every minute and our time became precious. We all rushed to pack the trucks. The large crate was first to leave. In the crate were the numerous new components, without which we were lost. I climbed in beside the crate. I glanced out and saw the prisoners. They were kneeling in their hundreds on the ground, the smoke all around them. I did not look very long. They were destined for Buchenwald. When they turned to smoke and ash in the crematoria, what they knew would die with them. I reached out and touched the crate. General Nebe waved from the murk. The truck growled and then rumbled down the hill as the destruction continued.

The darkness was descending. The Allied guns roared in the distance. The truck started rocking from side to side and the large crate swayed dangerously. I reached out and touched it. I

thought briefly of Rudolph Schriever. The Flugkapitan was still working in Mahren, trying to finish his saucer. As the guns roared, I smiled. Schriever's saucer could never work. I stroked the large wooden crate with my fingers and felt a great peace. The truck shuddered and then stopped. I heard the hissing of steam. I looked out and saw the mass of milling workers, getting close to the train.

We unloaded in darkness. The crate was moved with great care. A battalion of SS troops marched by, their guns and knives gleaming. They were all young fanatics. They were General Nebe's disciples. They had deserted after the attempt on Hitler's life, and were now going with us. The war raged in the distance. The train clanged and spat steam. The slave workers were stripped to the waist, sweating under the cracking whips. I watched the crate being loaded. It bumped against the long carriage. I cursed the man who was operating the crane and he lowered his head. The crate dropped down more slowly. Blackened hands pushed it in. The doors were closed and the slaves were pushed away as I walked toward the platform.

Allied planes growled overhead. I heard the crack of a rifle. A dog snarled and a man began to scream as I reached the dark platform. The train's steam swirled all around me. Troops were entering the train. The earth shuddered and I saw flames in the distance, flaring up in the black night. Men were shouting and jostling. A torch shone in my face. General Nebe materialized from the murk, his dark eyes unrevealing. He pointed up at a nearby carriage. I saw the peaked caps of the officers. I nodded and we both climbed on the train and closed the door hard behind us.

The carriage was packed and noisy. A sweating corporal pulled the blinds down. Once finished, he turned on all the lights and I felt my eyes stinging. The officers were all disheveled. Their ties were loose and their shirts were soaked. The air was blue with cigarette smoke, smelted of ash and fresh sweat. General Nebe murmured something. Two men jumped to their feet. They saluted and then marched away, leaving two empty seats. Nebe indicated one of them. I sat down and he sat beside me. The two

officers sitting opposite froze visibly and then dropped their eyes. Nebe yawned and glanced around him. His rough face was expressionless. Shortly after, with a clanging and groaning, the train started to move.

The night was long and miserable. The train stopped and started often. Allied planes growled continuously overhead, the guns boomed in the distance. The officers smoked and played cards. Their ears cocked when they heard explosions. Nebe slept with his mouth pursed and whistling, his head hanging heavily. General Kammler was not present. He was busy elsewhere. That same night he was moving the scientists from Peenemiinde to the mine shafts of Bleicherode. He had suggested the move to Himmler. It was a cunning thing to do. Its purpose was to distract Himmler's attention while we made our escape. The Reichsfuhrer was in a panic. He had forgotten about the wilderness. He was now more concerned with the V-2 rockets, and with young Schriever's saucer. The guns roared as I smiled. I thought of Shriever back in Mahren. That fool would still be working on his saucer when the Allies surrounded him.

We were bombed a few hours later. I remember my streaming fears. The sudden roaring almost split my eardrums as I plunged to the floor. The bending tracks shrieked. My one thought was for the crate. The whole carriage climbed up and crashed down and then rolled on its side. The noise was catastrophic. Men screamed as seats buckled. I went sliding along the floor and hit a wall and rolled over a flailing form, flying wood and spinning chairs. A smashed head pouring blood. I turned around and saw the windows above me, glass shattered and glinting. Men screamed and bawled curses. I jumped back to my feet. A bloody corporal formed a stirrup with his hands, and Nebe planted his boot in it. The corporal heaved the general up. I saw a mass of dangling legs. More bombs fell and exploded around the train as I found a cleared space. I pulled myself up through the window. The night roared and spewed flame. I crawled away from the window and rolled off and crashed down to the ground.

My one thought was for the crate. I ran toward the long

carriage. Men were falling of the train and crashing down and then rolling away from me. The night spewed flame and smoke. A silhouette was bawling orders. I clawed two or three men from my path and then saw the long carriage. General Nebe was already there. There were three trucks near the train. A dozen men were laboring under my crate, their eyes large, their necks straining. Another bomb fell nearby. Nebe stepped forward and barked an order. The men heaved the crate onto the truck and then quietly collapsed. General Nebe's jackboot glistened. He kicked one of the lolling men. The men jumped up and grabbed at their weapons and climbed into the truck. Nebe waved his right hand. I climbed up beside the driver. Nebe climbed in beside me, barked an order, and the truck started moving. The planes passed overhead. A gray dawn began to break. There teas another truck in front, one behind, and we kept moving forward.

The breaking dawn was filled with smoke. The landscape was devastated. Charred trees and smoldering buildings and corpses, ragged columns of refugees. The refugees were going the other way. Allied planes flew overhead. The trucks growled and bumped along the dusty roads and the smoke cleared away. A drab country: anonymous. The devastation remained. The black buildings were no longer smoldering; the ash had turned cold. We stopped and started often. Darkness fell and brought a stark, chilling silence that gave way to the murmuring sea.

We stopped just outside Kiel. The fields were flat and barren. I saw a hangar, a series of low bunkers, a few bleak, concrete buildings. There we stayed for five weeks. The crate was hidden in a bunker. Every day I went down to inspect it, wanting desperately to leave. Each day was the same. The men played cards and drank. Allied planes rumbled over our heads, but always kept going south. Long days and freezing nights, I toyed with mathematical problems. It was wet and the SS men were drawn to the flickering ovens. General Nebe kept to himself. His dark eyes were unrevealing. He slept soundly, his mouth puckered and whistling, his legs outstretched and heavy. Dawn drifted into dusk. The Allied planes flew overhead. I often studied the

SS men in the bunkers, wondering what they were thinking. They were mostly very young. All were handsome and sweet-faced. All had dipped their hands in blood and tortured flesh, few would suffer from sleepless nights. I wondered how we could take them all. I didn't think we had the space. A cold wind came and chilled us to the bone and Nebe said we were moving out.

We drove down through Kiel. A fine mist veiled the darkness I was sitting in the back of a truck, the wooden crate towering over me. I thought of Kammler in Oberammergau. I wondered if he had escaped. I thought of Wernher von Braun and Dornberger and wondered what would become of them Kammler might be with them still. He might be down there in Kiel. I ran my fingers along the length of the crate and then we came to the docks.

The trucks squealed to a halt. The crate shook and then was still. General Nebe's dark eyes appeared from swirling mist and he motioned me out. I jumped down, feeling weary. The docks were very quiet. The black water reflected the lamps beaming down on the submarines. I glanced vaguely around me. Nebe was murmuring to some troops. The men formed up in a neatly spaced line against the wall of a hangar. Other men were at my crate. They worked slowly and carefully. I glanced down at the submarine just below me: U-977. There were men on the deck grouped around the hold. Chains rattled and I saw my precious crate dangling over the water. There was a moment's hesitation. The crate jerked and started spinning. Hands reached up and guided it down until it dropped out of sight.

General Kammler appeared on deck. He was accompanied by Captain Schaeffer. Both men climbed up the ladder to the dock and walked toward General Nebe. Kammler talked in a low voice. He kept glancing along the docks. His shadow trailed out along the wet stones and smothered my feet. General Nebe turned away. He murmured something to his sergeant. General Kammler took a torch from his pocket and flashed it three times. I glanced along the dock. I saw the lights of another truck. The truck growled and then started coming toward us, its headlamps turned down. General Kammler walked toward me. He

introduced me to Captain Schaeffer. We shook hands as the truck pulled up near us and turned toward the water.

The SS troops were silent. They formed a line along the hangar. The sergeant stepped back and bellowed an order and they all faced the wall. I heard their guns rattling. Their boots rang on the stones. The truck stopped, overlooking the water, and its ramp was thrown down.

A shocking noise split the silence. I stepped back and shook my head. The men lined up along the tall hangar were jerking and dancing. My eyes swung toward the truck. I saw a barrel spitting flame. The machine gun was roaring and rattling as the men screamed and died. When I blinked, there was silence. A gray smoke drifted lazily. The tall wall of the hangar was filled with holes, and splashed with fresh blood. The men all lay on the ground. They were sprawled across one another. Their large pupils reflected the lamps beaming down on their faces.

Captain Schaeffer turned away. I saw Kammler's tight lips. General Nebe took his pistol from its holster and then cocked the hammer. He nodded to his sergeant. They both walked toward the bodies. Most were silent, but a few were still whimpering, their fingers outstretched. General Nebe fired the first shot. The sergeant fired the second. They took turns, bending over the bodies, the gunshots reverberating. It seemed to take a long time. It did not take long at all. When they had finished, General Nebe turned away and gently waved his left hand.

Some men jumped out of the truck. The machine gun barrel clanged. General Nebe returned his pistol to its holster and walked slowly toward us. There was no sweat on his brow. His dark eyes were unrevealing. He nodded and we all turned away and climbed down to the submarines.

We pulled out shortly after. We did not go very far. I stood with Nebe and Kammler on the deck and watched the men on the dock. There were only four men. They worked long and very hard. They put the bodies of their comrades in the truck and drove it into the hangar. The dock seemed very quiet. The lamps beamed down on the wet stones. More Allied planes rumbled overhead as the four men emerged again. They were not in the

truck. They merged gradually with the darkness. They climbed down the steel ladder one by one and dropped into a dinghy. The oars splashed in the water. The distant lamps showed desolation. After what seemed a very long time the men arrived at the submarine. They were all pulled aboard. The dinghy drifted into the darkness. I stared back across the water at the docks and saw the lamps on the hangar.

The explosion was catastrophic. The whole hangar disintegrated. The flames shot up in jagged, yellow lines that turned the night into daytime. The noise was demoniac. A black smoke billowed out. The flames swirled and turned into crimson tendrils that embraced one another. Then the smoke drifted sideways. Behind the smoke was rubble. The flames leaped across the charred, broken beams and filled the road with great shadows. The flames burned a long time. The harsh wind made them dance. They were still burning brightly when we submerged and disappeared in the Baltic Sea.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

EDITED TRANSCRIPT GER/0023/DEC 3 77
TAPED INTERVIEW BETWEEN DR EPSTEIN & PROFESSOR RONALD MANSFIELD OF THE GROUPEMENT D'ETUDES DES PHENOMENES AERIENS
LOCATION: PARIS, AS ABOVE
INTERVIEW DATE: NOV 27 77
EPSTEIN EDITED OUT

Tape 1:
'Yes, Dr Epstein, it is of course true that we in the British Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee were particularly interested in German scientific progress in the Second World War. It must be borne in mind that from the moment Hitler took power, in 1933, a gross militarism prevailed and all outstanding German scientists were forced willy-nilly to work for military laboratories. Now most of that work was concerned with producing various kinds of advanced weaponry, but as early as 1934 there was talk coming out of Germany about even more disturbing projects such as aerial torpedoes, pilotless aircraft, remote-controlled rockets, long-range guns and mysterious death rays - so quite naturally we worried. Our anxiety was increased when, in 1942, various resistance groups informed us of the flying bombs and giant rockets being

constructed at a secret research establishment at Peenemunde, and then we started receiving reports, from very experienced pilots, of mysterious "fireballs" that were harassing them on their bombing runs.

'Confirmation that the Peenemiinde experiments had been successful came on 13 June, 1944, when the first V-1 flying bombs fell on England, and, more forcefully, on 6 September the same year, when the first of the V-2 rockets devastated areas of Chiswick and Epping. Since these fear-some inventions were dropping on London, the populace were quite obviously aware of them; however, what the populace did not know - and what we were not about to tell them - was that many Allied pilots had started returning from bombing runs with wild tales of being pursued by mysterious "fireballs" that made their aircraft's ignition and radar malfunction.

"The first recorded incidence came from lieutenant Edward Schlueter of the 415th US Night Fighter Squadron. Apparently, on the night of 23 November, 1944, lieutenant Schlueter was flying in a heavy night fighter over the Rhine, about twenty miles from Strasbourg, when he and Air Intelligence lieutenant Fred Ringwall glanced out of the darkened cockpit and saw "ten small balls of reddish fire" flying in formation at what they claimed was amazing speed. The lights followed the aircraft for some time, were pursued and disappeared, returned and seemingly caused the aircraft's rader and ignition to malfunction. The "balls of fire" eventually vanished over the Siegfried Line.

'Four days later, on the night of 27 November, pilots Henry Giblin and Walter Geary submitted an official re port stating that their airplane had been harassed over the vicinity of Speyer by "an enormous burning light" that was flying fifteen hundred feet above their plane at about two hundred and fifty miles per hour and seemingly caused their radar to malfunction. This report was followed by a sudden spate of similar reports, most of which agreed that

the objects were large, bright, orange lights, that they appeared to ascend from low altitude, and that when they leveled out and followed the aircraft there were inexplicable radar and ignition malfunctions. Finally, when on 12 January, 1945, several bombing squadrons simultaneously reported seeing the lights, we decided to open a dossier on the subject.

'Naturally, when the war ended, our major priority was to take under our control as much as possible of the documents, drawings and actual components belonging to German scientific and military research. Regarding this, the Red Army moved into the enormous underground rocket factory in Nordhausen in the Harz Mountains, where they immediately took charge of almost-completed flying bombs and rockets, numerous precision tools and parts, and over three thousand research workers from Peenemiinde, including leading scientist Helmut Grottrup and quite a few other rocket experts - all of whom disappeared into the Soviet Union to create God knows what. The Americans, on the other hand, managed to get their hands on over a hundred V-2 rockets, five cases of hidden and highly secret Peenemiinde documents and, of course, the very famous Wernher von Braun, a few hundred of his V-2 specialists, and another hundred-odd scientists who were intimate with the various Peenemiinde projects.

'I give you these figures not just to impress upon you the fact that both the Soviets and the Americans gained from this division much of the material, human and otherwise, vital to advanced weaponry research and the exploration of space, but also to impress upon you the sheer size of the German projects.

'And the British? It was our intention right from the start - as it was doubtless the intention of the Soviets and the Americans - to complete the picture on the state of development of German research on guided missiles, supersonic aircraft and other secret weapons. Apropos of this, we sent teams of specialists belonging to the Ministry

of Aircraft Production all over Western Germany and Aus-tria, their brief being to locate every cave, disused mine, tunnel, ravine or forest where secret German establish-ments might be hidden, and, once having located them, to dismantle and return to England the most valuable or en-igmatic equipment, even including the Germans' quite extraordinary wind tunnels.

'Since the British zone of occupation extended from the Dutch frontier to Prussia, centering on the invaluable port of Hamburg and including a large part of the eastern Al-pine massif in Austria, we really did quite well out of the deal. The movement of this mass of captured documents and equipment was discreetly controlled by the British In-telligence Objectives Sub-Committee, and in general it was transported to Hamburg, shipped from there to England, and from there distributed to various interested parties such as the experimental center then being built at Bed-ford, the Royal Radar Establishment at Great Malvern, the Telecommunications Research Establishment, and to other top-secret establishments in Australia and Canada

Working under British Intelligence, my job was to organize the Anglo-Canadian teams of scientists who would scrutinize every aspect of the captured German technology. Our main concern was with unraveling the mystery of certain German secret weapons which may, or may not, have existed. These would have included the Foo Fighter or "ball of fire" that apparently harassed so many of our pilots: the "circular German fighter without wings or rud-der" which, according to one reliable source, crossed the flight path of a four-engined liberator at very high speed, gave off a number of little bluish clouds of smoke, and thereby caused the liberator to catch fire and eventually explode; and the "strange flying machine, hemispherical or circular in shape" which reportedly flew at incredible speed, attacked a whole convoy of twelve US night fight-ers, and destroyed them without using visible weapons. Naturally, being British, we approached our task with a

certain skepticism - but such skepticism would be shortly dispelled and replaced with amazement.

'Let me briefly summarize what we found. First, whether or not the mysterious aircraft that sprayed those bluish clouds of smoke over the unfortunate Liberator was "a circular German fighter without wings or rudder," it certainly could have caused that aircraft to explode without using its guns. We came to this conclusion when we discovered that documents recovered from the technical departments of factories hidden in the forested areas of the Schwarzwald contained details of experiments conducted with a liquid gas that would, when blown with considerable force over an aircraft, catch fire from the aircraft's exhaust fumes and cause that aircraft to explode. The existence of this gas was confirmed by one Dr Rosen-stein, an organic chemist and Jewish collaborator who, when interrogated by members of the American Aslos Mission in Paris in 1944, stated that the Germans had succeeded in perfecting a new gas whose use would have caused "strong vibrations and even breakage in aircraft engines" by encouraging immediate and repeated self-ignition.

'In this context it is worth noting that in April 1945, on the outskirts of the Hillersleben testing grounds west of Berlin, members of the Intelligence Technical Branch of the 12th Army Group found the rusty remains of a rather odd item called the Windkanone - a cannon that shot gas instead of shells - and another odd item called the Wirbelringkanone, or whirlwind annular vortex cannon, which was designed to shoot, and then ignite, a gas ring that would spin rapidly on its own axis and form a rather fierce "ball of fire."

'Regarding the possibility that the "circular German plane without wings or rudder" might have been some sort of remote-controlled flying device, we discovered that as far back as 1939 Dr Fernseh of Berlin, in collaboration with Professor Herbert Wagner of the Henschel Aircraft

Company, was working on the development of a television component that would enable pilots to control bombs and rocket bombs after they had been launched; that Fernseh was also involved in the development of a microtelevision camera that would be installed in the nose of an antiaircraft rocket and guide it precisely to its target; and that similar projects were quite commonplace in Germany - and, more important, highly successful.

'Naturally such information led us back into an investi-gation of the apparently remote-controlled German "fireballs." What we found was that Messerschmitt had developed two workable radio-controlled interceptor planes - the Krache and the Donner - that these were initially designed to be controlled from the ground by a television receiver installed in an armored console, but that certain negative aspects to the system led to the develop-ment of numerous very advanced electromagnetic, electroacoustical and photoelectric fuses, and to even more advanced warheads which were sensitive to the natural electrostatic fields that surround aircraft in flight. Indeed, some of those devices were incorporated into "automatic" aircraft weapons, with the result that all a German pilot had to do was fly his plane a few hundred yards beneath or above his target and the automatic firing mechanism would operate. Thus, by installing similar devices in a pilotless interceptor rocket, the Germans could engage in aerial combat without using human pilots.

The devices I've just mentioned led inevitably to a more solid version of the original wind-cannon idea. By 1945 a Luftwaffe experimental center in Oberammergau in Bavaria had completed its research into an apparatus capable of short-circuiting the ignition system of an aircraft's engine at a distance of about a hundred feet by producing an intense electrical field. Their intention -aborted by the ending of the war - was to expand the field greatly, but certainly by the middle of 1944 they had incorporated the device into a weapon actually

called the Feuerball, or "Fireball."
The Feuerball was first constructed at the aeronautical factory at Wiener Neustadt. Basically, it was an armored, disc-shaped object, powered by a special turbojet engine, which was radio-controlled at the moment of take-off, but then, attracted by the enemy aircraft's exhaust fumes, automatically followed that aircraft, automatically avoided colliding with it, and automatically short-circuited the aircraft's radar and ignition systems. During the day this device looked exactly like "a shining disc spinning on its axis" - which may account for the first Allied newspaper reports of "silver balls" observed in the skies over Germany - and by night it looked like a "burning globe." The "burning globe" was actually a fiery halo around the solid device, caused by the very rich chemical mixture that over-ionized the atmosphere in the vicinity of the target and thus subjected it to extremely damaging electromagnetic impulses. It is also worth noting - with regard to the fact that the Feuerballs reportedly flew away when attacked -that under the armored plating of the Feuerball was a thin sheet of aluminum which acted as a defensive "switch": a bullet piercing the armored plating would automatically establish contact with the switch, trip a maximum acceleration device, and cause the Feuerball to fly vertically out of range of enemy gunfire. In short: the Feuerball really existed, it was described accurately by our pilots, and it was used with great effect from about November 1944 to the end of the war.
'At this point I feel I should remind you that from as far back as 1942 the German military establishment had encouraged every kind of research and experiment in the field of jet propulsion and advanced remote-control systems. However, after the attempted assassination of Hitler on 20 July, 1944, Hitler, in a bout of fury, turned control of the planning and construction of these astonishing new weapons over to Himmler's dreaded SS. I mention this because the SS were, by that stage of the war, a self-ruling

and highly secretive body with their own research centers and construction plants and factories, many of which even Hitler didn't know about. In other words, from that point on, the fate of many of the secret weapons was even more difficult to trace - and indeed, in many cases is not known even to this day.

'What we do know is that many of the leading scientific establishments were evacuated totally and transferred to vast underground complexes scattered all over Germany most notably in the area of the aborted Alpine redoubt Once transferred, they were virtually sealed off from the outer world, rigidly controlled by the SS, and forced to concentrate their attention on nothing other than advanced military projects. Given that this work went on twenty-four hours a day, that even the scientists worked in shifts, and that thousands of slave-laborers from the concentration camps were at their disposal, there can be little doubt that some extraordinary advances were made in those secret research plants.

'Unfortunately the SS, when retreating from the Allies, destroyed much of this remarkable research. Unfortunate because what we often found were highly advanced but frustratingly incomplete documents, isolated parts of obviously complex components, and a wealth of other odds and ends that could have belonged to just about anything. Even more disturbing was the fact that thousands of slave workers who had been used in such establishments had, with their SS overlords, simply disappeared by the time we got there - and few of them were ever found again.'

'So, my evaluations are incomplete. Nevertheless, regarding the "wingless" aircraft so often reported, we did collect enough material to tantalize us and keep us involved for years. Found across the length and breadth of Nazi Germany were not only the V-1 flying bombs and V-2 rockets, the gas cannons and Feuerballs, and the quite extraordinary variety of automatic flying devices and infrared warheads, but also a considerable number of highly

advanced U-XX1 and U-XX111 submarines, almost completed ME-262 jet fighters, a nearly completed atom-bomb project, the prototypes for various vertical-rising aircraft and even, in the immense underground Riva del Garda research complex, the manufacturing process for a metallic material which could withstand temperatures of about one thousand degrees Centigrade. So, as you can imagine, the Germans were on the verge of some truly extraordinary developments.'

Tape 2:

There are two problems standing in the way of a supersonic, completely circular aircraft: one is the need for gyroscopic stabilization and the other is control of the boundary layer. It is therefore worth noting that scientists of the Kreiselgerate at Berlin Britz had, in 1943, worked on the construction of mechanisms employing gyroscopic phenomenon and succeeded in reducing the oscillations of a violently shaken body to under a tenth of a degree. This was, of course, a most important achievement - and added to control of Prandtl's "boundary layer" it would have led to some extraordinary advances in aeronautics.

'Let me briefly explain this "boundary layer." While being four or five thousand times less viscous than oil, air is, nonetheless, viscous. Because of this, the air sweeping in on the solid body of an aircraft forms imperceptible stratifications of resistance and consequently decreases the speed of the body in flight These layers of air are therefore known as the "boundary layer" - and the boundary layer increases its resistance in direct proportion to the increasing speed of the flying object

'In layman's terms, therefore, the major problem regarding supersonic flight was to somehow or other move this negative air as far to the rear of the aircraft as possible, thus minimizing the expenditure of energy required to propel the aircraft through the sky. Further: it is

possible that a revolutionary type of aircraft could - by not only completely removing the boundary layer, but by some-how rerouting it and utilizing it as an added propulsive force - fly through the skies using little other than the ex-pelled air itself. Should this be accomplished we would have an aircraft capable of remarkable speeds while utiliz-ing the barest minimum of fuel.

'By 1945 - or so our captured German papers indicated - both the LFA at Volkenrode and the research center at Guidonia were working on a revolutionary new type of air-craft that was devoid of all obstructing protuberances, such as wings and rudders, was devoid even of the normal air intakes, and was powered by a highly advanced turbine engine. In short, that new aircraft was a "flying wing" that offered the least possible air resistance, sucked in the "dead air" of the boundary layer, and then used that same air, expelling it at great force, to increase its momentum.

'Whether or not that aircraft was actually developed and flown is not known. What we did know, however, was that the Feuerball really existed, that it took the form of a circular "wing," and that that wing was in a sense wrapped around the suction pump and that the pump was part and parcel of the engine. In other words, the Feuerball was a perfectly symmetrical disc devoid of all surface protuberances - the first small flying saucer.

'Nevertheless, with the Feuerball the boundary layer would still have been present, albeit drastically reduced. In order to get rid of the boundary layer completely - and in order to make use of the "dead air" not only for acceleration, but for maneuvering as well - what was required was a porous metal that would act like a sponge and remove the need for air intakes altogether. This need led scientists into the exploration of what would henceforth be called, in the words of the German engineer Schrenk, "frictionless air flow" and which would result, according to Sir Ben Lockspeiser, in an aircraft that would "slip through the air in the same way as a piece of wet soap slips through

the fingers." I mention this because certain documents discovered by us in both Gottingen and Volkenrode indicated that between 1943 and 1944 the German scientists had been completing their research on just such a metal - a compound of magnesium and aluminum - and had given the resultant material the name of Luftschwamm, which translated means "aero-sponge."

'Let us assume, then, that by early 1945 the Germans had combined all the aforementioned discoveries into one complex experimental flying machine. First, we have a small flying disc known as the Feuerball. This disc not only spins around its vertical axis, but automatically follows its target, makes its target's radar and ignition malfunction by filling the vicinity with a gas which when burning creates a damaging magnetic field, then automatically flies away when attacked.

'Now let us enlarge this flying "fireball." The new, enlarged disc will also spin on its own axis, but with the addition of direct gyroscopic stabilization, a pilot's cabin can now be placed on that axis, with the main body - or engine - of the disc spinning around the cabin. We then add to the enlarged, pilot-carrying disc a form of radio that can cancel at the pilot's discretion the return signals, or blips, from the enemy's radarscope and thus render our flying disc undetectable to that enemy. Next, we have elec-tromagnetically or electroacoustically controlled firing weapons, we have cannons that spit ignition-damaging gas instead of shells, we possibly have various laser or pulsebeam weapons, and we have devices that insure that our flying disc will automatically retreat from enemy attacks. Add to all this the fact that the disc is made of an alloy that can withstand enormous pressure and a temperature of one thousand degrees Centigrade and that, being porous, can take the air in like a sponge and then use it to enhance its own propulsion to almost unbelieveable speeds... Add it up and what have we got? What we might have is the German Kugelblitz, an offspring of the

Feuerball, a piloted machine in which a single mass of wing, tail and fuselage is formed into one gyroscopically stabilized, vertical-rising, possibly supersonic flying disc.

'Did such a machine exist? I think it might have. What do know is that a machine very much like it, and called the Kugelblitz, was apparently test-flown sometime in Febru-ary 1945, in the area of the underground complex at Kahla, in Thuringia, that the test was marked as successful, and that from incomplete notes found in the Kahla complex when the Allies took it over, that machine reached a height of about forty thousand feet at a speed of approximately twelve hundred and fifty miles per hour.

'Regarding the possibility that what we found in Germany was later utilized by the Allies, I can only point out that shortly after the war the British and the Canadians between them began to develop some revolutionary kinds of aircraft that were rumored to be based on designs discovered in Germany after its collapse. Included in these were the Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft Company's AW-52-G all-wing glider and the AW-52 Boomerang - both of which were similar in appearance to the German "flying wing" designs and, incidentally, to the enormous "flying wing" seen over Albuquerque in 1951. Also, during that same period, there was much talk going around British and Canadian aeronautical circles about research into "porous" metals and vertical take-off jet planes - and, of course, there were an enormous amount of UFO sightings. Finally, as you yourself have reminded me, both the Americans and the Canadians made numerous mentions of official flying saucer projects. From all this, Dr Epstein, I think you can draw your own conclusions.'

CHAPTER THIRTY

The noon sun was scorching, the humidity suffocating. The river rippled and flashed, curving away in the distance, shadowed by the conifer trees and the banks of red mud as the sun beat on the forests, on the creaking gunboat, draining Stanford and making his eyes sting as he clung to the railing. He could not grasp where he was, had lost track since his arrival, stunned by the heat, by the stifling humidity, alienated by the noise and dusty streets of Asuncion, now gazing across the Paraguay River and wondering where he was going. Stanford normally liked the heat, had grown up with it, was used to it; but here, on the gunboat, the forests looming across the river, the heat was unearthly, unreal, totally monstrous, a sodden heat that clamped all around him and threatened to strangle him. Stanford took off his hat, wiped the sweat from his forehead, put the hat back on and glanced around him, his clothes soaked, his boots burning.

'Have a beer, Senor Stanford. It will help to cool you down. You must not let the sun dry you out. You need plenty of liquid.'

Juan Chavez was smiling, a sly, gap-toothed grimace, his dark eyes as unrevealing as the forests that slipped past the gunboat Stanford nodded and took the beer, the bottle cold in his sweaty palm, drank and wiped some beer from his lips, stared uncomfortably at Chavez.

'How much longer?' he asked.

'Not long, senor.' Chavez grinned and then spat over the railing, his open shirt fluttering.
'How long?' Stanford asked.
'Not long,' Chavez said. 'Five, maybe ten or fifteen min-utes. It is just around the bend in the river. It will not take much longer.'
Stanford gazed along the river, saw it curving around the forests, flowing lazily, rippling out around rocks, slashed by sunlight and shadow. The sight of it chilled him, made him feel more unreal, filled with foreboding and with vague, nameless fears that lanced through him for no apparent reason and drained him of courage. He despised himself for it, tried to fight it, failed constantly, tumbled back into fear and confu-sion like a child having bad dreams. In a sense that's what it was - his recent memories were all nightmares: the strange boys outside the ranch, the suicide of Scaduto, Epstein will-ingly clambering up the darkened hill and not seen since that evening. Stanford felt crushed by it all, dogged by incomprehension, dreaming frequently of the lights that pulsated and merged, and then awakening to an alien world in which nothing was constant... And now here he was in Paraguay, the sun blinding him, the heat draining him. He had been on the shuddering gunboat for four or five hours, passing banks of red mud and sleazy waterfront cafes and great forests that soared on either side and seemed totally impenetrable. Stanford shivered and gazed ahead, saw the muddy, rippling water, raised the bottle to his lips and drank more beer, seeking some kind of solace.
'Good,' Chavez said. 'You must drink. You must never dry out.' He was eating from a cone of paper, dipping into it with his fingers, and he grinned and held the cone out to Stanford, his brown eyes faintly mischievous. 'Here, senor,' he said. 'You must eat. You should have some camarones.'
Stanford fought back his revulsion. 'No thanks,' he said. 'I can just about stomach the beer. I don't think I can eat.'
'You are feeling ill, senor?'
'Not really,' Stanford said.

'Ah, yes,' Chavez said. This stinking boat. And the heat... You're not used to it.'
Stanford didn't reply. He gazed around the crowded gun-boat The Ache Indians were still crouching at the aft end of the deck, small, emaciated, their narrow eyes dulled by fear, dressed in rags and huddling close to one another as if for protection. Two Federates were guarding them, wearing jackboots, carrying rifles, both gaunt-faced and bored, chewing gum, their eyes hooded beneath peaked caps. Stanford stud-led them at length, feeling helpless and ashamed, remembering how they had been herded onto the boat from the village some miles back. He knew what was happening to them. They were being sold into slavery. They would end up in the Bolivian tin mines, in the ranches of Boqueron, in the brothels of Argentina and Brazil, in the cotton fields of Guatemala. Stanford shivered when he thought of it. The eyes of the women and children haunted him. He turned away and gazed along the muddy river, drinking beer, the heat draining him.
This is your first time in Paraguay, Senor Stanford?'
Yes,' Stanford said.
You must get used to these things,' Chavez said. You must not be upset by them.'
'I won't get used to them,' Stanford said. 'I won't be staying flat long. Once I talk to the German I'm leaving. I won't get used to anything.'
'You disapprove,' Chavez said.
'That's right: I disapprove.'
'Disapproval is a luxury,' Chavez said. 'An American luxury.' He grinned and glanced around him, his jaws chewing on camarones, drank some beer and then looked back at Stanford, his brown eyes slightly mischievous. You know the German?' he said.
'No,' Stanford asked.
'It is very strange, senor,' Chavez said, 'that you should know he is here.'
'Why strange?' Stanford asked.

The German doesn't have many friends. He has been here in the forest for thirty years, and is a man of great mystery.'
That's not unusual,' Stanford said. There are a lot of Ger-mans here. They own and operate the estancias and are all well protected.'
Chavez sipped his beer and grinned. 'You do us wrong, senor,' he said. These rumors about us harboring Nazis have no basis in fact.'
'Really?'
'Really.'
'That's bullshit,' Stanford said. 'Your whole economy is based on slavery and drugs - and on harboring Nazis.'
'Lower your voice, senor.' Chavez's eyes flicked left and right 'It is not wise to speak of such things in so open a manner.'
'I'm an American,' Stanford said.
'That won't help you, senor. The Federates are devoted to General Stroessner and will not make allowances.'
Stanford glanced across his shoulder, saw the lounging Federates, most of them lingering around the rusty gunmounts, chewing gum, smoking cigarettes. Stanford didn't like the look of them. They looked simple and brutal. There were Kalashnikov rifles slung across their sweating shoulders, and their jackboots, which were covered in mud, made him think of the Nazis.
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'What's your connection with the German? Note: I don't call him a Nazi. I'm a very good tourist.'
Chavez grinned and shrugged. The Ache,' he said. 'I round up the Ache and deliver them to the German, and he gives me a percentage of what he makes on the ones that he sells.'
'And what happens to the ones he doesn't sell?'
Chavez shrugged laconically. 'At our worst, we are patriotic. The Ache are vermin, filthy and diseased; they cannot look after themselves and they cause us much trouble. So, if they cannot be sold, we look after them in other ways...'

'You exterminate them,' Stanford said.
'A harsh word, senor. Let's say we put them out of their misery and leave it at that.'
Stanford finished his beer, crushed the can, threw it over-board, watched it glinting as it bobbed along the river and was swept out of sight. He glanced again at the Indians. They were huddled pathetically on the deck. He tried to reconcile this world with the world he had come from: with the pilots and astronauts and the control towers of NASA, with the jet planes and the space probes and the orbiting satellites, with the UFOs that haunted man's thoughts and mapped out his future. He couldn't reconcile the two. This river carried him through history. The gunboat and the forest, the Federates and the Indians, all existed in a primitive, frozen past far removed from the modern world. And what was the modern world? It was what he had come from. It was a world of technology, of relentless, searching science, racing blindly into a future not yet even imagined, a future in which men would be numbers and facts would rule feelings. Yet was that such a bad thing? Stanford felt sure that it was. He looked at the squatting Indians, saw them bought and sold as meat, and then wondered if the future conjured up by the man called Wilson was in any sense a better world than this, less cruel, more just No, it was not The human lot would not improve. The cruelty and injustice and inequality would remain, changed only in their areas of distribution and in who would most suffer. The advance of science ignored that fact The two worlds were very similar. The future being built by Wilson, and represented by his technology, was as savage and emotionally primitive as the world this boat drifted through.
Stanford shivered and looked ahead. The river curved out of sight He saw a jetty thrusting out from the riverbank, the water rippling around it.
'There it is,' Chavez said. Tour journey is ended, senor. You will soon feel the ground beneath your feet, and can talk with your German friend.'

'He's not a friend,' Stanford said.
'My apologies, senor. A man like you would not have such friends. Your appearance confirms that fact.'
Stanford ignored the sarcasm, his eyes fixed on the wooden jetty, watching intently as the boat approached and the waterside village slid into view, thrusting out from the tangled shrubs and liana at the edge of the forest There were people on the jetty, men in filthy fatigues, looking suspiciously like contrabandistas, pistols stuck through their belts. The boat growled and shuddered violently, turning in toward the village, crept forward and then bounced against the tires along the edge of the jetty. Stanford glanced over his shout der. One of the Ache women was wailing. A Federate slapped her brutally across the face and screamed a stream of abuse. The woman's wailing became a whimper. Stanford flushed and turned away. One of the crew had thrown a rope to a man on the jetty and this man was tying the rope around an upright, bending low, shouting loudly. The boat's engine cut out A crew member removed the gate. A plank was thrown across the space between the deck and the jetty, then tied to some flaking uprights to form a crude gangplank. Stanford moved toward the plank, wanting desperately to get off, but Chavez tugged at the sleeve of his shirt and motioned him back.
'No,' he said. 'First the Ache.'
Stanford stopped and stared at him, saw the sly, gap-toothed grin, stepped back as Chavez went to the Federates and shouted out his instructions. The Federates were quick to move, venting their boredom on the miserable Indians, screaming abuse and kicking them to their feet and herding them toward the gangplank. The Indians were not so quick, weak from hunger, confused, and the Federates encouraged them along with vicious blows from their rifles. The women wailed and held their children, cowering away from the swinging rifles, while their menfolk, uncommonly small and frail, tried in vain to protect them. Stanford had to throttle his rage, turning away and surveying the gangplank, saw the first

of the Indians stumbling across it with their hands on their heads. Chavez was leading them down, his shirt unbuttoned and flapping loosely, his broad hat tilted over his eyes, a bright white in the fierce sun. Stanford burned and looked away, let his gaze roam over the village, a drab collection of leaning huts made from palmetto trunks and vines, hogs and goats sniffing lethargically at the dust, babies lying on corn shucks. The poverty was total, the old and young emaciated, sunlight falling on scattered gourds and woven baskets and banana leaves, on the giant rat that raced across the clearing and disappeared in the forest. Stanford looked along the jetty. The Ache Indians had just left it. They were now at the edge of the clearing, the Federates surrounding them. Chavez waved both his hands. He was signaling to Stanford. Stanford choked back his rage and walked over the gangplank, looked down once at the muddy, oil-slicked water, then stepped onto the jetty.

One of the nearby men approached him, a big man, broad and muscular, a pistol stuck through his belt, a knife flapping against one hip, his shirt open and exposing a leathery chest, his trousers tattered and greasy. 'The Americano?' he asked.

'Yes,' Stanford said.

'You speak Spanish?'

'No,' Stanford said.

'Okay. Come with me.'

'You're from the German?' Stanford asked.

'You have no luggage, senor.'

'I don't intend staying,' Stanford said. 'All I need is in here.'

Stanford indicated his shoulder bag. The big man just stared at him. He had narrow eyes and very fat lips and his head had been shaved.

'Okay,' he said. 'I see. Come with me.'

'You're from the German?'

'Yes.

'Where is he?'

'Over there.' The man pointed impatiently toward the village. 'Let's go. He expects you.'

They walked along the creaking jetty, past the staring contrabandistas, the air smelling of urine and sewage and die-sel fuel, the sun glinting off the oil in the water, off pistols and knives. Stanford took note of the weapons, could scarcely credit the sheer amount of them, had the feeling that he was in a war zone, death ready to pounce on him. This thought heightened his tension, swelled his sense of unreality, and he blinked and wiped the sweat from his face, tried to keep his head clear. The big man was just ahead, the knife bouncing against his hip, stepping down into the dust of the clearing, chickens scattering around him. Stanford followed him down, feeling drained and exhausted, breathing dust, the heat burning his skin, the light dazzling his eyes.

There were two trucks in the clearing, their paint flaking, the rust showing, and the Ache Indians were now grouped just in front of them, being prodded and poked. The Indians were being examined. The Federates were watching them. A tall man in gray slacks and white shirt was walking up and down, studying them. This man was very thin, almost cadaverous, brown eyes in a sunburned, brown face, brown hair graying and thinning. He did not touch the Indians, merely looked on with distaste, standing back while Chavez extolled their virtues, showed their teeth, stripped their clothes off.

'Quatsch!' the tall man sneered. This is rubbish you bring me. Old men and sick women and children, not worth ten guaranis.'

Chavez spluttered his protestations, his hands waving theatrically, then he stripped the blouse off a woman's shoulders and held her breasts high. The woman's narrow eyes widened, filled with fear and terrible shame, as Chavez jiggled her breasts in his hands as if bouncing two balls.

'Look, senor,' he said. They are ripe and filled with milk. Still a good breeder, senor. And so soft, senor. Soft!'

'Dreck!' the tall man sneered. They are unwashed and diseased. They are not fit to work in the fields. You should bury them now.'

Stanford glanced at the Indians, saw the terror and shame,

shook a little and stared at the tall man and wanted to murder him. Chavez glanced over his shoulder, saw Stanford, grinned slyly, pointed in Stanford's direction and then glanced at the tall man. Stanford stepped forward. The tall man walked toward him. They stopped about a foot from one another, the dust drifting between them.

'You are Stanford,' the tall man said. 'Yes,' Stanford said.

'You have the money?' 'I have half the money. The rest is in Asuncion.'

'You don't trust me,' the German said.

'I can't afford to,' Stanford said.

'Good,' the German said. 'That is intelligent. I cannot deal with fools.' He grinned bleakly and turned away, looked at Chavez, waved at the trucks. 'All right,' he said. 'I have no choice but to take them. Put the schweine into the trucks and get them out of my sight.'

Stanford stood there, enraged. He knew he had to control the rage. There was nothing he could do for the Indians, not now and not ever. Still, it made him burn. He heard the shouting and saw the blows. The Federates punched the Indians, thumped them brutally with their rifles, forced them up into the backs of the trucks, the women and children all wailing. The tall German hardly saw this. He was negotiating with Chavez. Their hands were waving and they hissed at one another and then came to agreement. They actually shook hands. Stanford stood there, disbelieving. The trucks roared and kicked up the red dust and drove out of the clearing. Stanford glanced around the village. The huts were primitive and filthy. Hogs and goats wandered freely, babies sucked at sagging breasts, Indians squatted around fires of glowing ash, staring at him with dulled eyes. Chavez waved at the tall German. He turned around and walked toward Stanford. He stopped to offer his sly, gap-toothed grin, his brown eyes slightly mischievous.

'Keep your eyes and ears open,' he whispered. 'Adios, companero!'

He sauntered back toward the boat, his shirt flapping about him, and the German walked over to Stanford, his gaunt face dark and sweaty.
'So,' he said. 'You came.'
'Yes,' Stanford said. 'I came.'
'And how do you like Paraguay?'
'I'm not very impressed.'
The German laughed at the remark, a high-pitched, bark-ing sound, then the laughter turned into a ragged coughing that made his whole body shake. The German cursed and turned aside, covered his mouth with a handkerchief, kept it there until the coughing had subsided, then wiped blood from his lips.
'Scheisse,' he hissed dramatically. This filthy forest is killing me. I must return to Europe as soon as possible for some civilized care.'
'Germany?'
'Where else? I need a civilized doctor. The Paraguayans have the surgical skills of butchers. I would not let them touch me.'
'I thought you liked it here,' Stanford said. 'You've been here for thirty years.'
'Not by choice,' the German said. 'As you well know. I do not require sarcasm.'
He gazed steadily at Stanford, his dark eyes hard and searching, then he sniffed and turned his gaze on the large man who had brought Stanford to him. The large man moved forward slightly, his knife and pistol flashing, and stopped when he was right beside Stanford, his thick arms hanging loose.
This is Atilio,' the German said. 'He is from Argentina. He is now what we call a cuchillero, and is very reliable.'
'What's a cuchillero?' Stanford asked.
'A knifer,' the German said. He turned his head and glanced around him, his eyes moving in jerking movements, his lips curling back in distaste at the sight of the village. 'Diese Halunken,' he hissed. 'Unbelievable. Come... let us go.'

He led them across the clearing, scattering children and chickens, Atilio just behind him, Stanford just behind Atilio, their feet kicking up the red dust, the fires smoldering about
them. The fires were not for heat. The Indians were roasting sweet potatoes. The German glanced down and spat on a fire as he passed the drab huts. He stopped at the edge of the forest. The trees shadowed the waiting jeep. The German climbed in the back, Stanford climbed in beside him, then Atilio sat behind the steering wheel and turned on the ignition.
'Where are we going?' Stanford asked.
'To my compound,' the German said. 'You want information and shall have it - but I must have my comforts. It is not too far away. Ten kilometers from here. I feel safer when I'm deep in the forest where the planes cannot see me.'
The jeep roared into life, kicking up earth and stones, lurched forward and headed into the forest where the trees kept the sun out. Stanford thought it would be cooler, was shocked to find that it wasn't the humidity was much worse, overpowering him, almost making him choke. He glanced around him, feeling ill, seeing a riot of vegetation, tangled vines and soaring trees in a chattering green gloom, isolated shafts of sunlight beaming down on the steaming banana leaves. The narrow track was very rough, hacked by hand and pitted with holes, winding left and right between the trees and disappearing ahead of them. The tall German said nothing. Stanford glanced at him briefly. The German looked like a skeleton, his cheekbones too prominent, his dark eyes buried deep in his head, his lips thin and disdainful. The jeep roared and kept going, bouncing up and down roughly, rushing through the shafts of sunlight that bored down through the trees and illuminated the steaming vegetation. Stanford felt suffocated. He was sweating and felt feverish. He glanced again at the German, saw his dark, remote eyes, shivered and licked his parched lips and wished the journey would end.
'So,' the German said. 'You want to know about the saucers. You have come a long way for your information. You must want it quite badly.'

'I brought the money,' Stanford said. 'I want it that much.'
'Why?' the German asked. 'Why this interest in the saucers? Everyone wants to know about the saucers, but it does them no good.'
'You've had others?' Stanford said.
'Of course,' the German said. 'Did you think you were the first to locate me? Such vanity, mein Herr!'
The German laughed at his own joke, the same high-pitched, barking sound, and again the laughter turned into a coughing that made him spit blood. He cursed and wiped his lips, shook his head and muttered something, his thin body being jolted by the jeep as it bounced through the forest.
'How many others?' Stanford asked.
'Just a few,' the German said. Three or four over the past ten years or so - all wanting the same thing.'
'Who were they?' Stanford asked.
'Men like you,' the German said. 'Men with a great need to know, two Americans, a Russian...' The German coughed and cursed softly. 'It will do you no good,' he said. Those who know what I know will not admit that it is true, those who don't know will refuse to believe it... It will do you no good.'
Stanford didn't reply. He thought the German might be right He looked around the forest, at the steaming vegetation, saw the pillars of light in the gloom and felt as if he were dreaming. Then the jeep burst into sunlight. He saw a clearing in the forest. lines of barbed wire formed a fence around a large wooden building, its sloping roof covered in vines and banana leaves and supported by tree trunks. The jeep skidded to a halt Clouds of dust swirled up around them. Stanford coughed and covered his eyes with his hands and let the dust settle down again.
'Sehr gut,' the German said. 'We are home. I live humbly, mein freund.'
Stanford followed the German down, the dust settling around his feet, the heat monstrous, pouring down on the clearing as if through a huge glass. He rubbed his eyes and

glanced around him, saw the curved line of the trees, the large, L-shaped hut right before him, surrounded by barbed wire. The compound was busy, filled with Indians and cuchilleros, the latter keeping an eye on the former, their guns and knives flashing.
'The barbed wire is electrified,' the German said. 'Make sure you don't touch it. Over here. Come this way.'
They walked across the dusty earth, past the Indians and cuchilleros, reached the house and climbed up some wooden steps and stopped under an awning. There was a table and some chairs. An Ache woman stood by the table. She was wearing a white blouse and long skirt, a towel over her right arm. She bowed low to the German. He simply grunted and sat down. He waved his right hand at Stanford who sat down at the table, saw two glasses and a bottle of brandy, a clay cup full of wriggling worms. The worms were white and fat The German reached over and grabbed one. He bit off its head and held it up and said, 'Koro worms! Try one.' Stanford shuddered and shook his head. The German chortled and swallowed the worm. He put his feet up on a stool and the Ache woman knelt down and laboriously pulled off both his boots, wiped his feet with the towel. When this was done, she shuffled backward. She didn't get off her knees. The German barked and the woman stood up and filled the glasses with brandy. Stanford watched her, saying nothing. The German clapped his hands loudly. The woman bowed and disappeared inside the hut, her bare feet making sucking sounds.
'So,' the German said. 'We are home. We are relaxed. We can talk.' He picked up his glass, sipped some brandy, set it down, stared at Stanford with a humorless smile that made his flesh creep. Stanford picked his own glass up, drained it dry, set it down, then be pulled the leather bag from his shoulder and placed it between them. 'Your money,' he said.
'And the rest?'
'When you've told me. One of your men can take me back

to Asuncion and I'll give him the other half.'
'You might not do that,' the German said.
'Then your man will kill me,' Stanford said.
'Good,' the German said. 'You understand that. That makes me feel better.'
He finished his brandy, refilled both the glasses, then leaned back in his chair and looked at Stanford with that humorless smile.
'There's something else,' Stanford said, wiping the smile from the German's face. 'I didn't just come for information. I also want proof.'
The German sat up straighter, leaning forward on his knees, stared at Stanford with steely, suppressed anger licked his upper lip slowly.
'Proof?' he asked quietly.
'You heard me,' Stanford said. 'I know for a fact that you can prove it - and that's what I want first'
The German stared at him a long time, hardly moving, expressionless, then his lips slowly curled into a smile as he sat back again.
'We have a jungle up north,' he said.
'I know that,' Stanford said.
'That jungle is hell,' the German said. 'You can take it or leave it.'
Stanford pushed his chair back, took his glass and stood up, then went to the leaf-covered railing and looked over the compound. The sun was sinking behind the forest, the sky violet and serene, the conifers and cypress turning dark as the twilight descended. A faint breeze stirred the dust up, blew it lazily across the barbed wire, let it drift around the Indians and cuchilleros, their shadows stretched out and merging. Stanford stared at the forest It seemed dense and vaguely threatening. Stanford shivered and turned away, let his rage defeat his fear, then he grinned and held his glass up to the German who was sitting in shadow.
'Here's to Hell,' Stanford said.
* * *

They moved out the next morning, in the dawn's bloody haze, heading into the forest, following a narrow, dwindling path, shafts of crimson light boring through the gloom between the dense, soaring trees. The Ache beaters were out ahead, their knives hacking and slicing, clearing a path for the short line of men stretched out behind them. Stanford marched beside the German, the huge Atilio protecting them both, a few disheveled cuchilleros behind them, their guns and knives rattling. The forest was cold, the dew glistening and dripping, the leaves underfoot damp and treacherous, branches whipping and spitting. The forest rustled and chattered. Stanford heard the noise and loathed it. The morning sun was fighting through the soaring trees and bleeding into the chilling gloom.

'Sehr gut,' the German said. 'A good morning. It will soon be less cold.'

Stanford marched with some care, a small pack on his back, feeling cold and almost ill from lack of sleep, still not fully awake. He had slept in the German's hut. The German's snoring had haunted him. He had tossed and turned uncomfortably on the hammock, the forest sounds in his ears. The forest never slept. The long night had taught him that much. He had heard jagged cries, staccato cackling, distant growling, the leaves rustling with a life of their own, the ground shifting and sliding. It was not much different now. Stanford glanced around him nervously and saw the tangled vegetation in the gloom.

'How long will it take?' he asked. 'All day,' the German said. 'It is a very long walk, my American friend, and will possibly kill you.'

'I'll make it,' Stanford said.

'I'll make sure of it,' the German said. 'You are worth the second half of the money, and that makes you worth helping.'

Stanford tugged at the pack straps, felt the tingling of his skin, sweating even in the chill of the morning, dreading the heat to come. He saw Atilio just ahead, his gross hips rolling rhythmically, a pistol and a couple of knives stuck behind his

broad belt. The forest seemed to be endless. It grew deeper and darker. The path dwindled to nothing and disappeared and the forest closed in on them. Stanford fingered his pack straps. His shoulders had started aching. He looked ahead and saw the knives of the Ache beaters hacking down the banana leaves. Stanford felt tired already, heard the bellow-ing of his lungs. He looked briefly at the German, saw his gaunt, weathered profile, and wondered how that frail, gangling body could endure such a punishment.

'You are with us?' the German asked.

'I'm still here,' Stanford said.

'Sehr gut,' the German said. 'You must survive. It is part of your penance.'

'What penance?' Stanford said.

'Why ask me?' the German said. 'But a man does not come to this place just because of the saucers.'

'The saucers are a mystery.'

'And you came here for a mystery?'

'I came because I lost a couple of friends and I want to know why.'

The German nodded and smiled. 'Ah,' he said. 'I see. And these friends were involved in the saucers. Ja? Am I right?'

Stanford didn't reply. He didn't want to think about it. The forest chattered and slithered all around him, and he felt his flesh creep. He couldn't find an answer. There were too many questions. He tried to think, but the sweat dripped in his eyes and reduced him to pettiness. All right, think: he would think. He thought of Epstein in the mountains. He closed his eyes and saw the blackness rushing at him and exposing the stars above. His old friend had gone away. The months since then had not been pleasant. During the day, at night, when awake or deep in sleep, he had known the dreams of those who were haunted and lived with their helplessness. Stanford knew he was being followed. He wasn't sure and yet was certain. He had sat back and studied it objectively, then collapsed into lunacy. He now understood paranoia. He knew what the frightened felt. He had turned into an old man overnight and

might never recover. Stanford fingered his chafing pack straps. He glanced nervously around him. The forest rustled and slithered with mysteries that did not offer comfort.
'Your friends disappeared,' the German said.
'Yes,' Stanford said.
'That is not so unusual,' the German said. 'It happens here all the time.'
'You mean the Ache,' Stanford said.
'Just so,' the German said. The Ache disappear in their hundreds, melting into the trees.'
'You do it,' Stanford said. 'You make them disappear. You sell them or use them as slaves and then you bury them deep.'
'You disapprove,' the German said.
'Damn right, I disapprove.'
'You're a guilt-ridden American,' the German said. 'And your conscience is pricked.'
'Fuck you,' Stanford said.
'Sehr gut,' the German said. 'Nevertheless, there are many disappearing that we cannot account for.'
'Wunderbar,' Stanford said.
'I am serious,' the German said. The Ache disappear too fast We cannot account for their numbers and the saucers are blamed for it.'
They came out of the forest A broad savannah stretched before them. Stanford blinked and felt an awful blast of heat that almost sucked his lungs dry. He rubbed his eyes and looked ahead, saw a sea of waving grass, a few barren trees here and there, the sky white, the sun dazzling. Stanford felt himself melting. He drained down into the earth. He stared across the sea of grass, saw it shimmer and undulate, and longed for the comforts of a city and its luring parameters. He fingered his chafing pack straps, licked his parched, drying lips. The heat was monstrous and it closed in around him and he gulped like a drowning man.
'Beyond that is Boqueron.' The German spoke with calm indifference. 'It sits between Argentina and Bolivia and Brazil, and within it is the jungle I mentioned - a place to avoid.'

That's where we're going,' Stanford said.
'You will remember it,' the German said. 'What you want is buried deep in the jungle, and you must pay the price.'
The German seemed pleased. He smiled at Stanford and moved forward. Stanford gulped and felt the heat burning through him and then stumbled ahead. The air was hot and clammy. He put on his sunglasses. The Ache Indians were already in the savannah, their knives flashing in sunlight. Stanford walked beside the German. The huge Atilio was just ahead. The cuchilleros were moving out around them, beating down the tall grass. The sun blazed down on the grass, on the scorched, scattered trees, turned the sky into a sheet of white steel that radiated tremendous heat. He tried to think, but his thoughts slipped and slid as if out of control... Epstein clambering up the hill. The black sky peeling back. The dark globe shrinking high in the sky, flaring up, disappearing ... He was doing it for Epstein. He would not let Epstein go. He would not be defeated by Wilson and his fellow conspirators... Stanford wiped sweat from his brow. He was waist-deep in the grass. The field of grass shimmered and stretched out to a silvery haze.
'The Ache,' Stanford said. 'What do you mean, they disappear? You said you can't account for their numbers. What did you mean by that?'
'They disappear,' the German said. 'We are not the ones taking them. We go to their villages, we find the huts empty, we search the surrounding forests and find nothing - they have just disappeared.'
'Other traders?' Stanford asked.
'No,' the German said. 'We all know each other quite well - and all suffer the same way. They are not removed by traders. Such a theft would be impossible. Paraguay is a very small country and is strictly controlled. The Ache disappear in their hundreds. They disappear overnight. The only way out is along the rivers, but they've never been seen there.'
'Airplanes?' Stanford asked.

'They can't land in the forests. Nein, it cannot be airplanes, so we think it's the saucers.'
Stanford heard the rustling grass, felt it brushing around him, had visions of the life beneath his feet, of the snakes and giant rats. He shivered and kept going, trying not to look down, the muscles tightening in his stomach, the sweat pouring down his face, the dark glasses inadequate protection against the sun's fierce white glare. The grass snapped and broke around him. The Aches' long blades were flashing. The cuchilleros formed a loose protective circle, their knives and guns rattling. Stanford felt that he was choking, his breath burning in his lungs. The pack jumped up and down on his back and made his whole body ache.
'Lots of saucers,' the German said. 'We see the saucers all the time. They come down on the Chagres, on the Gran Chaco and the Mato Grosso, and afterward all the Ache have disappeared and are not seen again.'
'They actually land?' Stanford asked.
'Ja, they land,' the German said. They descend into the forests. They descend where there is nothing but swamps, and yet they always take off again. They must hover abcve the swamps. We cannot explore such areas. But they appear to descend above the swamps and take the Ache away.'
The sweat poured down Stanford's face, soaked his armpits and body; his feet were burning in the canvas jungle boots, his throat dry, his head tight. He tried to think of the reports, shook his head, tried again ... dark skin, narrow eyes, very small, Oriental... the most common characteris-tics as described by the numerous contactees. Such descriptions fit the Ache. They were small and Mongolian. Stanford marched through the tall grass, half blind and exhausted, the muscles in his stomach growing tighter with excitement and tension.
'You feel good?' the German asked.
'I feel rotten,' Stanford said.
'You're an American,' the German said. That makes you weak. You should thank me for this.'

'Thanks,' Stanford said.
'Don't thank me,' the German said. 'Just stay on your feet until we get there. It is still a long way.'
The savannah seemed endless, a rustling, yellow sea, the tall grass bending under his feet, springing back up around him. Stanford blessed the Ache beaters. He saw their blades flash in the sun. They worked hard and the sweat soaked through their shirts and streamed down their dark faces. Here and there were lonely trees. The blazing sky was a white sheet The air was hot and very humid, suffocating, a giant glove slipping over him. Stanford wiped sweat from his eyes. His shirt was sticking to his body. The light shimmered and distorted the waving grass and played tricks with his eyes. He blinked and licked his lips. Pains were shooting up his legs. The heat swam all around him, scorched his skin, sucked his lungs dry; the brightness of the sky was overwhelming, a vast, silvery furnace.
One of the Ache Indians screamed, waved his hands and fell down, disappearing into the rustling, waist-high grass while the others all scattered. Atilio cursed and raced ahead, tearing his pistol from his holster, a knife jumping up and down on his left hip, the grass parting around him. Stanford stopped and licked his lips. He heard the screaming of the Indian. Another Indian raised his blade above his head and swept it down through the shifting grass. The hidden Indian kept screaming. Stanford shrank from the sound. The German muttered and rushed toward Atilio, the cuchilleros surrounding him. Atilio bawled and waved his pistol. Stanford caught up with the German. They both stopped beside Atilio and looked down at the Indian on the ground. He had been bitten by a snake. He was wriggling about and shrieking. Another Indian stood beside him, his long blade dripping blood, the snake's amputated head at his feet, the headless body nearby.
'Scheisse,' the German hissed. 'We have no time for this. Fix the Indian.'
It was over very quickly. Stanford hardly knew what was

happening. He saw the Indian on the ground, pouring sweat and shivering badly, holding on to the leg that had been bit-ten and screaming dementedly. Then Atilio knelt down, grabbed the Indian by the hair, jerked his head up and poked it wih the pistol and then squeezed the trigger. The sudden bang made Stanford twitch. He saw the Indian's head jerking. Blood and bone splashed on the ground beneath the head, and then the head itself fell. Stanford blinked and looked again. Atilio stood up and blocked his view. Atilio shouted at the watching cuchilleros, who then turned on the Indians. They were all shouting at once. The cuchilleros pushed the Indians forward. The Indians moved out and swung their long blades and started hacking the grass down. The cuchilleros formed a circle. Atilio marched on ahead. Stanford looked down at the ground, saw the snake's bloody head, saw the brains of the Indian spilling out, his eyes open, his arms out-stretched. Stanford blinked and licked his lips. He hurried after the marching German. The cuchilleros surrounded them both as the grass swayed about them.

'You killed him!' Stanford said.

'Ja, that is correct,'

'He could have been saved,' Stanford said.

'We haven't the time, mein freund.'

Stanford looked at the German. 'What does that mean?' he asked.

'Be quiet,' the German said. 'We can't carry him. It is too hot for that.'

'You bastards,' Stanford said.

'Sehr gut,' the German said. 'At least you still have enough energy to display your resentment'

'It was a swinish thing to do.'

'You are here of your own free will. That makes you a collaborator, mein freund, so don't offer me pieties.'

Stanford couldn't deny it, felt ashamed, kept his mouth shut, bent forward and pushed against the tall grass, wonder-ing when it would end. The sun crossed the burning sky. The heat increased and dissolved him. He bled down through him-

self, through the earth, and lost touch with reality. The long blades flashed up ahead. The cuchilleros surrounded him. Atilio walked on in front, his hips rolling, his gun and knives flapping. Time slowed and then stood still. Stanford tried to stop thinking. His thoughts scattered and spun. The white sun started sinking in the sky, became gold and then violet. Stanford saw the yellow sea. He blinked his eyes and looked again. He saw a dark line between the sea and sky and won-dered what it might be. A sea: a yellow sea. Not a sea: a scorched savannah. Stanford blinked and saw the dark line as a snake that crossed the line of his vision. He heard the snake and felt it He tried not to look down. He thought of the capibara, the giant rats, and a cold chill slid through him. Stanford shuddered and kept walking. He saw the German beside him. The German's gaunt frame was hazed in silvery light, the yellow sea of the tall grass. The sun shifted in the sky. It sank lower, turning purple. The dark line divided the grass from the sky and took shape as a forest. Stanford almost sobbed for joy. He felt as if he were on fire. He was burning and his body seemed hollow and drained of all feeling.

'There it is,' the German said.

'Thank God,' Stanford said.

'You will not thank God once you are there. That's the Devil's playground.'

Stanford tried not to listen. He didn't want to believe it. He did not believe it possible that he could feel worse than he did, did not believe that any place could be worse than the blistering savannah. Those trees formed a forest. Not a jungle: a forest. In there, in the shade of the trees, it would have to be cooler. Stanford felt a great joy. He followed Atilio toward the trees. The Ache beaters were out ahead, their blades flashing, the grass snapping and falling down. Stanford wiped sweat from his brow. The white sky was streaked with violet. Stanford grinned and walked faster, felt the pack on his back, ignored it ignored the sweat and pain, and stumbled into the forest

His spirit plunged and died. He couldn't believe the heat

was real. His lungs burned and he felt that he would drown in his own pouring sweat. He hadn't known he could sweat so much. He wondered where it all came from. He rubbed his eyes and glanced around the green gloom, saw it steaming and glistening. Stanford felt a deep dread. Here everything was outsized: the tangled vegetation, the huge plants and swaying leaves, the crawling insects and chattering birds and monkeys, the great rats in the undergrowth. Stanford felt his flesh crawling. He felt trapped and suffocated. The forest chattered and shrieked, hissed and growled, the steam curling in faint light.

The long knives flashed in the gloom, slashing branches and leaves, the Indians ripping the shrubbery aside, their brown bodies sweat-slicked. Stanford choked back his sobs. He felt petty and childlike. His despair was a void at his center and it threatened to swallow him. Something crawled across his foot. He looked down and saw a spider. It was huge and very black, its body covered in gleaming hairs, and he kicked out with his foot, almost screamed, saw it flying away from him. He shuddered and wiped his brow. He saw the German smirking at him. He felt rage and the rage drove him forward and brought back some strength. A bat flew above his head. Its beating wings merged with the leaves. Stanford shuddered when the leaves brushed his face with the feel of warm slime. He cursed softly and moved faster. Tangled vines trapped his feet He knelt down and tore the vines from his boots and saw a lot of large ants. They were devouring a dead rabbit. Not a rabbit: a huge rat. Stanford shivered and then something stung his hand and he slapped the ant off. He stood up and walked on. The forest steamed and dripped around him. It was chattering and shrieking, alive with crawling things, the undergrowth rustling and shaking, furry forms racing back and forth.

'You are all right?' the German asked.

'Yes, I'm all right.' 'You do not look too good,' the German said. 'You seem a little bit shaken.'

'I'm all right,' Stanford said.
'You have tenacity,' the German said.
'Just get me there, you fucker,' Stanford said. 'I won't crack until you do.'
The forest opened around a swamp. A crimson light poured through the trees. He saw the bones of various animals in the clearing, the swamp steaming and stinking. The Indians led them around it The cuchilleros cursed and groaned. Atilio slapped one of the men across the face and then kicked him ahead. Someone screamed and started sinking. His dark eyes were round and frightened. The slime oozed and bubbled up around his knees as he waved his hands wildly. Atilio cursed and bawled some orders. A few Indians rushed toward him. They formed a chain and reached out for the sinking man and pulled him out of the mud. The man rolled onto his back. Atilio walked across and kicked him. The man yelped and then leaped to his feet and was quick to move on. Atilio followed, bellowing orders. The forest closed in again. The heat clamped around Stanford, suffocated him, drenched him, and he choked back his nausea, stumbled on, his eyes scanning the green gloom.
The forest opened out again. He saw a village in crimson light. He saw a river of blood on his left as they passed through the village. The natives stared at them silently. They had dark, haunted eyes. Children played in the dust, swallowed worms, their flesh almost transparent. The cuchilleros ignored them. They drove the Indians on ahead. The forest closed in again, a green gloom filled with steam, the heat monstrous, the humidity suffocating, the depths shrieking and chattering.
Stanford felt that he was dead. He hardly knew why he was here. His body burned and was covered in slime and he felt his flesh peeling. He was nothing. He was now. He was in and of the forest: the snake and the spider and the rat and the teeming, unseen life. The huge leaves dipped and dripped. The vegetation hissed and steamed. He was boiling blood and aching bones and filth, but he soared above all of it. The trees

held him and protected him. The green gloom was his sustenance. He swallowed bile and drank in the scalding air and rubbed his eyes and saw shooting stars. Then the gloom. Shafts of sunlight. The distant cries of the Indians. The trees parted and let him walk through and he saw streams of crimson light.

They were in another clearing. A towering cliff blocked their way. The sinking sun was a huge bloody globe that filled the air with a crimson light. The cliff face was steep and jagged. The rock looked like flowing lava. The cuchilleros and the Indians, Atilio and the German, all were frozen in that swimming crimson haze, staring up at the bleeding rock.

Stanford followed their gaze. He shook his head and stared hard. He saw tree trunks and planks, knotted vines and banana leaves, all piled up to block off the entrance to a cave in the cliff face.

'This is it?' he asked.

'This is it,' the German said. 'It's a shrine. The natives worship at this shrine. And the shrine is your proof.'

He stepped forward and barked some orders. The Indians swarmed across the cliff face. The cuchilleros moved back and raised their rifles and did not look too happy. Stanford watched them, feeling dazed. His throat was dry and he felt ill. The Indians worked at the vegetation, pulled the leaves and vines away, removed the planks and then tackled the leaning tree trunks, knocking them over. The debris crashed to the earth. A shower of dust billowed up. The dust sparkled in the swimming crimson light and turned the Indians to specters.

Stanford stared through the dust. He saw the dark mouth of the cave. He stepped forward and saw a dull, metallic gleaming behind the red haze. The last of the tree trunks were pushed away. They crashed down and raised more dust. The Indians looked at the cave with frightened eyes and then hurried away. Stanford stepped forward again. His senses suddenly rushed back. His heart was pounding and he saw the metal gleaming in the spiraling dust.

The crimson light filled the cave. Stanford almost stopped breathing. He saw a jigsaw of coiling black lines and metallic gray pieces. He stepped forward and looked again. He saw a solid sphere of metal. It was thirty-five feet long, it rose up to a dusty dome, and the black lines were a coiled mass of snakes, all asleep on the saucer.

'Oh, my God,' Stanford whispered.

He stood there for some time. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. There were at least a hundred snakes on the sau-cer, their bodies coiled, intertwined. Stanford felt his flesh creep. He saw the gleaming gray metal. The smooth perim-eter swept up to the dome and looked incredibly beautiful. The natives thought it was a shrine. Stanford understood the feeling. His fear collapsed and made way for a deep and overwhelming exhilaration. The saucer was magnificent. Its polished surface seemed seamless. It stretched across the mouth of the cave and was bathed in the crimson light.

'What happened?' Stanford asked.

'It crashed years ago,' the German said. The natives thought it was a gift from the gods, and they dragged it in there.'

'Was there anyone in it?'

'I think so. I presume so. But there's no way to open it up-and now the snakes keep us out of there.'

Stanford felt his heart pounding. He saw the lovely, sublime machine. He saw the snakes coiled around the dusty dome, still and silent, a tapestry, Stanford started to shake. He couldn't bear it any longer. He stepped forward and walked toward the saucer, determined to touch it

A single shot rang out The bullet ricocheted off the saucer. Stanford gasped and jumped back and whirled around and saw the men looking at him. They were frozen in crimson light They looked hazy and unreal. The tall German had a pistol in his hand and was waving it gently.

'Don't do that,' he said. 'Don't try to touch it If you do, you'll be dead.'

Stanford looked at the gleaming saucer. His flesh crawled

at what he saw. The snakes were all awake, slithering through one another, wrapping themselves around the dome, dangling over the edges, hissing and spitting and sliding along the smooth, seamless surface. Stanford shook even more. The exhaustion suddenly swept over him. He stood there in the jungle, the dust drifting about him, staring through the swimming crimson haze at the snakes on the saucer. 'Your proof,' the German said. 'Now I talk.'

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Let me begin at the beginning. In 1933, when Hitler took power, the greater part of German science was totally subordinated to the creation of new military weapons. Thus, by 1935, research on rockets and other forms of aerial warfare had advanced by spectacular leaps. Now the common assumption is that most of that work was being done by Walter Dornberger, Karl Becker, Klaus Riedel, Helmut Grottrup and Wernher von Braun, but such was not in fact the case. Most of the fame attached to those gentlemen resides in the fact that they all worked on the V-1 and V-2 rockets, that the majority of them went to America after the war, and that once in America they became even more well known for their NASA work on space exploration. Sehr gut. However, the real pioneer of Germany's World War II achievements was the American, Wilson.

In 1935 most of the German rocket research was being undertaken at the experimental stations in Reinickendorf and Kummersdorft West, not far from Berlin. It was to Kummersdorft West, where I was then scientific administrator, that Himmler personally came to introduce Wilson. And what really astonished me, apart from the fact that he was an American, was the extent of the powers that Himmler intended giving him.

'By the middle of 1935 it had been decided that the Reinickendorf and Kummersdorft research centers were no

longer big enough to house the rocket projects. That same year, Wernher von Braun had suggested using an island in the Baltic, named Usedom; this island was situated close to Szczecin at the mouth of the Oder River, and it was densely wooded, sparsely inhabited and relatively isolated. It was therefore decided to move the two research centers to the northern promontory of Usedom, near to the small village of Peenemiinde... And this mysterious man, Wilson, this stranger from America, was to take over Kummersdorft West when the rocket teams left.

'It was an unusual situation, but not as impossible as it might seem. While Germany was now a nation under constant surveillance, that surveillance was carried out by the Gestapo and the SS, and those organizations were strictly controlled by Himmler. Himmler's SS were unique, a law unto themselves; they answered neither to Hitler nor to the German High Command, but only to their beloved Reichsfuhrer. their demigod, Heinrich Himmler. In fact, Himmler controlled Germany. He did it quietly and surreptitiously. He quietly took over schools, universities and factories, and soon he had his own research centers scattered all over Germany. Thus Himmler controlled Germany - he controlled the flow of information - and his projects were shrouded in a secrecy that would never be broken.

'Wilson's project was such a secret It was known only to a few. His research centers were filled with meticulously chosen technicians and constantly patrolled by the SS. He was a genius, almost certainly. I don't doubt it at all. He was cold and brilliant and relentless, and nearly inhuman. His one passion was science, his knowledge was beyond belief, and he rarely discussed anything but his work and the need to complete it. That's why he was in Germany. Only Germany could meet his needs. He had limitless facilities and slave labor and Himmler's personal support That's what he wanted. He didn't care about anything else. He needed money and muscle, and he didn't give a damn where they came from.

'So. Given carte blanche by Himmler, Wilson quickly

strengthened his project: pulling in other departments, utilizing other research centers, and stealing more technicians wherever he found them, working through the SS. Now while this had many obvious advantages, it also meant that Wilson was forced to take on some engineers whom be didn't really care for all that much. Included in these were the German scientists Habemohl and Miethe, the aging Italian, Dr Bellonzo, and the ambitious Luftwaffe engineer, Rudolph Schriever. Most of those men were actually there to watch Wilson, and their presence around his project really annoyed him. He therefore kept them busy by letting them work on various designs, which they could then forward at regular intervals to Himmler. Few of the designs were worth the paper they were drawn on, but they kept Himmler happy, soothed the vanity of his four scientists, and enabled Wilson to get on with the real work without too much interference. 'Determined that his project should be the most advanced then in existence, Wilson traveled all over Germany, visiting the other research centers, and utilizing any innovation that could enhance the possibilities of his own project.

'At this point you must understand that while it is true that the German scientists as a whole were then working on some extraordinary innovations, it is equally true that their separate projects were rarely coordinated. So great were the rewards in Nazi Germany, and so terrible the penalties, that even formerly cooperative scientists were reduced to seeking favor by competing ferociously with one another. In this sense, the Peenemunde situation was typical: while we had the cream of our rocket engineers working on the V-1 and V-2 at Peenemunde, the V-l was a Luftwaffe project, the V-2 was an Army project, and both sides competed with one another instead of putting their heads together. Similarly, while various establishments scattered all over Germany and Austria were working separately on gas turbines and jet propulsion, heat resistant and porous metals, and gyroscopic mechanisms and boundary layer-defeating airfoils, it was not until the arrival of the relentless Wilson that someone had the

sense to link these innovations together in one astonishing, revolutionary aircraft Wilson did that - he combined the cream of German innovations - and in five years he had com-pleted the prototype of his first flying saucer.

'Now, Himmler was very excited by the possibilities of the flying saucer, but he never mentioned the saucer to Adolf Hitler. Indeed, the only thing der Fuhrer knew about Kummersdorft West was that it was one of many aeronautical research centers and that it was probably engaged in producing conventional aircraft. Regarding technological matters Hitler knew very little, since he expected Himmler to keen him informed. That was a mistake: Himmler kept a lot to him-self. So Hitler knew about Peenemunde, about the V-1 and V-2, but otherwise he only heard about "secret" weapons that were still being processed.

'Himmler had good reason for his secrecy. Back in 1938, Hitler, anxious for a foothold in the Antarctic, had sent an expedition commanded by Captain Alfred Richter to the coast due south of South Africa. Daily for three weeks two seaplanes were catapulted from the deck of the German aircraft carrier Schwabenland, with orders to fly back and forth across the territory which Norwegian explorers had named Queen Maud Land. The Germans made a far more thorough study of the area than the Norwegians had done - believed to be the most extensive aerial study undertaken up to that time -finding vast regions which were surprisingly free of ice. Their planes covered two hundred and thirty thousand square miles in all, photographing almost half of this area. They also dropped several thousand metal poles, each marked with the swastika and pointed at the tip so that the poles would dig into the ice and remain upright. This job done, they renamed the whole area Neuschwabenland and then claimed it as part of the Third Reich.

'From that moment on, men and equipment were shipped regularly to Neuschwabenland for the purpose of building a secret underground military base. Most of these men were either specially trained SS troops or slave workers from the

concentration camps. Now, while Hitler was aware of the fact that Himmler was shipping his men to the Antarctic, he tought of it as a purely military endeavor. As far as der Fuhrer was concerned, the secret base in the Antarctic - be-ing constructed underground - was merely an SS training base designed to acclimatize scientists and soldiers to those rigorous conditions in preparation for explorations after the war. However, what Himmler was in reality doing was pursuing a dream that did not include Hitler, would supersede the Third Reich, and would place Himmler up there with the immortals as the Lord of Atlantis.

'Let me clarify that. Himmler's obsessions were numerous, bizarre and totally mad: sorcery, mesmerism, clairvoyance, reincarnation, faith healing, Lemuria, Atlantis, the mystic strength of the Volk. Himmler also believed absolutely in Hoerbiger's fanciful doctrine of Eternal Ice - that a world of ice was the natural heritage of Nordic men - and he therefore also believed that a return to such a world would lead to men who were like gods.

It was because of this dream that Himmler, when he was given the task of organizing the SS, did not envisage it as a normal police force but as a real religious order devoted to the creation of the perfect man. Indeed, right from the start it was his intention to eventually isolate the "elite" of the SS from the world of ordinary men for the rest of their lives. It was also his intention to create special colonies of the "elite" all over the world, answerable only to the administration and authority of Himmler's New Order.

'For this, the first step was the creation of special schools in the mountains of Bavaria where the SS elite were indoctrinated in Himmler's ideals and firmly convinced that they were the unique new men "far finer and more valuable than the world has yet seen." The second step was the creation of the Ahnenerbe - the Institute for Research into Heredity - whose function was to finance and publish Germanic researches and to supervise the hideous "anthropological" medical experi-ments in hellholes like Auschwitz and Dachau. The third step

was to eliminate the Jews from the face of the earth, and to transport all subhumans - the Poles, Czechs and Slavs - to the numerous concentration camps and keep them there, generation after generation, as slaves to the Reich. And the fourth and most important step was the Lebensborn - Spring of Life - which would, through the controlled mating of elite SS men and pure Aryan women, breed out the "imperfect" German types within one hundred years.

'A world of ice and fire: the Antarctic and the SS. This dream obsessed Himmler night and day and then became a reality. He had his colony: the Antarctic. He had his masters: the SS. He would send his slaves to the Antarctic, use therri for labor and as guinea pigs, and in time, with scientific application, the Superman would be born.

'You do not believe, Herr Stanford? You do not think it possible? Then think of the Ahnenerbe and the Lebensborn, of the medical experiments and controlled breeding, of Belsen and Buchenwald and the SS torture chambers, of the millions who were processed like battery hens and emerged as warm ash. The concentration camps were no accidents. They indulged in imitative rites. They were the prototypes for the social order of the future: that world of masters and slaves... And think again, Herr Stanford, of the Lebensborn. Apart from arranging matings between the SS elite and fine blonde ladies and adopting "racially suitable" children for childless parents, the Lebensborn also kidnapped thousands of "suitable" children from the occupied territories and had them raised in special SS institutions... And a lot of those children - indeed, thousands of those children - simply disappeared from the face of the earth.

'So, it was Himmler. Hitler never knew about it Himmler wanted his secret colony, he wanted his world of ice and fire, and he wanted the extraordinary flying saucer for his future protection. Thus it was that by 1943 more concentration camp prisoners and children kidnapped by the Lebensborn were being shipped to the Antarctic, and that a lot of valuable equip-ment, including components for the flying saucer, were

disappearing via the South Atlantic route in SS controlled submarines.

'Alas, Himmler's dream then collapsed. By 1943 it was clear to us all that the war would eventually be lost. This awareness put Himmler in a panic, made him yearn more desperately for some extraordinary new weapons, and finally encouraged him to look fondly at the V-l and V-2 rocket projects. Then, after the August 17 bombing of the Peenemunde research centers, Himmler persuaded Hitler to hand the whole project over to the safekeeping of the SS. A month later, on 3 September, 1943, SS General Hans Kammler was put in charge of the transfer of most of the peenemunde development works - not including Wernher von Braun - to caves in the mountains near the Traunsee in Austria, and mass production of the rockets to the underground factory in Nordhausen in the Harz Mountains. This effectively gave Himmler a new pet project and distracted him from Wilson.

'By early 1944, Wilson, now working at the BMW Platz near Prague, had replaced his original flying saucer's turboprop propulsion system with a new, highly advanced jet propulsion system, thus completing the first truly operative machine. It was Wilson's intention to test fly the machine as soon as possible, but increasingly darker thoughts about Himmler put him off this idea.

'Bear this in mind about Wilson: As a child in America he had, like our von Braun, been obsessed with the potential of space flight. A genius himself, he had secretly worked with the genius Goddard, and had observed how that gentleman was mistreated by the country he helped. Because of that -and because of his experience in Iowa - Wilson was obsessed with the need to avoid a similar fate and find absolute freedom regarding his work. That freedom was in the Antarctic. It was in a master and slave society. And Wilson wanted that
society to succeed more than anything else.

'By 1943, however, it was Wilson's belief that Himmler was basically insane, that he would eventually fall apart, and that

he would then represent a threat to Wilson's plans for escap-ing. Knowing that this view was shared by a few other high-ranking officers, Wilson waited until the time was ripe -when the forthcoming defeat was very evident - and then ap-proached them with a separate escape plan. One of those officers was myself, another was SS General Hans Kammler, and a third was SS General Artur Nebe, a very secretive man. It being that both Kammler and myself had been directly re-sponsible for the utilization of the slave labor, and that Nebe had been in the Gestapo and had also headed an extermination squad in Russia, we were all well aware of our fate should the Allies get hold of us. Needless to say, we fell in with Wilson's plan.

The crux of the plan was to make Himmler forget our project and turn his attention elsewhere. Consequently, Wilson started to lie about his project and submit incomplete drawings to Himmler and one of his favored engineers, namely Flugkapitan Schriever. While never going far enough to make Himmler suspicious, Wilson nevertheless understated the actual progress being made and told Himmler of bad setbacks, involving labor and equipment, that never for one minute existed. This worried Himmler - he desperately wanted an extraordinary weapon - and as anticipated, he turned away from Wilson and started looking elsewhere.

This brings me back to Wilson's unwanted associates, particularly Flugkapitan Rudolph Schriever. Now remember that it was mostly the unworkable drawings of Schriever that had been passed on to Himmler, and not the more advanced Wilson drawings. Therefore, in accordance with Wilson's plan, Hans Kammler, shortly after the Allied invasion of Europe, intimated to Himmler that the Schriever drawings were more advanced, that Wilson was maliciously holding Schriever back, and that Schriever should be given his own research center and allowed to continue his work without interference. Kammler further suggested that because of the terrible bombing raids over Berlin and its surrounding areas - and because of the Allied invasion - the research center at

Kummersdorft West should be evacuated to a more inaccessible, secret area. He suggested that Wilson's project be moved to Kahla in the mountains of Thuringia, and that Schriever's new project be located in a desolate area of Mahren. Himmler agreed to this.

'On 22 June, 1944, shortly after having fitted his saucer with jet propulsion, Wilson's project was moved from Kummersdorft West to Thuringia. A week later, with Schriever in charge, the remaining staff of Kummersdorft West was moved to a secret location in Mahren. Thus, while Schriever's progress would be watched closely by Himmler, Wilson could complete the genuine flying saucer under the protection of Hans Kammler and myself.

'What we now needed was a tightly controlled escape route that would take us from Kahla to Kiel in the Baltic. The best man for such a job was obviously Artur Nebe, an SS general with a keen sense of survival and sound training in all kinds of intrigue. Unfortunately, while Nebe had once been one of the most favored of the SS, he was now under suspicion from those closest to Hitler and knew that he was being watched all the time. Nebe had to disappear - he would have to work in anonymity - and his chance came on 20 July, 1944, after the attempted assassination of Hitler.

That assassination attempt led to the most terrible reprisals, and a great many of our officers, in fear of their lives, fled and then disappeared for good. One such officer was General Nebe. He had a lot of fanatical followers. Nebe fled straight to Kahla, took a lot of his men with him, and those men organized the escape route from Kahla to Kiel. Thus it was that by early 1945 important men and materials were being quietly moved from the research complex in Thuringia to sympathetic submarines and ships in Kiel Harbor on the Baltic Sea - the moves officially authorized by favored SS General Hans Kammler and tightly controlled by the anonymous General Nebe and his other "missing" SS men.

'Kammler was in the perfect position to arrange all this. Now trusted implicitly by Himmler - and therefore revered

by his SS troops - Kammler could move men and equipment anywhere without being questioned. More so because by this time he had been placed in full charge of the V-2 program and that program had become Hitler's final hope. Naturally, since the job gave Kammler the freedom to travel at will around the German-occupied territories, he worked like a demon on the launching of the V-2s and made sure that all his movements were noticed. In this way, Wilson could assemble the complete prototype of his flying saucer in the underground factory at Kahla - undisturbed by the increasingly disillusioned Himmler, ignored by the V-2 obsessed Hitler, and otherwise protected by General Nebe and his runaway SS subordinates.

'Kammler had another useful job at this time. While the infamous Alpine Retreat had never really existed, Hitler was still dreaming of forming a last redoubt in the mountains of Germany. Since his chosen area was to include the metaphorical arc that ran from the Harz Mountains to Thuringia, south of Prague and across to Mahren, Kammler was put in charge of all the important research centers hidden deep in those areas. This again made it easy for him to protect Wilson's project in Kahla and insure the continuing shipment of men and supplies to the ships and submarines in Kiel Harbour.

'By early February 1945, Wilson had completed a truly advanced flying saucer and a test flight was arranged for the fourteenth of that month. Unfortunately, when the saucer was wheeled out of its hangar during the early hours of that morning, bad weather, including rain and snow, caused the test to be canceled. Two days later, however, a resoundingly successful test flight was made.

The machine tested near Kahla on the morning of 16 February, 1945, was known as the Kugelblitz. Basically, it was a triple-layered, disc-shaped machine with a diameter of fourteen thousand and four hundred millimeters and a height from base to canopy of three thousand and two hundred millimeters. The central body was made from heat-resistant nickel-based alloys and titanium; and the top and bottom discs

of this circular body rotated at varying speeds around the two-pilot control cabin which was molded to the solid body that housed the engine. While the spinning discs were devoid of all surface protuberances such as wings and stabilizers, their porous metal composition would suck the air through the machine and utilize it as an added propulsive force.

'As with the previous turboprop version, this saucer's four legs also functioned as downward thrusting, swiveling tail pipes used for lift-off - but now activated by low and high pressure compressors generating an enormous thrust and including a new vaporizing fuel injector system that rendered the jet thrusters smoke-free. The jet burners lifted the Kugelblitz vertically, at modest speed, to a height of just over one hundred feet; once there, the downward thrusting tailpiece would swivel up through the bottom disc and be locked into position in the molded central body. Four similar boosters, situated at equal distances around the immovable central body, would then be used for horizontal propulsion and direction control, while the upper and lower discs, with their porous composition, would revolve at high speed to utilize the boundary layer and achieve unprecedented high speeds. 'The Kugelblitz was in fact a giant-sized Feuerball - the most recent spin-off from Wilson's endeavors - and as such was remarkably sophisticated. During the test flight it reached an altitude in excess of forty thousand feet at a speed of approximately twelve hundred and fifty miles per hour. Not yet capable of the extraordinary maneuvers of the modern UFO, it nevertheless incorporated a special inertial shield for the protection of the pilots; an automatic control system that utilized the profile of the terrain below; high frequency, omnidirectional automatic navigation; and a few primitive, but fairly effective pulse beam weapons.

'Naturally, with the flying saucer project completed, our most urgent task was to transfer the project to the Antarctic, obliterate all signs of our work, and ensure that nothing was left for the advancing Allies. Bear in mind that we had, as each separate section of the machine had been successfully

tested, been shipping those parts to the Antarctic, component by component, throughout every year of the war. Now, the only components that had to be shipped out were those belonging to the redesigned jet engines. Within a week of the test flight those components were removed from the Kugelblitz, the machine itself was blown up, and then Wilson, accompanied by Nebe and other SS personnel, made his way by truck and train to the port of Kiel. Two days after that, on 25 February, 1945, the remaining slave workers of the underground Kahla complex were driven back to Buchenwald where they were gassed and then incinerated in the crematoria. The Kahla complex was then a deserted shell.

'Himmler never knew about the evacuation of Kahla since he was too obsessed with the rapid Soviet advance. To distract him further, General Kammler suggested that the scientists still at Peenemiinde be made to join the others in Nordhausen, pointing out that a new research center was being built in the Bleicherode mine and that accommodations had been prepared for the technicians and their families in the surrounding villages. Himmler promptly agreed to this move, and not long after, Wernher von Braun and his associates were moved by train, truck, private car and barge to their new quarters deep in the Harz Mountains.

'By this time, precisely as Wilson had anticipated, Himmler was falling to pieces. No longer trusted by Hitler, and having just made a fool of himself by allowing the Russian army to reach the outskirts of Berlin, he was then spending much of his time in Dr Gebhardt's sanatorium at Hohenlychen, seventy-five miles north of Berlin, and idiotically planning his private surrender to the Allies.

'At the end of February, while Wilson and General Nebe were hiding just outside Kiel and Kammler was transferring the Peenemiinde technicians to Nordhausen, I paid the Reichsfuhrer a visit Babbling dementedly, he told me that his peace negotiations were not progressing, that he was going to try to approach Eisenhower, and that he intended using Schriever's flying disc as a bribe to the Allies.

'Following Kammler's instructions, I informed the Reichs-fuhrer that the Wilson project had made no progress, that Wilson had been shot while trying to escape toward the Allied lines, and that the research complex at Kahla had been evacuated and then blown up to prevent the equipment from falling into Allied hands. I also told him that since the enemy would soon be reaching Hohenlychen, there was little chance of escaping to the Antarctic and that his peace negotiations were therefore our only hope. Himmler, terrified by this news, asked me to inform Kammler that the last redoubt was to be held at any cost. Meanwhile he, Himmler, would arrange for the Schriever disc to be tested as soon as humanly possible.

'Knowing that the Schriever disc could not possibly fly, I returned to wait for Kammler at Nordhausen. At the end of March, Kammler returned from the Hague where he had, ostentatiously, been firing the last of the V-2 rockets on London. Unfortunately, just before we could join Wilson and Nebe in Kiel, Kammler received orders from Himmler stating that the Americans were approaching Nordhausen and that the whole complex therefore had to be evacuated. Determined to ensure that no suspicion fell upon him, Kammler went ahead with this order.

'However, Kammler did not go with the evacuees. Seeing a more surreptitious way of making his escape, Kammler, on 2 April, took about five hundred V-2 experts to the Bavarian Alps in the region of Oberammergau, traveling with them in his private SS train. Once there, the technicians were housed in army barracks and guarded by some SS fanatics. Included in these scientists were Wernher von Braun and General Dornberger - and shortly after they were imprisoned, General Kammler quietly disappeared for good... 'Did I go with him? Obviously not On 2 April, when Kammler was on the train to Oberammergau, I returned to Berlin to check out the general situation. However, once in Berlin I found myself buried in plots, counterplots and other intrigues. As for Himmler, he just wouldn't let me go. Now

totally hysterical, hiding out in his sanatorium, he was study-ing his horoscope, still trying to negotiate a separate peace, and babbling constantly about Schriever's flying disc and how it could save us all.

'In the end, it was Schriever's worthless saucer that got me trapped in Britain. Now believing that the Wilson project had been terminated and that Wilson had been shot, Himmler insisted that I supervise the test flight of Schriever's suppos-edly completed prototype. Reluctantly I did this - I arranged the test flight for mid-April - but the test was called off in the face of the Allied advance, the prototype was destroyed by the retreating SS, and Schriever's few worthwhile drawings were stolen from him and burned in my presence. After that, Himmler collapsed, he eventually killed himself, and I fled the holocaust of Berlin and finally ended up here.

'And the others? On 25 April, 1945 - five days after Hitler's birthday, two days after the first meeting between Soviet and US troops on the banks of the Elbe, three days before the Allies crossed the Eastern Bank, and five days before Hitler killed himself in his bunker in Berlin - General Kammler joined Wilson and General Nebe aboard submarine U-977 -bound for the Antarctic.'

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

April 26, 1945. We had left Kiel illegally, not daring to ask for fuel, so we pulled into Christiansund South to fill up the tanks. The war news was bad. The Soviets were in Berlin. The Americans and Russians had finally met at Torgau on the Elbe. The end was in sight. The submarine submerged the next day and kept hugging the coastline. I often went to the hold to check the crate, but I knew this was pointless. General Nebe kept to himself. His dark eyes revealed nothing. General Kammler was obsessed with the radio and passed on the news. None of this news was good. The Reich was obviously crumbling. When the death of Adolf Hitler was announced, we all knew it was over. Captain Schaeffer called a meeting. Nebe and Kammler sat together. General Kammler was tense and energetic, Nebe was totally expressionless. The war was over, Schaeffer said. That presented certain problems. There would be no submarine tankers in the South Atlantic, which meant no food nor fuel. We would have to change our plans. We would never make it to the Antarctic. With luck, we might reach Argentina, but we couldn't go further.

I confess: I was shocked. My one thought was for the wilderness. I glanced at Nebe but his dark eyes were expressionless, so I then looked at Kammler. The general's eyes were bright. He mentioned Colonel Juan Peron. He reminded us that Peron was a man who could not resist geld. Kammler smiled when he said this. He was an organized man. He then added that he had al-

ready discussed the matter with the necessary people. General Nebe did not smile. Captain Schaeffer looked relieved. We agreed to head straight for Argentina at no matter the cost.

Not quite straight: a digression. Some of the crew were rebellious. The war was over and they wished to return to Germany and Schaeffer agreed to this. We hugged the Norwegian coastline. We only surfaced at night. A few days later we reached the mountain coast of Bergen and let the men off.

I climbed up to the deck. I had to breathe the cooling air. I saw patches of stars between the clouds, the dark water, the jag-ged cliffs. The men shivered on the deck. General Nebe surveyed them coldly. The men shuffled their feet on the deck and shook hands with their comrades. I looked across the dark water. The coastline was featureless. The sea lapped against the submarine as the men clambered overboard. I felt a great yearning. It was a yearning for dry land. After this, we would spend months in the submarine, mostly submerged.

10 May, 1945. The real journey began. My strongest memories are of constant heat and stench and the engine's bass rumblings. It was too long for sanity. We were living on top of one another. First a day, then a week, then two weeks, the submarine like a tomb. The North Sea and the English Channel. The blackened breast of Gibraltar. When we surfaced, our freedom was brief and the planes made us fearful. In truth, we hardly surfaced. The hatch was opened to let air in. We would see the glittering circle of sky, and then the hatch would be closed again. Then along the coast of Africa. A brief glimpse of sun and sand. Then sixty-six days under water, a nightmare of sweat and noise.

By June the crew was restless. There were arguments and fistfights. Once a man took his knife from his dinner plate and slashed the face of a friend. Captain Schaeffer gave them beer. He was a careful, thoughtful man. There was peace for at least another week, and then more fights broke out. General Nebe's dark eyes were watchful. His hand often stroked his pistol. He started walking up and down the submarine, murmuring words here and there. His words stilled some restless souls. Nebe's dark

eyes chilled their rage. They would stare at his eyes, at his pistol, and remember his history. After that, it was easier. It was miser-able, but less dangerous. We turned away from one another, faced the walls, and let our own thoughts sustain us.

We surfaced six weeks later. We were in the middle of the South Atlantic. A fierce sun burned a hole in the sky, and the green sea was placid. This reprieve was a blessing. The next month was more bearable. We alternated between floating on the surface and diving back to the depths. Then the Cape Verde Islands. We went ashore on Branca Island. The men frolicked on the burning white sand and washed themselves in the daz-zling sea. That day was all too brief. The droning of aircraft made us leave. The submarine dived back to the depths and our journey continued.

Nevertheless, life was easier. We started surfacing almost daily. Once we stayed on the surface for a week by disguising the submarine. False sails and false funnel. From the air, we were a cargo steamer. The planes droned overhead but ignored us, not suspecting a thing. The men waved at the planes. They fought their boredom with such humor. They would watch the planes flying away, and then lie down and sun themselves.

Nebe usually remained below. He liked the claustrophobic depths. Kammler paced the deck and searched the horizon like a man with no time to spare. Eventually we saw land. It was the coast of Rio de Janeiro. Kammler smiled and climbed down through the hatch to listen in on the radio. The news was not good. Kammler relayed what had happened. Another fleeing submarine, Captain Wehrmut's U-530, had recently put into the River Plate with unfortunate consequences. The whole crew had been taken prisoner. They had been handed over to the Americans. Kammler told us this, studied us, enjoyed our de-spair, then grinned and mentioned a place called Mar del Plata and went back to the radio.

17 August, 1945. We pulled in at Mar del Plata. Four months after we had stepped aboard at Kiel, we stepped off in the Argentine. We had no need to worry. An arrangement had been made. From here, we were to be transported to a secret

airfield in Bahia Blanca, and from there flown directly to the Antarctic.

The thought filled me with pleasure. I looked up at the crowded dock. The Argentinian officials crossed the gangplank, their medals flashing and jangling. They did not look too happy. They were mopping their sweaty brows. I sensed immediately that something was wrong and crossed over to Kammler. He shook hands with the officials. The man with the most medals whispered. Kammler's lips formed a single, thin line that expressed his concern. He then smiled at Captain Schaeffer. He introduced us to the officials. We all had wine and biscuits on the deck, the sun blazing upon us. A small delay, someone said. An unfortunate mishap regarding transport. We would have to spend some days on the submarine before we could leave. Captain Schaeffer agreed to this. He was a reasonable and thoughtful man. The Argentinians all smiled and bowed low and then left in a hurry.

I spoke to Kammler and Nebe. We met at midnight on the dock. It was dark and I saw the moon reflected in Nebe's depthless eyes. Kammler spoke in an urgent whisper. He told us what had really happened. He said that British and American Intelligence had picked up the information that Hitler and Martin Bormann had escaped. Reportedly they had fled in a submarine. They were thought to be heading for the Argentine. It was the British and American wish that the Argentinians report the arrival of any German submarines in their waters. Thus the Argentinians were in a panic. They felt that something must be done. What they wanted was to offer the Allies a little something to chew on.

General Nebe lived by intrigue. It was bread and meat to him. His dark eyes offered no pain or pleasure as he outlined a compromise. We three alone would leave. We would take the crate with us. But to save the Argentinians embarrassment, we would leave all the rest behind. They would be held as political prisoners. The Argentinians would hand them over. That way, the Argentinians would look good and we would save our own necks.

Ruthless? Yes. But then the three of us were ruthless. We had lived in the Third Reich a long time and had learned to survive. We agreed to Nebe's plan. It could not possibly fail. The fate of Schaeffer and his crew did not concern us and could hardly affect us. It didn't matter what they told the Allies. By then it would be too late. By then we would be hidden in the Antarctic,
our whereabouts unknown. The Allied forces would then be help-less. They would never find our underground base. They would know that the underground base existed, but they wouldn't dare mention the fact. How could they mention it? It would only lead to panic. And so, aware of this, knowing the Allies would be helpless, we decided to drop Schaeffer and his crew and go on by ourselves.

We unloaded the crate the next day. This aroused no curiosity. Schaeffer assumed that we were simply unloading it for safekeeping on shore. That same night we slipped away. Some army officers were waiting for us. I saw the crate in the back of their truck and I climbed up beside it Nebe and Kammler quickly followed. We looked back at the submarine. We saw the other troops moving along the dock, their rifles aimed at the submarine. Then the truck drove us away. We left the submarine behind us. The flat plains of Argentina swept around us and the stars glittered brightly. Kammler looked at me and smiled. Nebe pursed his lips and slept. The night passed and a pearly dawn broke and then we reached Bahia Blanca.

The airfield was heavily guarded. The plane's engine was already running. The truck drove up to the hold of the plane and the crate was unloaded. General Kammler climbed in first.

I let Nebe go ahead of me. I glanced briefly around the airfield, at the soldiers and barbed wire fences, at the flat plains that stretched out to the sky, and then I boarded the plane. The doors of the hold were slid together. The steel locks made a clanging sound. I sat down beside Kammler and Nebe and stared up at the wooden crate. Then the plane roared and shook. It taxied slowly along the runway. Then it roared even louder, raced along the runway, jolted, leaped off the tarmac, and climbed into the sky.

Perhaps I slept then. I do not remember the journey. I remember Nebe's dark, depthless eyes and the plane's constant rumblings. It did not take very long. My spinning thoughts de-stroyed time. Kammler smiled when the wheels touched down again and the crate bounced disturbingly. I reached out and touched it. The plane shuddered and stopped. The doors opened and a bright light rushed in and brought with it the shocking cold.

All white. Everything. The frozen wilderness stretched out before us. I stepped down and felt the snow around my boots and breathed the pure, icy air. We were on a small, modest airstrip. Our own plane was waiting for us. We transferred the crate to this plane and then clambered in after it. The doors closed again. The plane's skis chopped through the ice. We took of and flew above the white wilderness and headed inland. All white. Everything. The plains and mountains were as one. My impatience was a hand upon my heart, my exultation was boundless. Then at last we dropped lower. I saw the enormous, encircling, plateaus. We flew down below the mountains, below the glittering ice peaks, and then the great caves opened out to embrace us and carry us home.

Here we are and here we stay. The ice glitters in the sun. History changes and the world surrenders to us. We are here. We exist.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Stanford arrived early, deliberately so. Slowing down at the crossroads, just before the meeting place, he turned off the road and drove between the trees, comforted by the darkness and moonlight, feeling safer that way. He stopped the car, turned the lights out, killed the engine, took a deep breath; looked out at the darkness, glanced up at the sky, half expecting, as he now always did, to see glowing lights merging. When had Epstein disappeared? November 1977. Since then, a whole year had passed and a new year was dawning. Stanford shivered at the thought of it. He didn't think he would survive it. He reached into the glove compartment, carefully pulled out a pistol, checked it, then got out of the car and closed the door very quietly.

The skies of Virginia were starry. There was no wind at all. Stanford smelled the wet grass, felt the chill in the air, marveling at how soothing it was after the furnace of Paraguay. He checked the pistol again, checked the time, shivered slightly, then he walked back through the trees to the road, his eyes moving from left to right.

The road was still deserted. Stanford glanced up at the sky. He grinned automatically, more self-mocking than amused, thinking of himself as a fugitive and wondering how it had come to this. The road remained deserted. Stanford checked his watch again. Satisfied, he knelt down on the grass behind some thick, tangled brambles. The hills were covered in

trees. He thought of Epstein in Mount Rainier. His lips tightened and he looked along the road and heard a sound in the distance.
Fuller was on time. He had always been reliable. Stanford got up off his knees, but stayed low, cocked the pistol, looked along the road and saw Fuller's lights coming out of the darkness. The road was flat and very straight The car approached the crossroads. Stanford watched it as it slowed down and stopped, its engine still purring softly. Fuller flashed his head-lights twice. He didn't get out of the car. Stanford looked along the road and saw nothing, listened carefully, heard nothing. Fuller flashed his lights again. He was expecting a response. Stanford turned and loped back through the trees and cut around in a circle. He emerged behind the car. He looked back along the road. There was obviously no car behind Fuller and that made him feel better. He stepped out from the trees. The gun felt heavy in his hand. He walked up to the car, bent down, knocked on the window, and Fuller rolled the window down and looked up and saw the gun in his face.
'Stanford?'
'That's right'
'What the fuck are you doing? You asked me to meet you and I'm here. What's the fucking gun for?'
'Are you alone?' Stanford asked.
'What the hell do you think? Take a good look. You got eyes in your head. I'm all alone, for chrissake.'
'Get out of the car,' Stanford said.
'I don't believe this,' Fuller said. 'I came because you asked me, and now you're sticking a pistol in my face. Have you gone fucking crazy?'
'I'm sorry,' Stanford said.
'We're old buddies, for chrissake!'
'I'm sorry. I'm a little bit nervous. Now get out of the car.
Fuller sighed and rolled his eyes, killed the engine and headlights, climbed out and put his hands up in the air as if praying for mercy.

'I don't believe this,' he said. 'You must have lost your fucking marbles. Who the hell do you think you are? Elliot Ness? Get it out of my face.'
'This way,' Stanford said.
'It's a joke,' Fuller said. 'He drags me out of my bed to stick me up. An old buddy from way back.'
Stanford waved the gun gently. 'I'm not joking,' he said. 'If I have to use this pistol I'll use it. Over there. Through the trees.'
Fuller sighed and shook his head, not believing it, forced a grin, then he sauntered across the road toward the trees, the pistol prodding him on.
'In here, old buddy?'
'That's right,' Stanford said.
'It's a picnic,' Fuller said. 'A midnight treat I can't fucking wait.'
Stanford kept the gun on him, still fond of him, not trusting him, not capable of trusting anyone anymore, not even his oldest friends.
'Can I stop now?' Fuller asked.
'That's right You can stop now.'
'I take it that's your car,' Fuller said.
'That's right. Get inside.'
Fuller sighed and shook his head, ran his fingers through his gray hair, opened the door and lowered himself onto the seat, looking cramped in that small space. Stanford walked around the front. He kept the gun aimed at the windshield. He opened the door and slid into the driver's seat the pistol still aimed at Fuller.
'Where are we going?' Fuller asked.
'Nowhere,' Stanford said. 'We'll just sit here and have our little talk and then I'll let you go home.'
'Most generous,' Fuller said.
'I'm sorry,' Stanford said.
'My old buddy's sorry,' Fuller said. 'I feel better already.' He was a big man, all muscle, his face rough as they come, and he ran his fingers through his thick hair, his gray eyes

very sharp. 'Okay,' he sighed. 'I'm impressed. I can't believe it We're sitting here in the middle of nowhere and you're pointing a gun at me. What the fuck's going on?'
'It's the saucers,' Stanford said. 'I want to talk about the saucers.'
'I figured that,' Fuller said. 'You always do. Only the pistol is new to me.'
'I've had a bad year,' Stanford said. 'I have the impression I'm being followed. My room's been wrecked twice, my phone's been cut off, and a hit and run driver smashed my car... I just don't feel too safe.'
'This is a very dangerous country,' Fuller said. 'I thought you knew that.' He looked down at the pistol, shook his head and grinned laconically. 'I'm putting my hand in my pocket,' he said. 'I'm not smoking. I need chewing gum.'
Stanford nodded and watched him. Fuller pulled out some gum. He unwrapped it and popped it in his mouth and proceeded to chew.
'So,' he said. 'You're nervous. You're being harassed. And you think we're the bogeymen.'
'That's right,' Stanford said. 'Those are CIA trademarks. You bastards have been following us since we went to the Caribbean, since we told you about Gerhardt's disappearance. You accused us of lying.'
'Us?' Fuller asked.
'Me and Epstein,' Stanford said.
'Epstein's gone.'
'That's right. Epstein's gone. And you haven't done anything.'
Fuller shrugged and chewed his gum. 'What the hell could we do? You say the guy's been abducted by a UFO and expect us to wear it It was too much to ask.'
'Why?'
'Don't talk shit,' Fuller said. 'You come up with a story like that and you can't expect much.'
'You believed me,' Stanford said.
'You're talking shit,' Fuller said.

'You've known me too long not to believe me... you know I don't invent things.'
'Your story was ridiculous.' 'Then where's Epstein gone? He's been missing for over a year and you haven't asked why.'
'It's a police case,' Fuller said. 'Police, my ass,' Stanford said. 'I told the cops and they laughed me out of the station and forgot the whole thing.' 'What the fuck did you expect? You said a UFO stole your friend. You came on like a crank in a gabardine, so of course the cops laughed.'
'Fine,' Stanford said. 'But Professor Epstein's still missing. He's a pretty important name and now he's gone and no one seems to be bothered. I think that's pretty strange. I mean, it doesn't make sense. A famous man disappears for a year and they don't bat an eyelid. That strikes me as strange.'
'So, he's missing,' Fuller said. 'A lot of people are missing. He was an old man, he was on his last legs, and now he's probably dead.'
'I was there,' Stanford said.
'Yeah, I know. A UFO took him.'
'You believe me,' Stanford said. 'I know that. That's why you're not searching.'
Fuller stopped chewing his gum, stared at Stanford, not smiling, then slowly started chewing the gum again, his jaws working methodically.
'So,' he said, 'we're at an impasse. What the hell are we talking for?'
Stanford watched Fuller carefully. His old friend seemed like a stranger. The pistol was very steady in Stanford's hand, and he was ready to use it.
'You believe me,' Stanford said. You believed me then and you believe me now. You've been following me and you know what I found out and now it's making you nervous.'
'Oh?' Fuller said. 'And what was that? Just what did you find out?'
Stanford felt very hot. He wanted to roll the window down.

He was frightened to roll the window down because of who might be out there. His eyes flicked left and right. He felt foolish as he did it. He licked his lips and put the gun in his other hand, wiped his right hand on his trousers. Then he transferred the gun again. He kept it pointed at Fuller. His old friend, his old CIA buddy, could no longer be trusted.

'The saucers exist,' he said. 'You've known about them for years. You have your own, but you're keeping them quiet for political reasons. There are other saucers as well. They're extraordinarily far advanced. They represent a threat to this country and you're running a race with them. You're fright-ened of those saucers. You're frightened of public opinion. You don't want the word to leak out and lead to mass panic. Those saucers are very powerful. The people who made them are very powerful. They have weapons we never dreamed about and they're willing to use them.'

Fuller raised his eyebrows. 'I don't believe this,' he said. 'I think maybe I'm not hearing too good. My old buddy's gone crazy.'

'You have your own,' Stanford said. There's no point in denying it The original concepts came from Germany, you've been building them for years, the work was carried out at White Sands and in the wilds of Canada, but now the people who built the original saucers are displaying anxiety.'

'I don't believe this,' Fuller said.

'You believe it,' Stanford said. 'You just want to keep it quiet You killed off Project Blue Book, you harassed all our best researchers, and you've deliberately spread confusion through rumor for the past thirty years. You knew you couldn't keep it secret - you could just confuse the issues -so when something leaked out you just twisted it and wrapped it in myths. Take Cannon AFB. Take Deerwood Nike Base. Take Holloman and Blaine Air Force Bases and then tell me they're rumors. They weren't rumors, you shitface. The saucers seen there were your own. People talked and you let the talk lead to tales of extraterrestrials. But the extraterrestrials don't exist. Something much worse exists. It's a bunch ot

wizards down in the Antarctic, and you know all about them.'
'The Antarctic?' Fuller said.
'You're not so innocent,' Stanford said. There's a bunch of men in the Antarctic, they created the original saucers, and now they're so advanced you can't touch them and the government's shit-scared.'
'This is crazy,' Fuller said.
'No, it's not,' Stanford said. The Antarctic's a very big place, and those people are hidden there.'
'Where?' Fuller asked.
'I don't know,' Stanford said.
'No,' Fuller said. 'You don't know. You're just spouting hot air.' He shook his head slowly, chewed his gum, looked disgusted, stared sympathetically at Stanford and shook his head again, wearily. 'What horseshit,' he said. 'I mean, I thought you had more sense. That's one of the oldest stories in UFO mythology - and one of the worst.'
'What story?'
'Fucking holes in the poles. UFO bases in the Antarctic. Underground cities beneath the ice... Atlantis, Lemuria.'
'I've heard the stories,' Stanford said. 'I never believed them for a minute... But then I never believed in the saucers either. It turns out I was wrong.'
'So they come from the Antarctic?'
'So you admit that they exist?'
'We don't have flying saucers,' Fuller said. 'Nor does anyone else.' He tried to grin at Stanford. It was not a successful grin. 'Lef s assume they're in the Antarctic,' he said. 'I might correct you that way.'
'They're in the Antarctic,' Stanford said. They're in under-ground plants. They're the same as the hidden factories of Nazi Germany, and they're under the ice.'
'That's ridiculous,' Fuller said. 'You can't get beneath that ice. Don't give me that hollow Earth shit. That's a theory for hacks.'
'Is it?' Stanford asked.
'You know fucking well it is. There aren't any holes at

the poles. Don't talk like a crackpot'
'I don't know,' Stanford said. 'What about the ESSA 7 satellites? The photographs taken by those satellites caused a sensation.'
'It's beneath discussion,' Fuller said.
'Tell me anyway,' Stanford said.
'You're a scientist. You know the facts well. I don't have to tell you.'
'Tell me anyway,' Stanford said.
Fuller shook his head wearily. 'Okay,' he said. 'You want to play games, we'll play games. I'll tell you about the photos that conned all the fucking UFOlogists.' He took out some more gum, unwrapped it stared at it popped it in his mouth and started chewing, looking thoroughly disgusted. Those famous NASA photos were released to scientific journals most of whom could have been expected to understand them! Unfortunately, and as usual, the ESSA 7 satellite photos found their way into the hands of certain commercial writers. The enormous holes in the poles, so clearly shown on the photos, were described, through what can only be termed ignorance, as being just what they looked like: goddamned holes in the poles.' Fuller shook his head sadly, chewed his gum, glanced around him, saw nothing but the darkness beneath the trees and then turned back to Stanford. 'Of course they weren't holes,' he said. 'You know that as well as I do. Those photographs were obtained by onboard Vidicon camera systems, and as such were not normal pictures. They were, in fact, photomosaics. They were reproduced from processing the signals from a lot of television camera frames obtained over a twenty-four hour period. Those signals were processed in a computer and transformed to a polar stereographic map projection with latitude, longitude and the outlines of land areas superimposed electronically. The areas in which camera frames were missing - due to the fact that the pictures were taken during the dark polar winter and the ESSA 7 camera systems lacked infrared facilities - were shown in solid black or white, which accounts for the famous "black holes."

However, current polarorbiting satellites use a two-channel scanning radiometer instead of the Vidicon camera system, and this radiometer is sensitive to energy in both the visible and infrared spectrums. If you, being the ignorant scientist you're so obviously pretending to be, care to return to my office, I'll show you some polar stereographic satellite images from the NOAA 5 satellite in which the visible channel data over the poles during the polar winter shows holes at the poles - whereas the infrared channel data for the same period shows the land as it actually exists. There are no holes in the poles and you know it, so let's just fucking drop it.'
Stanford knew he was right He just wanted him to talk. He wanted to loosen Fuller's tongue before he pulled his ears off.
'Okay,' he said. 'Let's change the subject What do you know about Admiral Byrd?'
'Oh, Jesus,' Fuller said.
'Tell me,' Stanford said.
'I'm going crazy. My ears are playing tricks. We're in the land of the freaks.'
'Tell me,' Stanford insisted.
'Just ask me,' Fuller said. 'My imagination doesn't stretch as far as yours. I can just about answer you.'
Stanford didn't laugh. He kept the gun aimed at Fuller. Just occasionally, he glanced out of the car, scanned the dark, silent forest.
'Okay,' Stanford said. 'Accepting that there's no enormous hole at the South Pole, the next great UFOlogist theory is that the land around the Pole actually dips down considerably, forming a sort of giant doughnut, and that this land mass is therefore greater than we commonly think it is and could actually be a lot warmer than the surrounding Antarctic.'
'Right,' Fuller said. 'And being so immense, hidden from us and quite warm, that land could be fertile and inhabited: the home of your saucer people.'
'It's possible,' Stanford said.
'It's not possible,' Fuller said. You're going to quote

Admiral Byrd's remarks about a continent in the sky.'
'Right,' Stanford said. 'It's been widely reported that Admi-ral Byrd penetrated a land extent of two thousand and three hundred miles beyond the Pole and saw a mass of land re-flected in the sky. Okay, since we now know about Antarctic conditions, we can assume that it was a reflection.'
'Or a mirage,' Fuller said.
'Or a mirage. That still begs the question of how, given where Byrd turned back, he could have reported traveling two thousand and three hundred miles beyond the Pole.'
'He didn't,' Fuller said. The origin of that figure is a mystery and did not come from Byrd. Go to your newspaper morgues and you'll find that the actual stated figure was a journey covering approximately ten thousand square miles with only one hundred of those miles beyond the Pole. As for the "Great Unknown beyond the Pole," that statement -which the UFOlogists have picked up as solid proof of their "hidden continent" theory - is merely the very understandable remark of a man who was, in 1947, looking for the first time at a land mass that had not yet been explored. The "Great Unknown" was simply the Great Uncharted - but it has been crossed and photographed since and is no longer "unknown".
Stanford started to speak, but Fuller waved his large hand, now involved in what he was saying and determined to finish it
'Let me continue while I'm eager,' he said. 'I can't bear your sweet ignorance... It is to be noted, regarding Byrd's other much abused remark about "that enchanted continent in the sky," that Byrd also stated that during the flight both he and his crew had no oxygen equipment, that they were suffering from anoxia, and that they were therefore not quite themselves - a point conveniently ignored by our UFOlogists. As for the "enchanted continent in the sky" being a reflection of a land mass not covered in ice, this isn't as extraordinary as the UFOlogists pretend it is. There are in fact, and contrary to the ignorant assertions of many UFOlogists, many

well known ice-free areas in the Antarctic - and any one of these could have been the reflection, or mirage, viewed by Byrd. Another popular so-called "fact" is that there are no volcanoes in the Antarctic, and that the dust sometimes found in the Antarctic must therefore come from the "hidden" continent. That's a very neat theory except for one thing: there are volcanoes in the Antarctic.'

Fuller grinned and chewed his gum. Stanford moved closer to him. The gun was still steady in his hand and he felt pretty high.

'Okay,' he said. 'That gets right to my point. I just want to dear up a little matter and then we'll call it a day. There are lakes in the Antarctic. There are also ice-free areas. There are mountains and volcanoes, the ice can be a mile deep, and it's believed that the ice beneath the surface is actually joined to the sea. That suggests certain things. It suggests hidden valleys. It suggests canyons and caves and other ice-free hidden areas in which a colony of people could exist in comparative safety. I never thought the Earth was hollow. I know we've charted the Antarctic. But I also know that we've only charted it from the air and that there are vast, unknown areas. You know the bastards are there. You probably know where they are. I want to know what they're doing, I want to know just where they are, and I want all the facts here and now and no pissing around.'

Fuller stared hard at Stanford. His large body was quivering. Stanford knew he wasn't quivering with fear, but with cold, suppressed rage. Stanford kept the gun on him. Fuller looked down and studied it He looked at the gun a long time and then he stared straight at Stanford.

'I'm getting out of here,' he said.

'Don't try it,' Stanford said.

'You wouldn't know how to fire that fucking thing. Adios, kid. I'll see you.'

He started turning toward the door. Stanford raised the pistol higher. He tapped the pistol against Fuller's head, then slipped it into his ear. Fuller froze immediately. The gun

barrel filled his ear. Fuller sat there and stared at the dash-board and took a deep breath.
'You wouldn't do it,' he said. 'Who the fuck do you think you're kidding? You're a scientist You don't play with those things. Now get it out of my ear.'
'It's cocked,' Stanford said.
'I noticed,' Fuller said.
Talk or I'll blow your fucking brains out.'
'No way. You won't do it.'
Fuller jerked his head away. He started opening the car door. Stanford turned the pistol around, used the grip as a hammer, hit Fuller across the side of the head and on the back of his wrist Fuller's head seemed to spin, hit the dashboard and bounced back, and he grunted, his wounded hand flapping, trying to wipe off the blood. The hand dropped down to his side. His good hand started swinging. Stanford swept the hand away with his gun, jerked the gun down and over. He hit Fuller's hand again. Fuller gasped and flopped forward. He lay there with his head on the dashboard, dripping blood, breathing deeply.
'Talk,' Stanford said.
'Get fucked,' Fuller gasped. 'If you didn't have a gun for a fist I'd have your balls in my teeth. I'm not talking, you little prick. You've gone too far too quick. If you want me to talk you'll have to suck me, and you're just not the type.'
'I'll do it,' Stanford said.
'I bet you would,' Fuller said.
'Okay, Fuller, that's enough, the joking's over. Just talk. It's less painful.'
Fuller started to raise his head. Stanford smashed it with the pistol. Fuller's head cracked against the windshield and bled even more. Stanford watched himself in action. He was standing outside himself. He didn't recognize himself anymore, now driven only by anger. His hidden self had stepped forward. He knew what the hunted felt He was desperate and it lent him a rage that overrode his old nature. He remembered the girl in Galveston, remembered beating up

Scaduto; remembered his journey through Paraguay, the Ache Indians, the cold, brutal German. Yes, he had changed. He knew it now as he looked at Fuller. His old friend, who was breathing harshly and bleeding, could no longer be trusted.
'Talk,' Stanford said.
'Fucking Christ,' Fuller gasped. He gripped the dashboard with his thick, hard-ridged fingers, as if trying to bend it 'You've sure learned a few tricks,' he said.
Stanford smashed Fuller's hand. Fuller yelped and jerked his head up. Stanford pushed the head back down with the pistol and saw the blood flowing.
'I've changed,' Stanford said. 'I'm not a scientist anymore. I was never a good scientist anyway, but now you bastards have finished me. I won't sit back and take it. I want to get Epstein back. I don't know why it's all that important; I just know that it is. I have to find Epstein. I have to know what happened to him. That old man means a lot to me now, and I don't understand it. He said I refused to make decisions. I made a decision when he disappeared. I decided to track this filthy business down and let no bastard stop me. Now I want you to talk. I think you'll just have to talk. If you don't talk, we'll sit here all night and I'll hurt you much more.'
Fuller cursed and jerked upright. Stanford thumped him in the stomach. He grunted and flopped forward again, his good hand on the dashboard. Stanford smashed the hand. Fuller screamed and then whimpered. He was propped up with his forehead on the dashboard, dripping blood to the floor.
'Jesus!' he hissed. 'Oh my God, fuck, it hurts. Okay, Jesus Christ, I'm fucking dying, you win, Christ, it hurts...' He shook his head but kept it down. He was staring at his own feet. The blood was dripping off his head and lips, and splashing onto his shoes. 'Okay,' he said, 'you're right. It was the Second World War. The fucking Krauts built a saucer. We found components and various drawings: the British, the Canadians and us, we all found bits and pieces. It was enough

to get us going. We all put our heads together. You already know most of the details, so I'll save my breath there. The main work was done in Canada. Other work was done at White Sands. A lot of the UFOs seen over those areas were our very own saucers.'

'Fine,' Stanford said. 'I know all that. What about the Antarctic?'

Fuller groaned and shook his head. 'It's all on Epstein's tapes,' he said.

'That was Germany,' Stanford said. 'You're confused. What about the Antarctic?'

'You went to Paraguay,' Fuller said. You went to see that old Kraut. We know what the old fucker told you ... he told us the same thing.'

'When?' Stanford asked.

'A long time ago,' Fuller said. 'That old vulture, he should be dead by now, but we just can't get near him.'

'The Antarctic,' Stanford said.

'He told you the background,' Fuller said. That was the beginning of it all: those Nazis went to the Antarctic and that's where it began.' He shook his head and wiped his lips. He could hardly use his hands. He groaned and let his hands fall down again, his head still on the dashboard. 'We knew they were there,' he said. 'Captain Schaeffer told us that much. He said they had gone to Neuschwabenland to build flying saucers. We were inclined to believe him. We had plenty of evidence to support his statements. We had drawings and components, and we found a few people who talked. That's why we launched Operation Highjump. That was in January '47. It was a military mission disguised as an exploratory expedition, and its true purpose was to find out where the Germans were.'

'They docked near Neuschwabenland,' Stanford said.

'No,' Fuller said. You can discount that rumor. We had to bluff the whole fucking world, so we did it with style. We circled the whole continent. We really covered that mother. We split up into three separate groups and flew all over the place.

The Central Group, based at Little America on the Ross Sea, covered the area between Marie Byrd Land and Victoria Land, moving inland, in crisscrossing patterns, as far as the South Pole. Meanwhile, the East and West Groups girdled the whole continent, moving out in opposite directions and actually coming in sight of one another's planes. The East Group reached the Weddell Sea. The West Group went as far as Princess Astrid Land. Some planes from both groups then flew over Queen Maud Land, including the area that the Germans had called Neuschwabenland. They saw ice-caps like mountains. Their compasses went crazy. They got lost and then they saw some flying saucers that appeared out of nowhere. The flying saucers sort of buzzed them. The planes' ignition systems malfunctioned. Four of the planes went down and the others just cut out, and the crews then told Admiral Byrd about it. The expedition was cut short The official explanation was hurricane winds. Byrd returned to America, made some indiscreet announcements, then we told him to shut up, we killed all talk of the saucers, and we decided to treat the Antarctic with considerable care. About three months later, in June 1947, we tested our own saucers over Mount Rainier in the Cascades - and then the saucers we had seen in the Antarctic paid their first visits.'

'How did you find out where they were?' Stanford asked.

'We didn't,' Fuller said. They found us. They started to play tag with our jets and airliners, just to let us know what they could do. They hammered the point home by harassing our top-secret test centers and driving our interceptor pilots nuts. After three years of this there was no doubt in our minds about who those flying saucers belonged to. Naturally we kept it quiet: we were shit-scared of panic. We killed Project Grudge, tried to ridicule all sighting reports, and generally confused the whole issue to turn it into a myth. For the most part this worked. It also worked for our own saucers. The Lubbock sightings, for instance, were sightings of our own saucers - and a lot of other sightings were the same.' Fuller kept his head down. He was bleeding much less

now. He talked like a man in a trance, his breathing more steady.
They approached us in 1952,' he said softly, 'and they did it just like regular politicians, through all the right channels. The approach was made by a man called Wilson. He got in touch with the CIA. We met him and he told us the story, and we couldn't believe it Wilson proved his point He was talking to one of our top men. He already knew the guy's address and he told him that the next night he would send a flying saucer over his home. The CIA chief lived in Alexandria, Virginia, he was having a garden party on the night in question, and during that garden party both he and his guests saw a UFO directly over the house.'
'That was when the Director of Intelligence, General Samford, called Ruppelt to a secret meeting in Washington.'
'Right But Ruppelt didn't know about that Antarctic colony - and we never did tell him.'
'So, why the meeting?'
'After the UFO sighting over the CIA chief's home, he had another meeting with Wilson. Wilson told him more about the colony, told him what they were capable of, and then said that he didn't want any interference and would trade with the US. Apparently, even with his awesome genius and his hundreds of workers, he was in constant need of various mass-produced components and equipment. His idea, then, was that he would form a clandestine partnership with the US, trading certain secrets of his technology in return for what he required to advance the same. A seesaw arrangement, right? A tricky maneuver. But that's what he wanted.'
'And?'
'He was asked what would happen if we decided to say no, and he pointed to various disasters, on land and at sea, that we had not at least up until he told us, been able to explain. Wilson explained them. He told us how he had caused them. We still didn't believe him, so he told us that his saucers would invade Washington. When they did, we believed him.'
'That was in 1952.'

'Yes.'
'And the meeting between Ruppelt and General Samford?'
That was after Wilson had told us about his planned invasion. Samford never told Ruppelt anything about Wilson, but he wanted to know about the extent of the UFO sightings. Ruppelt, not knowing about our conversations with Wilson, confirmed that there had been a massive build-up of UFOs around Washington throughout that whole month. He also made it quite clear that he was expecting a UFO invasion over the capital. That invasion came, we decided to sit tight, and one week later the bastards came back and we had to tell president Truman.'
'And then you came to an agreement with Wilson.'
'Right. But the first thing we did was form the Robertson Panel. The purpose of that panel was twofold. The first purpose was to convince the public that a proper scientific body had investigated the UFO phenomenon and found it to be fucking nonsense. Also, regarding this, it was our intention right from the start to use the panel's recommendations as an excuse for suppressing all UFO reports. I think you know how we went about it...'
'Yes,' Stanford said.
'Okay. The second and equally important purpose of the panel was to examine what Wilson had told us and shown us, and to assess his viability as a threat to the nation. Our assessment was that his technology was so far advanced, it constituted an unprecedented threat to the nation - and probably the world. It was therefore decided to come to an agreement with him.'
'I see,' Stanford said. 'So that explains why the Robertson Panel was made up of men specializing in atomic research and advanced weaponry, why it was chaired by a CIA-classified employee, and why it included Lloyd Berkner, who had accompanied Admiral Byrd to the Antarctic in 1937.'
'Yes. It also explains why, when Ruppelt found out that the UFOs were intelligently controlled, we had to get rid of the bastard.'

'And anyone else who was like him.'
'Right'
Then you made your agreement with Wilson.'
'Right. The agreement, simply put, was that we would have a step-by-step trade, negotiating as and when required for what we both wanted. What Wilson wanted was access to our mass production industries - and what we wanted was every-thing he knew. Naturally he didn't buy this. He fed us a spoonful at a time. And with neither side trusting the other, we built up a relationship. That relationship grew more complex. Like all relationships, it had its faults. And the biggest was that Wilson was also trading with our good friends, the Russians.'
'He played one against the other,' Stanford said.
'You're still awake,' Fuller said. 'He's still at it right now. We all trade, we all lose. We keep trying to catch up with his technology, but he keeps just ahead of us. So now the pattern's changed. We're all creeping across the Antarctic. The Antarctic is a vast, untapped treasure-house of oil, coal, gold, copper, uranium and, most important, water. The whole world now needs water. Ninety percent of all the world's water is in the Antarctic. In short, the Antarctic is where the future of the world will be decided, so we just can't keep out of it any longer. We all pretend if s not political, that we're just there for research, but the logic, or lack of logic, in politics is leading straight to a clash.'
'It's political leapfrog,' Stanford said.
That's right. A kid's game. But somebody's going to trip and get hurt - and then all hell will break loose.'
'Are they Nazis?' Stanford asked.
'No,' Fuller said. They're a society of masters and slaves, but they're no longer Nazis. That Wilson is a genius. His genius extends to manipulation and he runs that whole place. He's into parapsychology, electrodes and prosthetics. He has his people implanted when they're born, and they grow up like zombies. There's never more than a thousand of them. The system is based on euthanasia: when someone ceases to

be of any use, Wilson has him put down. There's no possibility of resistance. They're all disciplined with electrodes. They all exist just to work, and that work is for the glory of science. Human beings are vivisected. What he doesn't have, he steals. We know he steals people from us, but we discreetly ignore that fact. We can't afford to rock the boat. We have to stay on the seesaw. That colony represents the balancing power and we just can't catch up with it'

'So the Americans and Russians actually work with him?'

'In truth, it's what we need. The whole world's out of control. We all need what that fucking bastard has, but he's buried down there. So, we continue trading. He lies to us, we lie to him. We keep building more satellites, pulse beam weapons, more powerful saucers, and we think that in a couple of years we might be ready to tackle him. The Russians think the same. Wilson knows what we're both thinking. When we slip up, he demonstrates his power and then we quickly correct ourselves. It's like I said: it's a seesaw, a tricky maneuver, but sooner or later, it's bound to explode - and I don't like to think of that'

'So,' Stanford said. That explains the secrecy about UFOs. It also explains why the Russians and Americans cooperate in the Antarctic.'

'You've hit the nail on the head, kid.' Fuller raised his head slowly, put it back against the seat. He took a deep breath and just sat there, staring out at the darkness.

'Where are they?' Stanford asked.

'Don't even think about it,' Fuller said. 'You go there and you'll never come back, and that's all there is to it.'

'Where are they?'

Fuller sighed wearily. 'They're in Neuschwabenland,' he said. 'You fly along the zero meridian, straight in to Queen Maud Land, and about two hundred miles in from the coast, you'll find a range of low mountains. It's really Norwegian territory. It's really part of Queen Maud Land. You usually only find it marked in German atlases, and they call it

Neuschwabenland. The Antarctic colony is in those mountains. They've hollowed out the base of the mountains. There's an area where the ice forms a huge circle that resembles a volcano. The carrying ships are down there. They come up out of there. Beneath the circle of ice is solid rock, now honeycombed with long tunnels. The tunnels lead into the colony. They all live and work there. The whole area is protected with a force field that makes aircraft malfunction. We found that out to our cost. We stopped trying years ago. That whole area is like the famous Area of Inaccessability - and our pilots avoid it.'

'I'm going there,' Stanford said.

'You're going nowhere,' Fuller said. 'I once liked you, but you can't walk away with this. Understand? You're a dead man.'

Stanford suddenly heard the noise. He glanced out automatically, saw the light flashing on and off the trees, beaming down through the darkness. Then Fuller made his move. Stanford turned back and saw him. Fuller had opened the door and was falling back, one hand inside his jacket. The pistol bucked in Stanford's hand. The roar filled the whole car. Fuller bawled as his body hit the ground, but then he rolled over quickly. Stanford dropped across the seats, heard the roaring helicopter, saw Fuller rolling away from the car, a pistol clenched in his right fist Stanford fired and Fuller jerked, dropped his pistol and flopped over. Stanford sat up and turned the ignition key as the roaring grew louder.

He didn't bother to close the far door. A cloud of dust and stones swept over him. The chopper roared and dropped down through the trees and bathed the car in a fierce light Stanford cursed and put his foot down, reversed, the wheels squealing, shot forward and made a tight turn as Fuller staggered toward him, swaying weakly from side to side. Stanford couldn't avoid him. He heard a sickening thud. Fuller bounced across the hood of the car, limbs akimbo, his eyes large and his mouth hanging open, waved crazily, rolled off again. Stanford put his foot right down. He raced straight at

the trees. He swung the car wildly from left to right and stayed away from the road.

First the darkness, then the light: the helicopter was right above him; it came down through the trees, whipped the dirt up, swirling and hissing. Stanford cursed and swung the wheel. He hit a tree and bounced off. The car shrieked and then shot forward again, crashing through vegetation. The chopper roared and deafened Stanford. It was just above the trees. It was whipping the dirt up on his right and forcing him back to the open road. Stanford cursed and kept going, weaving left and right furiously, tearing branches and bark from the trees, the car howling dementedly. He kept away from the road. The forest suddenly opened out The roaring chopper dropped down through the clearing and smashed the car with its skids. The impact blinded Stanford, made him let go of the wheel. The car shot to the left and started skidding and he grabbed at the wheel again. He drove into the skid, shrieked around in a circle, was blinded by the chopper's spotlights, almost choked in the dust. The car raced toward the chopper. The chopper jerked up and shuddered. A rotor snapped against a tree and flew away as the chopper tipped over. The car raced right beneath it, shot back into the trees, was shaken by a thunderous explosion, bathed in fierce, jagged lightning. Stanford managed to glance back. A ball of fire filled the clearing. The fire swept across the field and up the trees, the flames hissing and spitting.

Stanford pulled hard on the wheel, headed straight for the road. He bounced back onto the road, took the right fork to Washington, glanced across the road and saw the blazing trees illuminating the forest. The flames quickly dropped behind him. He slowed down and drove more carefully. He saw foe dark night all around him, the moon, the glittering stars, and he knew that he would have to leave the country and never return.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Awakening, in that biting cold dawn of 28 January, 1979, still not believing where he was, Stanford shivered and closed his eyes again and thought of how he had come here ... He saw the harbor of Manzanillo on the western coast of Mexico, the one hundred and twenty-five-foot ship, its wooden hull creaking rhythmically, moving out in the gray, early December afternoon, its engines and generators and air-conditioners filling his ears with a muffled roar. Then due south to Easter Island, the gray waves rolling slowly, the frigate birds sailing by on their fluttering black wings, the swarm of Galapagos storm petrels like a dark cloud of locusts. Blue-gray flying fish, the sea's monotonous rise and fall, the sun rising as orange fire, turning into a dazzling white, the pink sunset, then sharp, abrupt darkness, the stars glittering in velvet sky. The slow death of December. The dawn an eerie green glowing. The sun forming an arc, arched across the horizon, first green and then turning to red and setting the clouds on fire. The clouds shifted and changed, tinged with pink and orange-yellow, touched here and there with glinting gold, the sea violet, languorous. America was no more. Other worlds were now beckoning. The South Pacific, Cape Horn, the seas rough and uninviting, flocks of whalebirds with blue and white plumage, then the Tropic of Capricorn. White-breasted, dark-backed shearwaters, gliding through the troughs of waves, the south-ern latitudes with their long ocean swells, the smaller waves

in between. The great wings of the albatross, their graceful soaring and gliding, then past the southern coast of South America, rain and fog, the winds moaning. Buoyant Magellanic penguins. More birds, high and low. The barren, forbidding rocks of the Ildefonso islands, the Beagle Chan-nel, its dark, humpbacked islands, brown and bleak and forlorn. Then the New Year coming in, the sea foam-flecked and grim, giant petrels and skuas overhead, the cold winds unrelenting. Farewell to the Old World. No escape from the future. The primeval forests and glacier-encased peaks of Tierra del Fuego. Then the stormy Drake Passage, the current driven by the westerlies, waves fifty to a hundred feet high, the green water smashing over the bow and sweeping back out again. The New Year, a new person: Stanford losing himself. Over the Antarctic Convergence, past Elephant Island, the great blocks of rock and ice, flashing ribbons of snow, a shroud made of dark, drifting cloud, a sudden upthrusting glacier. Time passing and stopping. Stanford's gloved hands on the railing. Then the ice-encased mountains, seals and whales and pelagic birds, the air dazzlingly clear, the cascading ice blue, the mountain ridges of Gibbs Island, the penguins circling the ship, the crevassed ice cliffs sliding past as if not really there. Stanford's gloved hands in the air. A bird fluttering on the deck. More islands, more snowbanks, the penguins crowding on the rocks, Greenwich Island, green waves exploding fiercely, the spray drifting and settling. Then a white line in the distance. The approaching Antarctic Peninsula. Then the glaciers and icebergs, huge umbrellas and arches, flat white islands of sea ice, the grottoes and canyons and fjords reflecting sun on the green sea. A world like no other. Silent. Majestic. Sweeping plains of packed snow, soaring peaks of bright ice, the peaks yellow and pink and sometimes black, a blue sheen over all... Stanford opened his eyes again. He looked around him and shivered. He was now at the bottom of the world and could still not believe it.

He sat up on the bunk, yawned and blinked, glanced around

him, saw that the other bunks were already empty, the Norwegians out at their work. He sat there for some time, staring through the window opposite, seeing nothing but the wall of the dome that surrounded the base. Stanford couldn't believe it. He had finally arrived. He swung his legs off the bunk and stood up and dressed himself very quickly. The Nissen hut was long and bleak, a converted Army bar-racks, the blankets rumpled on the bunks, clothes and boots scattered all over the place, the walls covered in pinups. Stanford zipped up his jacket, shivered again and grabbed his gloves, then he walked along the hut, between the bunks, and went into the washroom. He splashed water on his face, combed his hair, put his hat on, made sure that his ears were well covered, and then looked in the mirror. A stranger stared back at him, a long-haired, bearded man, his eyes very hard and intense and possibly mad. Stanford wondered about that. The thought didn't bother him much. Then he turned and walked out of the hut and looked around the Norwegian base. The whole camp was in an enormous, glittering geodesic dome that shielded it from the wind and drifting snow. Beneath the dome there were mess halls, administration huts and living quarters, power plants and machine shops and garages. All the buildings were painted red, were square and rectangular, took the form of cylindrical Quonset huts, were made of corrugated steel. The generators were whining, the power plants humming quietly, as Stanford walked past the research laboratories for meteorology and atmospheric physics, past the library and medical center and radio masts, and stopped in front of the mess hall. He looked directly above him, studied the immense, glittering dome, then shrugged and went into the mess hall for a strong cup of coffee. It was a self-service canteen, the food stacked behind glass, plastic trays piled up beside the steel urns and the white plates and saucers. Stanford poured himself a coffee, studied the food and decided against it, turned away from the steel-framed glass cabinets and looked around the mess hall. Most of the tables were empty, the men already out at work. He

saw the pilot at a table near the wall, a large mug at his lips.
Stanford went to join the pilot, wending his way between the tables, a pulse beating nervously in his stomach, feeling bright and unreal. The pilot looked up and grinned, wiped some coffee from his beard, his hair, just like Stanford's, very long, a wild gleam in his eyes.
'Hi, ho,' he said. 'How's my buddy? He don't look too good.'
Stanford shrugged and pulled a chair out, sat down facing the pilot, noticed that his pupils were enlarged and did not feel encouraged.
'I'm fine, Rocky,' he said. 'Just wind me up and I'll go. One coffee - just one cup of coffee - and the day has begun.'
Rocky grinned and scratched his beard, inhaled luxuriously on his cigarette, blew the smoke out and filled the chilly air with the sweet smell of pot.
'Oh, my,' he said. 'Beautiful.'
'You're stoned,' Stanford said.
'Fucking right, I'm stoned,' Rocky said. 'A man needs a good breakfast.'
Stanford shrugged and sipped his coffee, let it burn down inside him, neither angry nor pleased about the pilot, knowing what he was like. Rocky was a freelance, working on commission for the Norwegians, a kid with scrambled brains and a history of Vietnam and the ability to fly just about anything under any conditions. The Norwegians called him the Mad Bomber. He lived up to his reputation. He would do things that no one else would do, and that's how Stanford got him. The other pilots avoided Neuschwabenland. It was forbidden to fly there. Stanford had learned that fact pretty quickly, and had thought he was sunk. Then he heard about Rocky. He started to get stoned with Rocky. He told Rocky where he wanted to go, and Rocky giggled with pleasure. Rocky liked the forbidden. He was just out for kicks. They had scrambled his brains in Vietnam and now he lived like a wild man. Still, he could fly. He had his own plane and crew. It was an old transport plane with skis attached, and Rocky knew how to handle it. He had loved the idea of the trip, had

wanted to see them goddamned UFOs. He had. like everyone else in the Antarctic, seen them flying around. Now he could see them up close. He couldn't wait to get in there. Rocky wanted to go down in a blaze of glory, stoned out of his skull.
'What's it like outside?' Stanford asked.
'Minus fifteen degrees Fahrenheit. I hope you've got your balls wrapped in velvet - you might lose them out there.' 'Rocky grinned and scratched his nose, inhaled some more marijuana, the pupils of his eyes very large, shielding sweet, secret dreams.
'Can you fly?' Stanford asked.
'Zip your lip,' Rocky said. 'I could fly that fucking airplane through a pinhole with a girl on my cock.' 'You must have tried it,' Stanford said. 'That's my secret,' Rocky said. 'Finish your coffee and let's get on the road. I don't want them to check us.'
'What did you tell them?' Stanford asked. 'That we were flying to Cape Norvegia. I said we were picking up some supplies, and the dumb cunts believed me.' Rocky giggled at the thought of it, finished his smoke and stood up, looking large in his boots and padded clothes, a pair of gloves in his right hand. 'Okay,' he said, 'let's get the fuck out of here and have us a good time.'
Stanford gulped down his coffee, grabbed his gloves and stood up, then he and Rocky walked out of the mess hall and headed straight for the airstrip. Stanford glanced around him constantly, still not used to being here, the geodesic dome soaring above him, sunlight pouring down through it. They passed the power plants and garages, saw a line of snow tractors, cut around a cylindrical Quonset hut, approached a door in the curved wall. They both put their gloves on. Stanford followed Rocky out. His boots sank into snow, a glaring brightness stung his eyes, then the cold clamped around him like a vise and rushed into his lungs.
Ice. All ice. Hills and valleys made of ice. The sun was shining and it flashed off the ice and the light almost blinded him. It was incredibly beautiful. It nearly took his breath away.

There was nothing out there but the ice and the bright, flash-ing light. The ice went out to the horizon. The sky was very blue. He looked up at the sky and saw a green field surrounded by more ice. The sky acted as a mirror. It reflected the land below. The green field was an ice-free mass of land twenty miles to the west Stanford looked all around him. The view never failed to stun him. The ice was everywhere - at his feet, up in the sky - and he stared at it and thought it was beautiful and mysteriously frightening.

They both walked across the snow, both bulky in their heavy clothes, putting their gloves on and breathing clouds of steam, a light frost on their beards. The airstrip was fairly close, nestling under a towering ice cliff, the lowest peak two hundred feet above the planes, the sky a white haze above.

Tucking crazy,' Rocky said. 'I can't believe we're really doing it. I mean, you say we're going to see some flying saucers, and that's it; we're off. We must both be fucking mad. You must be as mad as me. What the fuck are you going to do if you see them? Just answer that question.'

'I'm going in there,' Stanford said.

'From what I've heard, that would be nuts.'

'You can land about ten miles from the mountain and I'll take the snow tractor.'

'It's really true then?' Rocky asked.

'It's really true,' Stanford said. 'All the UFOs you've seen were real, all the rumors you heard were true: there's a colony buried deep in those mountains and they've got flying saucers.'

Rocky shook his head with wonder. 'Oh, boy,' he said, 'that's great. That's absolutely fanfuckingtastic and it's blowing my mind.'

Rocky giggled with pleasure, rolled his stoned, crazy eyes, the frost thickening on his bushy red beard, the sun flashing around him. 'I just can't wait,' he said. 'What a wild, fucking gig. What a story to tell when I'm senile. I won't believe it myself.'

They were on the edge of the airstrip, a wall of ice towering above them, a fine snow drifting lazily around their feet,

their eyes watering with cold. A helicopter was taking off, its rotors whipping the snow up, its image reflected in the wall of ice as it climbed past the cliff. They walked across to Rocky's airplane, an old and battered transport, its green fuselage decorated with pinups and colorful comments. The plane was sitting on long skis, the door open, the ladder down, and a couple of men were standing in the doorway, their fur collars turned up.

'All set?' Rocky asked.

'Smooth as butter,' one of the men said. 'But we better take off pretty quick. I think they're getting suspicious.'

'Norwegian shitheads,' Rocky said. 'They're okay,' the man said. They've just had a few complaints from the Russians - those fuckers said you'd been buzzing them.'

Rocky giggled and shook his head. 'Lord have mercy,' he said. Them Ruskies weren't telling any lies; I buzzed Novolazarevskaya.'

The man in the aircraft grinned. That's what you did,' he said. The Russians said you were lower than their radar, almost pissing on top of them.'

Rocky giggled again. 'What the fuck?' he said happily. 'A man needs a little action now and then to keep boredom at bay.'

'You were stoned,' the other man said. 'Happy days, I was stoned.'

'Some day they're gonna boot you in the ass and send you back to Alaska.' 'Some day,' Rocky said.

He climbed up into the airplane, followed closely by Stanford, and they made their way along to the cockpit, past the heavy snow tractor. Stanford heard the ladder rattling, the door shrieking and then slamming, the sound echoing around the aircraft and making his ears ring.

'Here we go,' Rocky said. 'You can sit in the copilot's seat. The guys there, they'll sit in the back and look after the tractor.'

Stanford nodded and sat down, strapping himself into the seat, his eyes taking in the control panel, the mass of switches and indicators in front of him, above him, to his right, the engineer's chair behind him. Rocky sighed and pursed his lips, flicked a couple of switches, and Stanford looked out through the glass and plastic windshield at the strange world before him. All white. Everything. The sun flashed off the ice. The airplane suddenly bellowed and shuddered and roared into life.

There's no traffic control,' Rocky said. That's the blessing of this burg. They just tell you what time you can leave, and then you get up and go. Hold on to your seat.'

The plane moved forward slowly, the strip running between banks of snow, a broad line narrowing down to a pinpoint at the base of a towering cliff. The cliff was made of ice, the sun flashing off its face, the peaks sharply defined against the sky that changed from white haze to blue. The plane shuddered and roared, picked up speed, started racing, passing trucks and sun-reflecting radar bowls that were framed by the glistening snow. Then the strip was racing around them, the white cliff spreading out, growing taller as the plane rushed straight at it as if about to go through it Stanford took hold of his seat, took a deep breath, nearly panicked, then Rocky giggled and the plane jumped off the runway, going into a steep climb. Stanford kept hold of his seat. The plane was shuddering and rattling. He saw the wall of the cliff, the blinding eye of the sun, then the glistening white peaks passed below and the plane leveled out.

'Jesus,' Stanford hissed.

'Hi, ho,' Rocky said. 'Nothing like a little bit of action to get rid of the cobwebs.'

The panorama was immense, a sweeping vista of packed ice, snow falls and glinting glaciers, low mountain peaks framed against a sky of unbelievable clarity. Nothing moved in that landscape, nothing broke its frozen silence; the fierce light of the sun poured down on it and was then devoured by it Earth and sky became one - the sky reflected the ice

below - and the rays of the sun were distorted and formed luminous arches. All white. Everything. The towering glaciers were like prisms. The light flashed and swept out in white lines that merged with dazzling white snowfalls. 'Queen Maud Land,' Rocky said. 'We're flying along the zero meridian. We should reach Neuschwabenland in forty minutes if we don't get lost first.' 'What happens if we keep going?'

'We cross the fucking South Pole. Then north becomes south, fucking east becomes west, and we have us a smoke and say our prayers until we run out of gasoline.' 'Don't get lost,' Stanford said.

'I'll do my best,' Rocky said. 'We'll circle over the mountains, we'll try to find that hidden base, then we'll turn back and land five miles away and go in with the tractor.' 'You're coming with me?' Stanford asked. 'Fucking right,' Rocky said. 'I'm not giving you this goddamned trip for free - I want to see all them saucers.'

'It might be difficult,' Stanford said. There's supposed to be a force field around the area. It's designed to make engines malfunction and bring down the aircraft.' 'It might be true,' Rocky said. 'A lot of planes were lost out there. That's why we're not allowed there anymore - and why I lied to those bastards.'

'So what do we do?' Stanford asked.

'We just stay at high altitude. That means we won't see very much, but it's better than nothing. We'll land near the mountains anyway. We'll go in on the snow tractor. We just have to see that circle of ice caps to know where we're going.'

Stanford looked down below, saw the dazzling white landscape, the peaks of glaciers merging with the snow, revealed only by flashing light. He felt tense and excited, a pulse beating in his stomach, closed his eyes and thought of where he had come from and still couldn't believe it. He had left the past behind him. He could never return. He had found out too much, was a threat, and would have to be wiped out. Stanford opened his eyes again. A sweeping white plain filled

his vision. Looking at it, he realized that he had come to the end of the road. There was nowhere else to run to. There was nowhere to hide. If he managed to return from the Antarctic, he would find no safe place. Finally, he was trapped. He was one of the hunted. He was at the lowest point on the Earth and could travel no farther. So what about Epstein? What would he do if he found his old friend? The contracts would be out on them both and the hunters would find them. Stanford sighed and looked below. He saw a boundless white terrain. It was a wilderness of drifting snow and ice, and might yet be his resting place. Stanford didn't really care. It didn't matter anymore. He saw the white world sweeping out to meet the sky, and suddenly felt a great peace.

'Holy fuck,' Rocky said.

Stanford followed his pointing finger, saw the radiant blue sky, great circles of white light spreading out and forming luminous patterns. He was used to that by now, knew the tricks of the Antarctic, leaned forward and looked even harder at what Rocky was pointing at. Something flashed and disappeared. The rings of light framed the blue sky. He kept looking and he saw the flash again about nine o'clock high. It came and went in an instant Before he blinked, it came again. This time it was much further down, a brief flash and then nothing.

'Over there,' Rocky said. 'It's changed position... Jesus Christ, now there's two of them!'

Stanford followed his pointing finger. He saw two pulsating lights. They were west of the plane, flying level with it, pacing it, two dime-sized pulsating white lights in the light-streaked blue sky. Stanford shook his head and stared. The two lights were now three. The third light had just suddenly winked on as if it had always been there. Rocky whooped with excitement. The lights were flying in formation. They formed the three points of a triangle and kept abreast of the plane.

'It might be nothing,' Stanford said. 'It might be atmospheric phenomena.'

'No way,' Rocky said. Those lights are moving. Those motherfuckers are pacing us ... There they go ... Jesus Christ!'
The three lights broke apart, moving slowly, serenely, one climbing and one dropping down until they formed a long line. It was a precise, vertical line, pacing the plane, pulsating brightly, the three lights about a hundred feet apart, one on top of the other. Rocky whooped with excitement. Stanford just stared, entranced. The lights pulsated against the vivid blue sky and outshone the fierce sunlight. Then they suddenly exploded - not exploded: disappeared - were suddenly over and under the plane as two large, silvery discs. The plane vibrated violently. It was sandwiched between the saucers. The saucers glittered above and below the plane and were a hundred feet wide. Then the plane just cut out. Rocky wrestled with the controls. Glancing down, Stanford saw a curving stretch of metallic gray; looking up he saw the base of the other saucer, a black hole right above him. It was a stark, total blackness, denying definition, so deep that it was more like a hole than anything solid. Stanford blinked and it was gone. The silent plane plummeted downward. Stanford saw the brilliant snow, the glinting peaks of the glaciers, two lights streaking down to join a third, the whole sky disappearing. The plane dived and Rocky cursed, fighting vainly with the controls, then the engine suddenly roared back into life and the plane leveled out. Stanford saw the sky again, swinging down and then steadying, saw the lights streaking toward a line of mountains and then winking out.
'Holy shit,' Rocky said. 'What the hell's happening here?' One of the men had come up from the rear, wiping blood from his nose. 'We nearly lost the snow tractor. I nearly got my head smashed. What the fuck are you doing, diving like that? That fucking place was bananas.' 'We had an accident,' Rocky said. 'What the hell does that mean? This fucking plane went as

dead as a doornail and damned nearly killed us.'
'It's okay', Rocky said. 'I made a little mistake. Stop worry, ing. It won't happen again. Don't get your balls in a knot.'
'You're fucking crazy,' the man said.
'That's right, I'm fucking crazy. Now get your ass back in that plane and keep your eyes on the tractor.'
The man vanished back inside. Stanford stared straight ahead. Rocky pulled the plane up, climbing gradually, gain-ing altitude, glanced at Stanford, his eyes large and wild, beads of sweat on his forehead. Stanford stared down at the mountains, saw the snow-swept brown peaks, stark shadows breaking up the white cliffs where great canyons divided them.
'That's it,' Rocky said. 'And that's where the fuckers went You were right, holy shit, you were right they're hiding somewhere down there.'
'You better climb,' Stanford said.
'Just what I'm doing,' Rocky said. Though I don't know that it'll do any good if those bastards come back again. Did you see how fast they moved? And they definitely killed the engine. The plane was dead, but it just kept on going as if by pure magic. I still can't believe it. I just don't believe it's possible. But those fuckers killed the engine, they carried us along somehow, then they just moved away and let us drop - and I don't understand that'
Rocky shook his head in wonder, pulled the plane up, kept climbing, leveled out when he felt that it was safe, muttering under his breath. They were approaching the mountains, flying high above the peaks, saw the sunlight flashing on and off the ice and forming faint, shifting rainbows. There was more color there: the peaks were tinged with pink and green, the light beating off the ice and making arches of yellow and gold. The mountain peaks were free of snow, thrusting up to the sky, a white haze that faded into violet and then became brilliant blue. Stanford felt overwhelmed, his eyes glued to the terrain, seeing the shadows of canyons and ravines as black scars on the glaring white.

'Fuck,' Rocky said. 'We're too high. We won't see a damned thing.'
They were above the mountains now, turning west and flying along them, gazing down on a ribbon of black shadow and flashing light, an indication of ravines and ice peaks, a ribboned scar through pure white. Then the plane started coughing, started spluttering and vibrating, dipped down and then picked up again, the engine dangerously malfunction-big. Rocky cursed and glanced at Stanford. They both looked down at the mountains. They saw the ribbon of shadow and light splitting in two, the two ribbons curving out and then returning to form a shadowy circle.
'That's it.' Rocky screamed.
'Yes,' Stanford said, 'that's it And we're just on the edge of the force field. You better go higher.'
'Jesus Christ, can you see it?
'Yes, Rocky, I can see it. Now let's get the hell out of here and land somewhere safe.'
Rocky shook his head in wonder, started changing direction, circling around and heading back where they had come from, muttering under his breath. Stanford sighed and looked down, saw the circle passing below them, the boundless white terrain all around it, a blank, frozen wilderness. Then he blinked and looked again, saw two lights fanning out, streaking up in opposite directions from the glaciers, fanning out at incredible speed and then just disappearing. Stanford looked down on the mountain, shook his head and then looked up, saw a light shooting away to the west, blinking out, leaving nothing.
Stanford couldn't believe it, turned his head and looked east, saw a light rising vertically, then stopping, then racing toward him. He shouted something at Rocky. He didn't know what it was. The light ballooned into a massive, flaring disc that shot past them and disappeared. The plane shrieked and rocked violently, was bathed in radiant light, the light racing away and shrinking in the west and then shooting up vertically. The plane steadied down again. Rocky glanced around

him wildly. The man came out of the rear and said, 'Hey, what the fuck?' and then the light from the west raced back again and shot past and was gone. 'Jesus Christ!' Rocky said. A light shot out of the east and then exploded and shot by them and disappeared. The man behind them was thrown sideways. The lights exploded over the plane and passed each other and disappeared on both sides of them. The man behind them was cursing. Equipment shot off the walls and flew around and formed a shocking cacophony. Rocky fought with the controls. Stanford looked east and west. The lights were pin-points in the distance, racing in at incredible speed, suddenly ballooning above the plane as massive discs of flaring light, rocking the plane, then racing away in opposite directions, becoming pinpoints again.

'Holy shit! We can't beat them!'

Rocky fought with the controls, tried to keep the plane steady, was defeated every time the discs shot past and stopped as pinpoints some miles away. The plane shrieked and rocked wildly, the holding bay now in chaos, the man behind them screaming incoherently as he rolled on the floor. Stanford looked east and west, saw the pinpoints of light, blinked and saw the huge, flaring discs exploding overhead, shrinking. The plane rocked even more. It was coughing and spluttering. The discs raced back and forth, from east to west, and kept passing each other.

Stanford watched them, amazed. He hardly thought of the bucking plane. He was fascinated by the speed and capability of the two flying saucers. They raced in and rushed away. Stanford tried to see them properly. He put his head back and looked straight above him, but it didn't help much. The flying saucers were too fast. They passed faster than he blinked. He saw nothing but a flaring mass that divided and disappeared. Then he looked east and west. He saw the pinpoints of light. They climbed vertically, then dropped down again and then flared out above him. The plane rocked when they passed, the engine spluttered on and off, and the two men in the holding bay were

screaming as equipment fell over them.
'We're going down!' Rocky bawled. The horizon shot above the cockpit, the white plains spreading out, sunlight flashing on and off the iced peaks around the edge of the mountains. Rocky tried to pull the plane up, fought the control column, cursed as the plane spiraled downward, heading straight for the mountains. The fierce light flared out above them, seemed to race through the cockpit, disappeared as the plane shrieked and shook and went out of control. The discs appeared out of nowhere. This time they passed over and under before shooting away. Stanford couldn't believe it They had sandwiched the falling plane, had passed so close he thought they must crush it, were now pinpoints again. The plane roared and kept plummeting. The shadowed mountains spun below them. He heard Rocky screaming a stream of abuse as the mountains rushed at them.
First the sky, then the white plains, then the spinning black shadows, then the flashing of glaciers and ice caps and the dark, jagged canyons. The plane kept diving, its engine roaring, then dying, the mountains spreading out and then spinning and becoming a jigsaw. Rocky screamed his abuse. The men were bawling in the rear. Stanford looked down, mesmerized, seeing light-reflecting ice, the great snowfalls leading into dark canyons of brown earth and ocher rock. It spread out and spun around. Walls of ice shot up around them. Dazzling light flared up and swept through the cockpit and then became darkness. The plane lurched and leveled out, raced along an ice-free canyon. A glowing disc, about a hundred feet wide, was keeping pace just below it. Stanford stared down, blinked his eyes and looked up. There was another enormous disc above the plane, a black silver-edged, whirlpool. The plane didn't make a sound. The saucers made a whipping noise. They were so close to the plane, they almost touched it, and they swept it on forward. Then the black hole was gone. The sky exploded above

them. The plane roared and climbed steeply toward the snow and then was out on its own again. It left the canyon far below. There was no sign of the saucers. The plane leveled out and raced across a gleaming ice cap that surmounted a mountain ridge. Rocky whooped and grinned wildly and grabbed the control column. Stanford looked down and saw a round shadow racing over the ice cap. 'Shit, no!' Rocky howled. Stanford jerked his head back. He looked up and saw a dime-sized, glowing disc, growing bigger, descending.

'Not again!' Rocky bawled.

First the sky, then the saucer, a black whirlpool above them, stretching out fifty feet on either side, a swirling silver-edged glowing mass. The plane's engine cut out. The swirling mass pressed them down. Rocky fought with the control column and then screamed more abuse. Stanford looked up at the saucer. He couldn't define what he was seeing. He was looking at a swirling dark mass that pulsated and glowed. It defied the laws of science. It was black and filled with light. It glowed and was devoid of all color, had no depth and seemed hollow. Stanford looked up and was foiled. He didn't know what he was seeing. Then it flared up and changed, became a dull, metallic gray, possibly spinning, its rim glowing and pulsating, racing in, shooting skyward. Stanford blinked and it was gone. He looked down when Rocky screamed. The plane was just above the ice cap, racing across the glassy surface, the ice rushing up and spreading out around them and becoming a white blur.

'Hold on!' Rocky screamed.

The skis touched down and screeched, chopped the ice and sent it flying, a white storm that howled and raged all around them and pummeled the fuselage. The plane bounced up and down, the skis chopping and screeching, blocks of ice and great chunks of packed snow sweeping past in fierce white clouds. The noise was hellish, almost deafening, reverberating around the cockpit as the skis chopped through the ice and dug deep and finally buried themselves. Stanford saw the spinning sky, his head exploding, stars streaming, heard

screeching and hissing and bawling, felt breathless and bruised. He opened his eyes and saw Rocky, swirling snow beyond the windshield, Rocky jackknifed, slumped forward, hanging over his safety belt, jerking upright and shaking his head, the snow settling down again. 'Jesus Christ. We've just landed.'

Rocky grinned and stared at Stanford, a wild light in his eyes, shook his head again, unsnapped his safety belt, slithered out of his seat. Stanford quickly did the same, felt the pains shooting through him, twisted out of his seat and followed Rocky back into the holding bay. He saw the eyes of the other men, four large eyes, glazed with shock, floating hopelessly in the gloom of the holding bay, a scene of chaos behind them. Rocky waved his hands and bawled, pushed the men, took command, not giving them time to think about it, moving quickly and ruthlessly.

'Okay!' he bawled. 'Get that fucking ramp down! Let's get the hell out of here!'

The ramp crashed down to the snow, a dazzling bright-ness pouring in, the two men silhouetted in glaring white, the plane filled with an icy chill. Stanford stepped forward slowly, his bones aching, head spinning, saw Rocky's hands waving in the air, felt the cold creeping into him.

'Right!' Rocky bawled. 'Fucking great! You're doing fine! Now let's get the snow tractor out! Okay! Move your asses!' The silhouettes became men, moving back toward the tractor, light flashing in striations all around them as they unsnapped the clamps. There was a sharp, metallic sound, the clamps banging on the floor, as Stanford passed the men and went to the ramp and looked up at the sky. A white sheen filled with blue, stunning clarity, no clouds; he looked and saw a gray sphere in the sky, very high, hovering silently. Rocky bawled, his voice echoing, blending in with screeching steel, then the snow tractor, gray and unwieldy, slid down the sloped ramp. Stanford shivered, felt the cold, saw the men filing past him, stopped Rocky and pointed at the sky, saw his bearded friend nodding. They both walked down the ramp,

then climbed up into the tractor. Stanford studied the other men, their large eyes, the glaze of fear, then the tractor sud-denly roared and lurched forward and headed east, going nowhere.

There was nowhere to go. They were on a high plateau. The ice cap was a flat white terrain that stretched around them for miles. The tractor whipped the snow up. It swirled around them and froze them. Stanford saw a white ribbon of land between the sky and the ice cap. That land was thousands of feet below them. There might be no way down. Stanford thought about that and felt nothing but a cold, blinding rage.

'Jesus Christ!' Rocky hissed.

First the light, then the gloom, the snow blowing around them, a humming, a vibrating, a savage jolting sensation, a black hole one hundred feet in diameter hovering quietly above them. Someone cursed, someone screamed, the tractor slid to the left, Rocky hissing a stream of abuse. The saucer stayed there, kept humming, its base a black hole, letting the tractor move, quietly forcing it forward. Stanford felt a fierce pressure, grabbed a handle, looked behind him, saw the gray metallic surface of the saucer sweeping up to a glass dome. Maybe glass, maybe not; it didn't really make much difference: the saucer was huge and awe-inspiring, looming over the tractor.

'Fucking cunts! They'll just bury us!'

Rocky bawled his defiance, pushed the tractor to its limits, racing over the ice cap, fighting through the snow, heading into a featureless white haze that offered them nothing. Stanford looked up at the saucer, saw the rotating black base, its surface sweeping up to the dome and reflecting the sunlight The saucer appeared to be motionless, always stayed the same distance, was not motionless, was inching forward slowly, whipping the snow up. Rocky cursed and tried to lose it, swung the tractor left and right, the snow whirling and hissing and devouring them and forming a curtain.

The tractor raced across the ice cap, not knowing where it

was going, pushed forward by the fiercely swirling snow that the saucer whipped up. It raced right through eternity, time frozen, all frozen: the men and the tractor and the landscape and the saucer above them. Rocky cursed, Stanford stared saw the other two men, one cracking and screaming and shaking and waving his hands. He tried to leap off the tractor, was pulled back by his friend, both falling down and rolling on the floor. Stanford shivered and glanced up, numbed by cold, filled with rage, and saw the black base of the saucer as it came down upon them.

Then the laser beams shot down, burning through the snow, two beams of pulsating yellow light that split the ice right in front of them. The ice cracked in jagged lines, spewing steam and spinning diamonds, hissing and snapping and exploding with an earthquake's fierce venom. Rocky cursed and whirled around, was flung forward, hands outstretched, as the tractor crashed down into a crevice and the laser beams vanished. Rocky spinning, Stanford saw it, his own body jackknifing, rolling over and exploding with pain, his feet finding the floor again. The tractor roared and whipped the snow up, tilted downward, going nowhere, a much stronger, more devastating storm howling wildly around them. Stanford stood up, felt lost, heard a wretched, shocked sobbing, saw the dark mass of the saucer just above, now obscured by the swirling snow. The sobbing turned into a scream, a pair of hands waving wildly, the man pushing his friend to the floor and clambering over the side. Stanford saw him, did nothing, thought of nothing, felt dreamlike, was pushed forward by a pair of strong hands and urged over the side. He dropped down into the snow, was whipped by it, numbed totally, saw the dark mass in the sky, the three shadowy forms just ahead, stumbling blindly and bawling. First the wind, then the snow, then the dark mass, then the whiteout, then the running, crouched low, seeing nothing, then the beam of bright light. The beam swept across their path, and they ran, leaping forward, heard a scream and turned around and saw a man sinking down, disappearing.

The ice snapped and the chasm widened, falling down a thousand feet, and they turned away and plunged into the storm, the dark saucer above them. Stanford heard a shocking scream, couldn't tell one man from the other, saw a rigid beam of light shining down upon a dancing black shadow The man quivered and spun around, his face briefly illuminated. Then he jerked and fell back, his eyes bright in the light, and the snarling ice split and opened wide and then swallowed him whole.

Stanford turned back and ran, turned right and saw the other unknown man as a shadowy form. They ran together, as one, moving blindly, not thinking, pushed forward by the dark mass above them, each leaning on the other. Then the beams of light shot down, the lasers cutting the ice, the ice snapping and hissing and streaming and exploding around them. They both stopped, feeling trapped, both alone with a shadow, then they moved, running around the beams of light, the snow shredding their skin. Too late: they saw the end. A beam of light shot between them. Stanford jumped back and stumbled and fell and heard the other man screaming. Then darkness, the snapping sound of ice splitting, the dying echo of the man plunging down a thousand feet to his death. Then the silence. And nothing.

Stanford lay there on his back, the snow settling down, his flesh numb, his bones aching, head spinning, the brilliant daylight returning. He watched the saucer descending, no longer glowing, enormous and very real in the sunlight, descending gently and quietly. Stanford sat up, fell back, pressed his hands into the snow, gasped loudly and turned around onto his belly, saw the radiant blue sky. He was near the edge of the ice cap, two thousand feet above the lowlands, his eyes drinking in a stunning panorama of white, frozen wilderness. It was too much, too blinding, too remote to be real, and he sighed and rolled onto his back and then forced himself upright. The saucer swept out before him, an enormous steel dome, resting lightly on the snow of the ice cap, the sun flashing around it.

Stanford studied the saucer. He felt cold and very calm. He sat there on the ice, in the snow and the silence, a white wilderness two thousand feet below, a radiant blue sky above. Stanford sat there and waited.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

Stanford waited a long time, his eyes fixed on the gleaming saucer, the snow drifting lazily around him, the silence un-broken. The saucer seemed enormous, its sloping walls a seamless gray, sweeping up to a dome of what looked like opaque yellow glass. The dome was thirty-five feet high, the saucer three times that in length, sunlight beating down and flashing off the gray steel and turning it white. All white. Everything. The land and sky looked the same. There was no definition, no sense of direction; just a glaring, white void all around him, a stark, total silence.

The saucer didn't move, made no sound, offered nothing, was simply spread out across the ice cap as if actually part of it. Stanford sat there and studied it, feeling cold and very calm, occasionally glancing at the white haze all around him, a light frost slowly covering him. The saucer didn't move. It made no sound at all. After a long time, feeling the cold eating at him, Stanford climbed to his feet. His bones were bruised and aching, his flesh numb, his head light, and he stood there for a moment, uncertain, the snow drifting around him. Then he walked toward the saucer, feeling smaller, more unreal, stopped a few feet away from its near edge and saw it towering above him. He stared as it with wonder. The steel swept up to the dome, very smooth, totally seamless, curving down and then under at its edge, becoming part of the base. There were no doors or win-

dows, no visible lights. He looked up at the opaque yellow dome, but it was vague in the white haze. Stanford stood there, bemused. The saucer filled his line of vision. He stepped forward, stopped close to the curved edge, then reached out and touched it

The metal felt like sandpaper. Stanford ran his fingers across it. He felt air, or he thought he felt air, and then he stepped closer to it. The metal was porous, the holes smaller than grains of sand, scraping imperceptibly against his fingers and releasing trapped air. Stanford smiled and looked closer, examining the curved edge, saw very fine, almost invisible lines crisscrossing each other. The lines formed various rectangles, some small and some large, swept up to the opaque yellow dome, were dissected by other lines. Stanford studied them carefully. There was a low-pitched, humming sound. Panels slid up around the curved edge to reveal hidden lights.

Stanford stood there, not moving. The lights were covered with convex glass, various colors, the glass thick and opaque and rippling slightly. None of the lights were on. The low-pitched humming sound grew louder. A series of panels slid up where the sloping surface was almost vertical, revealing a very long, rectangular window that curved around the whole saucer. The windows glowed with violet light, then this changed to whitish yellow. A group of shadowy forms were lined along the window, obviously staring at Stanford.

Stanford stood there, waiting patiently. There was a muffled, hissing sound. A large section of the curved wall moved forward, tilting back from its top edge. It slid out on large white hinges, tilting back, moving forward, the front edge finally touching the ground, the back edge in the saucer. The section of wall was now a ramp. It led up into the saucer. Stanford stared at the large, rectangular opening and saw a white wall beyond it. The men at the windows were looking at him. The windows were well above the door. Stanford smiled and then walked up the ramp and found himself in a corridor.

The inner wall was white and blank. There were windows

on the other wall. These windows were behind the gray shell of the saucer's body. The corridor curved away from him and obviously ran around the saucer. Stanford then heard a sharp, hissing sound as the door closed behind him. He stood there in the corridor. He waited, but no one came. There was a muffled sound all around him, above him, below him. Intrigued, he started walking. He felt no fear at all. The humming sound was filling his head and it made him relax. The corridor curved around the saucer, the white walls and celing arched, then a door slid across the space in front of him and forced him to stop.

There was a room to his left, the walls white, a perfect circle, broken up by the rectangular windows at which the men had been standing. A small hunchbacked man walked forward, waved a beautiful white hand. Stanford stepped into the circular room and stopped close to the hunchback. 'You're all right?' the hunchback asked. 'I think so,' Stanford said.

'I'm Rudiger,' the hunchback said. 'Please don't worry. We will take you down now.'

Stanford stared around the room. It was shaped like a large dome. The walls were covered with control panels and consoles and what looked like computers. There were eight men in the room. They were mostly very small. Some were young boys and some were Ache Indians, three were fair-skinned and middle-aged. About half of them wore masks, the masks made of thin metal, covering their noses and mouths, molded close to the skin. Stanford stared, fascinated. The boys and Indians were at the consoles, sitting down in chairs fixed to the floor, the control panels flickering. The other men looked at Stanford, not smiling, their eyes cold, then they turned away and sat in other chairs, turning knobs, flicking switches. The computers started flashing. The muffled sound grew louder. Stanford felt a light vibration, thought he felt it, wasn't sure, then he looked down at the small man with the hunch-back, saw his luminous brown eyes. 'Come,' the hunchback said. He was smiling and waving

his hands. The hands had an unusual delicacy, a feminine grace. 'Come,' he said. 'I will show you.'

He led Stanford across the floor, up some steps to a raised platform, the floor running right around the dome, above the computers and consoles. The long windows were there. Stanford stood beside the hunchback. The ice cap was shrinking beneath him, blending in with the mountains, the glittering snowfalls of the wilderness spreading out until they touched the horizon. The saucer was ascending, climbing vertically, leisurely, then it stopped, or seemed to stop -Stanford didn't feel a thing - then it moved horizontally, as if backward, and then dropped down again.

There was no sense of motion. The saucer dropped down at the speed of an elevator, falling into the mountains. The mountain peaks climbed up around them, first the rock, then blocks of snow, then the sheer, towering walls of blue ice, turning green, disappearing.

They were moving faster now. The saucer was flying horizontally. Walls of algae and plankton, green rocks splashed with white, were sweeping past on both sides of the saucer as it raced through a canyon. There was no sense of motion. He thought he felt a light vibration. He looked down and saw the rim of the saucer, metallic gray in a glowing haze. Then he looked ahead again, saw the canyon walls parting, opening out around a lake, the lake whipping out of sight, more snow, more brown earth, a dazzling green spreading outward, then an enormous, round valley, the white cliffs soaring skyward, the ice flashing and fading away above the earth and becoming pure rock. The saucer swept across the valley, the green earth rushing at them, then the rushing earth slowed down, almost stopped, then rose gently to greet them.

Stanford didn't feel a thing. There was no sense of movement The saucer drifted, or appeared to drift, across the broad valley, heading toward the towering cliffs that surrounded it and cast monstrous shadows. The hunchback raised a hand and pointed. Stanford stared straight ahead. He saw the mouths of large natural caves at the base of the ice-free cliffs.

'We go in there,' the hunchback said.
Stanford glanced at the rim of the saucer, saw the pulsating glow dying, saw the panels around the rim opening to expose all the lights. Then the lights started flashing, left to right, right to left, a kaleidoscope of green and blue and orange and violet, flashing right around the rim of the saucer as it moved forward slowly. The caves expanded as they approached, became enormous dark tunnels, and the saucer drifted into a tunnel, its colored lights flashing on and off, Stanford saw natural rock, the glint of moisture and moss, saw a pinpoint of light far ahead, growing bigger each second. First a pinpoint, then a dime, then a glowing balloon, then an enormous round exit racing at them and pouring light over them.
Stanford saw another valley, almost roofed in with cliffs, the rocks forming an umbrella above, the sun flashing through crevices. The valley floor was far below, broken up by silvery domes, some minute, some looking quite large, the ground around them a deep brown. The saucer hovered and then descended, dropping slowly, almost leisurely; it appeared to bob up and down gently, yet Stanford felt nothing. He looked down on the silvery domes, at first mistook them for geodesic domes, watched them rising up and growing larger and taking shape as more saucers. Stanford stared at them, bemused. The valley spread out around him. The saucer dropped past a soaring wall of glinting gray metal, and Stanford looked back up and saw a flying saucer as big as a cathedral: one of the legendary carrying ships. The saucer touched down gently. The hunchback looked up and smiled. Stanford gazed through the window, saw a large square steel platform, the flashing lights around the saucer's rim winking out one by one. The metal panels slid back down. The rim looked smooth and seamless. The steel platform was above the ground, thrusting out from the cliff face, fronting a tunnel from which a group of men emerged, bareheaded, wearing coveralls. They were all very big, their lower faces in silvery masks, and they pushed a mobile lounge

against the saucer as the door angled down. The door was swallowed by the mobile lounge. The lounge was pushed against the saucer; its angled edge had been perfectly contoured to the saucer's sloped surface.

'We go out now,' the hunchback said.

He led Stanford down the steps, across the dome-shaped white room, past the adolescents in coveralls, the Ache cyborgs in the chairs, their mouths and noses sealed and rendered useless, their narrow eyes dulled and fathomless. Stanford looked at them, accepted them, left the room with the hunchback, followed him back along the curving white corridor with its row of sealed windows.

They turned onto the ramp, the tunnel-shaped lounge sweeping over them, the walls white, the floors white, the windows framing nearby rock, passed through the lounge and walked along a tunnel that had invisible lighting. The tunnel was fairly long and had been hacked out of the rock; it obviously ran into the bowels of the mountain, and was surprisingly warm.

Stanford followed the hunchback, studied his strangely lovely hands, was struck by their feminine delicacy, the crude contrast of powerful arms. Then they both left the tunnel, stepping into brilliant light, crossed a catwalk that loomed above a workshop of massive dimensions. Stanford saw jibs and cranes, the enormous roaring machines, sheets of metal, dull gray and all shapes, being swung to and fro. There were hundreds of workers down there, long steel tables, steaming vats, blast furnaces and tall, screeching drills, immense, saucer-shaped skeletons.

Stanford stopped to survey it, was pushed forward by a cyborg, saw an oblong metal plate in his fist, let it touch him, was shocked by it. It was a sharp, electric shock, jolting fiercely through his shoulder, and he jumped away and followed the hunchback, his arm stinging and burning. They passed through another tunnel, crossed a steel-plated room, rows of frosted glass cabinets on the shelves, naked bodies inside them. Stanford stared at them, startled, felt the chill in

the room, then recovered and followed the hunchback through a door that led into another room.

This room was a laboratory, steel-plated, very large, the walls climbing to a ceiling of chiseled rock that was part of the mountain. The staff looked quite normal, men and women in white smocks, reading and writing, peering down through microscopes, checking printouts and gauges and thermom-eters, working quietly, intently. What was different were the specimens in the cages and glass jars: human heads, pump-ing hearts, floating brains and intestines, the naked body sitting upright in a chair, a wire frame where its head had been. The frame was shaped like a human head, was made from crisscrossing wires, contained flashing bulbs and fuses and copper coils, wires and tubes running out of it. The wires and tubes ran to a console, were plugged into various sock-ets, the console flashing and buzzing, activating the headless body, its arms rising and falling, legs kicking: a puppet of flesh and blood. Stanford looked and turned away, saw the hunchback smiling at him, felt the sting of the electric fist in his back, and followed the dwarf through another door. They passed through a sort of warehouse, its walls hacked out of the mountain, refrigerated and couched in semidark-ness, filled with tables and cabinets. Stanford tried not to look, felt horrified and fascinated, his head level with the cabinets, the tables all around him, his eyes drawn against their will to what was present: the nightmare of progress. The cabinets kept the meat frozen, arms and legs, hands and feet, wires extending from bloody necks and stumps, electrodes sprouting from sliced skulls. The tables were much worse, the human subjects not completed: here a steel chin and nose, there a woman with plastic breasts, here a torso with metal legs, valves and tubes instead of genitals, there a chest with the flesh peeled off the bone, its hydraulic heart gleaming. Other cabinets contained the hardware: the exoskeletons and pacemakers, the percutaneous power connections, the bifurcated blood vessels and aortic valves and silicone boosters, the orthopedic braces and cobalt joints and

piezoelectric generators - the stainless steel and chromium the meat and bone, of those picked to be cyborgs.
'Jesus Christ,' Stanford said.
The metal fist thumped his spine, the electric shock stabbing through him, and he gasped and followed the hunchback past the tables, the cyborg padding behind him. They walked through another door, passed more bodies in cabinets, the glass frosted, the graph needles not moving, and then came to another door. The hunchback stepped aside, bowed low, waved one hand, and Stanford walked through the door and was dazzled by bright light and plate glass.
He was in a dome-shaped room, its white metal walls gleaming, enormous windows running right around the wall, framing clear sky and mountain peaks. Between the windows there were doors, steel-plated, all closed, large consoles jutting out just above them, their lights flashing on and off. The room was fifty feet wide. There was a desk in the middle. On the desk there was an intercom, a Microfilm viewer, a pile of books, pens and pencils, notepaper, a black panel of switches. There were chairs in front of the desk, three white chairs, deep and comfortable; there was no other furniture in the room and the floor was cold plastic. A man sat behind the desk. He was staring steadily at Stanford. He was handsome and white-haired and slim, and he waved Stanford forward.
Stanford walked across the cold floor, his footsteps reverberating. It seemed to take a long time to reach the desk, but he got there eventually. He stopped and stared at Wilson. There was no doubt it was Wilson. Stanford stared at the unusually seamless forehead and knew who he was talking to.
'Mr Wilson,' he said.
'Yes,' the man said. 'You've come a long way to see me.'
Stanford didn't try to smile. He hadn't smiled for a long time. He rubbed his beard and looked at Wilson's blue eyes and thought of the Antarctic ice.
'This is it,' Wilson said. He waved his hand in a careless manner. 'Those doors lead out to the colony, to all the different departments; the consoles tell me what's going on

and I control it from here. The colony forms a sort of circle. The tunnels run right through the mountain. The tunnels are the spokes of the wheel, and this room is the hub. We're on the top of a plateau. The tunnels lead down to the bottom. The saucers and construction plants are down there, and can't be seen from the sky. This room constitutes the highest point. An overhanging rock protects it. I have lived here for more than thirty years and I find it inspiring.'

Wilson offered a bleak smile, his blue eyes very cold, filled with a luminous intelligence that did not know emotion. There was no malice in him. Stanford sensed that immediately. The man knew neither malice nor fear he had gone beyond all that

'You know who I am,' Stanford said.

'Naturally,' Wilson said. 'We've been watching you and Epstein for years; you were both too persistent.'

'Where is he?' Stanford asked.

'You'll see him soon,' Wilson said. 'Dr Epstein is healthier than he was - and is really quite happy.'

'Happy?' Stanford asked. 'Yes, happy,' Wilson said.

'What the fuck did you do to him?' Stanford said.

'I just offered him life.'

Wilson smiled and stood up, walked across to the window, his movements excessively slow and careful, then stopped and looked out. All white. Everything. The Antarctic was stretched out below him. He turned away from the window and looked at Stanford, his face smooth and expressionless.

'Why did you come here?' he asked.

'I came for Epstein,' Stanford said.

'No,' Wilson said. 'I don't think so. That just doesn't make sense.'

'Why not?' Stanford asked.

'You must have known you couldn't go back. You knew you couldn't get in here unless we let you - and you knew you couldn't escape. You must have known that and yet you still came... It wasn't just for your old friend.'

'Partly that,' Stanford said.

'And the other part?' Wilson asked.
'I don't know,' Stanford said. 'I'm not sure. I guess I just had to finish it.'
Wilson smiled without humor. The smile never reached his eyes. He walked back around the desk and sat down, his gaze still fixed on Stanford.
'You're living dangerously,' Stanford said.
'I'm not sure I understand.'
'We're all alone,' Stanford said. 'I could kill you. And I think I might do it.'
'I don't think so,' Wilson said. 'You didn't come here for that. Besides, it would serve little purpose: it would not affect this place.'
'You're not concerned for yourself?'
'Not really,' Wilson said. 'I've had a long life, a full life, but it can't last forever.'
'You're a cyborg,' Stanford said.
'Not quite accurate,' Wilson said. 'I have an artificial heart, a few joints are prosthetic replacements, my face has undergone plastic surgery, but I'm hardly a cyborg. Not that it makes much difference. Even cyborgs pass away. We still haven't conquered the liver, and that means we're still mortal.'
'How long have you got to go?'
'A few more years,' Wilson said.
'Then what? What happens when you die?'
'This place will continue.'
He stared steadily at Stanford. His eyes radiated no feeling. He displayed neither malice nor warmth, his soul destroyed by intelligence.
'Man is simply a tool,' he said. 'He is the seed of evolution. He exists to explore and create, and has no other value. But men alone are self-destructive. Without discipline, they rot Take the history of man and examine it and you come up with lunacy: wasted time and opportunity, self-indulgence and corruption, material greed and self-pity and vanity: all negative impulses. The will to freedom has never worked; every

success has been matched with failure; we step forward and then we step back and wallow blindly in pettiness. Our superiority is in thinking. Only the mind has any value. But our animal needs, our appetites and fears, keep us chained to the floor. We must leave the cave behind us. We must reach for the stars. We can't do that while Democracy persists and lets freedom destroy us.'

'Freedom leads to creativity.'

'No, it doesn't,' Wilson said. 'Freedom leads to boredom and conflict and waste - and perpetuates stagnancy.' 'The world hasn't stagnated.'

'It hasn't advanced much,' Wilson said. 'Or at least, it's only advanced on one level and is now dangerously imbalanced. We have advanced scientifically, have made extraordinary leaps forward, and now we stand on the brink of the miraculous and can reshape man's future. But that advance was intellectual. We are still emotionally retarded. The other face of man is still as primitive as it was in the cave. That face remains unchanged. It masks the dire results of freedom. It disguises mindless greed, political suspicion and social fear, pointless hatred and the boredom and resentment that lead to destruction. The world is wallowing in bloodshed, the seas are being polluted, we're gradually gobbling up our natural resources and inviting a barren earth. We do this because of greed, because of politics and war, and these things are the consequences of so-called freedom, the fruits of Democracy. Man must have a purpose. He must be disciplined and driven. Only then will the world become sane and save itself from destruction.'

'Totalitarianism,' Stanford said. 'A world of masters and slaves. The people will be content because they're zombies ... and the earth will be peaceful.' 'You disapprove,' Wilson said.

'Fucking right, I disapprove. It's obscene and it's been tried before and it just never works. A man needs free choice. Without that, he's not a man. To steal a man's will and contradictions is to steal his humanity.'

'That's sentiment,' Wilson said.
'I'm a sentimentalist,' Stanford said.
'You're a primitive,' Wilson said. You're self-destructive. That's why you came here.'
'Fuck you,' Stanford said. 'What you're saying is shit. And you won't get away with it forever - the world out there won't let you.'
'Won't it?' Wilson said. 'How naive you are, Stanford. The world out there is part of the conspiracy, and has been for years. The United States knows about us. The Soviet Union knows about us. The British and the Germans know about us, and all of them deal with us. What I have is what they need. What I'm doing is what they want The world is out of control, freedom has led to revolution, and now Democracy is no more than a name to keep the innocent happy. You think your people are any different? No, Stanford, they're not different. Totalitarianism creeps over the world and is stifling resistance. Regimentation is increasing. People are numbers instead of names. The world is now ruled by a selected few, and suppression is spreading. Surveillance is widespread. Every citizen is on file. The salient facts of every individual human have been fed to computers. Television mesmerizes them. Piped music fills their factories. Credit cards and employment cards and passports have rendered privacy obsolete. All these people are numbers. Their so-called freedom is an illusion. Their politics, their cultures, their religions have no bearing on anything. Let them demonstrate occasionally. Let them criticize and abuse. Feed them issues that will keep them engaged while the real work goes on. In the end they will be passive. They won't really have any choice. Their credit cards and employment cards and passports can be withdrawn at any time. Such items make or break them. A select few decide the issue. The mass of men are guided through various channels and they don't even know it. That's your freedom, Mr Stanford. Thaf s your precious Democracy. The world is a chess game, the pieces are property, and the game is only played by the select few who hide behind closed doors.'

'A neat theory,' Stanford said. 'It just has one glaring flaw: your players will fight amongst themselves, and you'll still have world conflict. The Americans want you out of here. The Russians want you out as well. They're human beings and they're filled with the suspicion and fear that you loathe. You won't have peace on earth. They're just playing for time. When they're ready, or when they think that they're ready, they'll come at you with everything. You just said it yourself: they're not logical people; they're human beings and they're moved by primitive fears - and that's the flaw in your scheme. Sooner or later, they'll try it. It might be madness, but they'll try it. Then the war that will come, caused by you, will be the war to end wars.'

'You're wrong,' Wilson said quietly. 'I've made allowances for that I'm not so naive as to imagine that this race can continue. But the race will not continue. It will end in ten years. Within ten years every major government post will be run from this colony. We have people everywhere, in every country, in every government, and those people have electrodes in their heads and will do what we tell them. They are currently in the Pentagon, in the CIA and the FBI, in NASA and the Cheyenne Mountain Complex, in the Army and Navy and Air Force, in every top-secret project. It's the same all over the world. We have people everywhere. We're robotizing important people every year, and every year it gets easier. They don't know they're robotized. They think they're making their own decisions. But every new law of suppression, every new surveillance system, every action that changes the course of world events is dictated by us. We grow more numerous every month. We're gradually climbing up the pyramid. In ten years - or possibly less - all the rules will be our rules. Your world is ending, Stanford. It will soon be no more. If I sent you back out there tomorrow, it would do you no good.'

Stanford didn't know what to say. There was nothing left to say. He hadn't felt emotion for months, but now he felt it returning. That emotion was fear. It might well have been

despair. He gazed down at the man behind the desk and saw the ice of his blue eyes. The eyes were devoid of feeling. No malice, no resentment, no greed... it was organization.
Stanford thought this and was shocked. He thought of the world beyond the mountains. That world, his own world, was procreating and becoming too complex. The cities couldn't be controlled, the great suburbs were a mess; inequality and boredom and frustration were leading to madness. Increasing violence and civil strife, increasing wealth and attendant poverty; the contradictions of society were exploding and crippling whole nations. The politicians were defeated: freedom foiled them every day; more and more they were introducing legislation that encouraged suppression. They didn't appear to have much choice. Increasing chaos overwhelmed them. Categorization and surveillance and harassment were all they had left. Stanford thought of it with woe. He desperately wanted an alternative. He was human for the first time in months, and he paid the full price. The fear chilled him and shook him, turned into quiet rage. He stared at Wilson and felt the faint stirrings of a cold, hard defiance.
'Where's Epstein?' he asked.
Wilson reached across the desk, flicked a switch and then stood up, led Stanford across the room to a door, not saying a word. Stanford looked above the door. A red light flashed on the console. He turned his head and looked out through a window at the sweeping Antarctic. The panorama was stupendous; the white plains stretched to the sky; the jagged mountain peaks were just below, their rocks ringed with blue ice. Then the steel doors slid open. Wilson waved Stanford in. They stood together in a white-walled elevator and the doors closed behind them.
The elevator fell quietly, dropping down through the mountain. Stanford thought of what the German had told him about Hitler's teahouse. He saw a window on one wall. Floors shot up and disappeared. There was hardly any sound, no sense of motion, and the elevator was quite warm. Wilson didn't say a

word. He stared at Stanford with detachment. Stanford saw a huge cavern, littered grottoes and caves, various workshops and storerooms and offices, people working in silence. The elevator door slid open quietly. They stepped out into an office. The walls were painted white, the shelves were crowded with books, and Professor Epstein was sitting behind a desk, looking up, smiling gently.

'Hello, Stanford,' he said.

Stanford looked at his old friend. Epstein seemed very healthy. He had put on some weight, his gray beard had been trimmed, and he was wearing a shirt and tie, a white coat, his checks ruddy, his eyes clear.

'I'll leave you now,' Wilson said. 'I hope you are agreeable. You will have to make a decision, Dr Stanford, and I hope it's the right one.'

He turned back to the steel door, the door opened and he walked in, then the door closed and Wilson was gone, leaving silence behind him.

Stanford looked at his old friend. Epstein stayed behind the desk. His hands were clasped under his bearded chin, his eyes clear and steady.

'It's good to see you,' he said.

'Is it?' Stanford asked.

'It's been a very long time,' Epstein said. 'It seems more than a year.' 'What happened to the cancer?'

'They cured me,' Epstein said. 'They're really quite extraordinary that way. I must say I was grateful.'

'Grateful?' Stanford asked.

'A new life,' Epstein said. 'Not just that, but new purpose, new work - something worth living for.'

Stanford looked at his old friend, felt a deep, searing anguish, a pain that came out of his bowels and made him feel lost.

'What did they do to you?' he asked.

'They did nothing,' Epstein said. They cured me of cancer and explained what they were doing, and I realized that the

work was important and decided to stay.'
'They did an implant,' Stanford said.
'Not on me,' Epstein said.
'Either you're lying or you simply can't remember. They must have done something.'
They did nothing,' Epstein said.
'Jesus Christ,' Stanford said.
'Believe me, they didn't do a thing. They just talked and I listened.'
'And this is what you want?'
'Yes, it's what I want They took me up above the Earth and showed me things that I just can't forget.'
They implanted,'
'Not in me.'
'They do it to everybody,' Stanford said. They must have done it to you.'
'They didn't.'
'You don't remember.'
'I don't remember. I know they didn't do it. I just want peace and quiet.'
'I'm taking you out,' Stanford said.
'I won't go,' Epstein replied. The very thought of it gives me a migraine. I just don't want to go.'
'A migraine?' Stanford asked.
'The thought of outside,' Epstein said.
'They did an implant.'
'No, they didn't,' Epstein said. 'I just don't want to go.'
Stanford felt hot and clammy, swept with anguish and despair, a hopelessness that threatened to drown him and kill his resistance. He thought of Jacobs and Gerhardt, of the girl near Galveston, of Scaduto and Epstein and himself and all the years now behind them. The mystery was resolved. The nightmare was manifest. The world was being saved from itself and taking on a new face. Stanford wanted no part of it He didn't want to lose himself. He wanted to live with contradictions and conflict and the pain of free choice. Yet the price was too great. He didn't know if he could pay it. He

looked down at his old friend, Dr Epstein, and the pain slithered through him. Dr Epstein was no more. His placid eyes were all-revealing. He stared at Stanford without malice or friendship, offering nothing and everything. Stanford shook with grief and rage. He let his senses fly away. The pain stripped him and put him back together and gave life to defiance.

'You must stay here,' Epstein said. 'We need people like you. You will work and know great satisfaction and never know discontent'

'I don't want it,' Stanford said.

'You must accept it,' Epstein said.

'You're not Epstein,' Stanford said. You're someone else. You're not the person I knew.'

'I'm the same,' Epstein said. They just cured me of the cancer. Now I do the sort of work I always dreamed of - and feel wonderful with it'

'They've stolen your mind.'

'That's ridiculous,' Epstein said. 'I know you. I remember my past I know just who I am.'

'They've stolen your will.'

'They've stolen nothing,' Epstein said. They just talked and I listened and that's all: they did not operate.'

'You can't remember,' Stanford said.

'I'm getting a headache,' Epstein said. 'We really must stop talking about this. You must stay. You can't leave here.'

Epstein's eyes were placid. His hands were folded on the desk. He looked at Stanford with a calm, remote interest, talk-ing quietly and patiently.

'You can't leave here,' he said. There's really no place to go. You can walk out whenever you wish, but you'll freeze to death out there. Here you'll live a painless life. Your life will take on some meaning. You might be deprived of your imagined freedom, but think of the blessings. No more discontentment. No decisions to be made. You will work and take pleasure in that work, and never know doubt or fear.'

'I'll be robotized.'

'They won't do that'
'They did it to you,' Stanford said.
'No, they didn't. They didn't.'
Stanford knew it was useless. His sense of loss was overwhelming. He let the grief and the rage shake him loose and make him fight for his freedom. It didn't matter where he went. He didn't give a damn what happened. The point was to make a decision and then follow it through.
'You said I can leave.'
'That's correct' Epstein said. 'We won't stop you, but we won't help you either. The decision is yours.'
'I want to leave.'
'You'll freeze to death,' Epstein said.
'Fuck you,' Stanford said. 'Fuck you all. I won't submit to this shit.'
Epstein sighed and stood up. He walked across to a wall. There were large curtains drawn across the wall, hanging down to the floor. Epstein pulled a sash cord. The wide curtains drew apart. A dazzling light poured through a large plate-glass door and washed over them both. Stanford blinked and rubbed his eyes. He was looking along a huge glass hall. Through the glass walls he could see the glaring white of the immense, frozen wilderness.
'The choice is yours,' Epstein said. 'You can stay or you can leave. However, once the decision is made there can be no turning back. You just have to touch this glass. It will open and let you through. Once you step into the hall the door will close and trap you in there. You can only leave by the other door. It's at the far end of the hall. That door opens by contact from inside, and leads out to the wilderness. You can't open it from outside. If you step out you must stay out You can leave or you can stay - as you wish - and you must decide now.'
Stanford looked at his old friend, at his gray, remote eyes, mutely prayed for some sign of emotion and received calm indifference. The sense of loss was overwhelming, the pain unprecedented, shaking Stanford and making his heart pound, leaving nothing but rage.

He would hold the rage and use it. He would make his decision. Neither old friends nor memories nor hopes would make him bend to their will. He was not a machine. He would not be a cipher. Stanford looked along the hall, saw the blinding sunlight, saw the white haze running out to the sky and then pressed on the plate glass. The large doors slid apart. The glass hall was filled with light. Stanford stared at his old friend, at his gray eyes and beard, thought of all that they had been through together and dissolved into anguish.

'You're not Epstein,' he said.

He stepped into the hall. The large doors closed behind him. Sunlight blazed through the glass walls and roof and formed dazzling mosaics. Stanford zipped his jacket up. He covered his ears with the woolen hat. He plunged his hands in his pockets and walked forward, determined not to look back. The past was now behind him. The hall stretched out to the future. Stanford saw a globe of fire fill the sky with lines of silver and pink. He walked quickly along the hall. The flashing glass was all around him. He reached the door at the other end of the hall and stopped a few feet away from it. Stanford wanted to say something, wanted to speak to the silence. He stepped forward and the glass doors slid open and the fierce cold rushed in.

All white. Everything. The cold was appalling. Stanford leaned into the wind and stepped forward and the doors closed behind him. He didn't stop or look back. The white wilderness stretched before him. The wind blew the snow in languid, glinting clouds across the pack ice and glaciers. Stanford kept moving forward. He didn't care where he was going. He saw an arch of light above a horizon that forever receded. All light. Flashing light. A unique and dazzling vision. The light flashed and made his eyes sting and weep. Stanford didn't give a damn. He felt defiant and proud. He was alive and he kept moving forward to disprove all their theories. He saw a monstrous balloon. It was floating there before him. The balloon was transparent and shimmered and framed a pink sky. Stanford shivered and stumbled. He had

to clench his chattering teeth. The wind moaned and made the snow swirl around him and settle upon him. He ignored it, kept going. His teeth started to ache. The snow settled on his beard and his hair and then formed a light frost.

All white. Everything. Definition was lost. The wind moaned and the snow blew all around him and made him a part of it. He fell down and stood up and stumbled forward again. He thought of Epstein and Wilson and the colony and the great flying saucers. The future was here and now. His own history had passed. The snow formed immense darkened portals that were luring him in. He stepped in and saw a light, stumbled forward and saw it grow. The snow hissed and swirled and then the bright light exploded. All white. Everything. He let the wilderness embrace him. Glinting glaciers and flashing pack ice and streams of yellow and violet. The frost thickened on his face. He couldn't feel his numbed lips. The hands plunged deep in his pockets had vanished and left singing nerve ends. Stanford laughed as he froze. The icy air filled his lungs. He stumbled forward, heading into the wilderness, and could not be defeated.

He walked out a long way. The mountains fell far behind him. The white wilderness stretched out all around him and offered no exit Stanford didn't give a damn. He thought of what he had left behind. The future that would rise from the ice held no promise for him. Stanford's lips cracked when he smiled. His blood froze on the instant. He moved forward with his weeping eyes stinging, his hands and feet missing. No feeling. All numb. The ground shifting and sliding. A great rainbow formed across the horizon and framed a fierce whiteness. Then a luminous balloon. A mirage: a sun dog. He saw miracles of blue ice and light, the dazzling wastes of the snowfalls. Stanford stumbled on, regardless. He started talking and singing. He heard a voice that was offering comfort and coaxing him onward. He followed the Pied Piper. He let the sun and ice dissolve him. He fell down and saw the great slabs of pack ice that drifted and glittered.

He would travel, he would move. He crept along on his

belly. His missing fingers found the snow and dug in and his body inched forward. Stanford saw the drifting ice. He sang and muttered under his breath. Jagged black lines on white glare. A giant jigsaw in the sun. Stanford felt a fierce defiance and exultation that would not let him die. He crawled across the frozen earth. He dragged a dead thing behind him, his body, and would not let it go. Stanford slithered across a crevice. His fingers touched a slab of ice. The ice glittered and reflected the sun as the snow settled down. Stanford murmured and sang. He heard someone singing, somewhere. His fingers touched and felt nothing and bent as his body inched forward. Stanford saw streams of light. The light flashed and beat about him. Stanford slithered onto the slab of pack ice and rolled onto his back.

All white. Everything. Stanford saw lights in the sky. They were very high up, very small, pulsating and glowing. He knew what the lights were. He smiled when he saw them. The lights were like stars in the white sky, very bright and intense. Stanford lay there on the pack ice. The ice drifted imperceptibly. Stanford lay there and let the frost encase him and turn into more ice. The lights drifted across the sky. They defied the sky's bright haze. The ice drifted and flashed blue and yellow and became part of Stanford. He lay there and smiled. The ice carried him away. Stanford felt a fierce defiance and exultation that would not let him die. The frost thickened and hardened. It molded Stanford to the pack ice. He turned around in the sun, a glass figure, quite beautiful, the light flashing on and off him, exploding, streaming skyward, slowly turning him into a glacier, a prism: a star.